



ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Date: Tuesday 2nd February 2021

Time: 12:15

Room: Collaborate

Attended – 26+ Apologies - 3

AGENDA

1. WELCOME

Chiara Menozzi (CM) welcome all Class Reps in attendance and briefly reminded the remits of the Academic Council (*See Slide 4 of Presentation*). She introduced Jo Kinsley, Learning Technologist and Cecile Guilloteau, Student Support and Representation Co-ordinator.

2. STUDENT PRESIDENT UPDATE

Feedback from last meeting

See Slide 6 of presentation

Students' Union Elections

This year elections voting will be online due to the pandemic. Information about positions available for nomination and voting is available on the Students' Union website.

<https://www.qmusu.org.uk/top-menu/your-voice/student-elections-2021>

An elections Q&A will take place on Thursday 11th February 3-4pm. Further information will be published on due time.

STaR Awards

This year awards are dedicated to Douglas McBean, former Senior Lecturer in Applied Pharmacology, who sadly left us last November.

Nominations are open until 1st March 2021. CR are invited to submit nominations to Staff and Student Awards and spread the word.

The Student Awards include a Class Rep of the Year Award.

Food Pantry

Chiara Menozzi announced the Food pantry was back up running again.

Native

The Students' Union has signed up to online Native events. All QMU students can join.

Class Reps Hub Area

The Students' Union set up a Class Reps Hub area where Class Reps can access the online training, training material, Academic Council documentation and other relevant information. It also offers Class Reps discussion boards to discuss any relevant matters.

Class Reps were asked to comment on the usefulness of the Hub Area and the effectiveness of Hub Announcements. Class Reps advised that they found the Hub Area useful, however they prefer that the Students' Union communicate with them from the classreps@qmu.ac.uk email address.

3. Guest Speaker: Jo Kinsley, Learning Technologist

Jo Kinsley joined the Academic Council to offer advice to Class Reps on the Hub and answer all their questions.

Jo Kinsley informed Class Reps of Ally (creation of alternative formats) and Panopto (video programme) functionalities. She advised them that full guidance could be found on the Hub Help and Support area.

It was confirmed training sessions on the Hub, Collaborate, Panopto and Ally are being delivered to staff and many staff have embraced the training opportunities.

The Learning and Teaching survey completed in Semester 1 has been helpful to develop guidance to staff. A Hub template has been created to advice on how to build a module site on the Hub. The objective is that all module sites are similar so students can easily access learning resources. There has been much positive feedback from students however some modules prefers to keep their own way.

There is currently some issues around the use of break out rooms with Collaborate. It is unsure why and the issue is beyond QMU.

Jo Kinsley provided Class Reps with some tips on improving connectivity:

- Switch the camera off
- Only open Collaborate
- Plug in your laptop to router
- Place your router high up
- Avoid using Safari Browser

It was advised not to turn off notifications as lecturers use it to communicate with students. However students can chose to receive notifications once a day.

There was a question about the app. Jo Kinsley advised that she will get back to students on this.

4. Senior Committee Update

Senate

The Revised Assessment Regulations (<https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/updated-assessment-regulations/>), which were set up in Semester 2 of 2019/20, were reviewed and re-approved at the December Senate meeting. These regulations will be reviewed again this Semester and Chiara Menozzi will update Class Reps in due time.

Student Experience Committee

The Student Experience Strategy and Student Employability Strategy are both to be reviewed this semester.

A grade descriptor working group is to be set up to review grade description.

The Feedback and Feedforward group is due to develop a feedback template to guide staff in their marking process.

A Postgraduate Dissertation Working Group is also due to be set up. Any interested Class Rep can contact Chiara Menozzi to receive more information on the group.

The University is looking at decolonising the curriculum, a wider sector project led across Universities in the UK.

School Academic Board – ASSaM

Members of the SAB- ASSaM welcome feedback provided in the Learning and Teaching Survey carried in October 2020.

Learning and Teaching activities are being looked at and a Learning and Teaching Strategy is being updated to take into consideration recent developments.

The board agreed to keep a reading week in semester 2. There had been concerns that students may not be able to contact their lecturers during reading week. It has been confirmed that staff will remain contactable during this week.

Two new external examiners were approved.

Dr Majella Sweeney is back from Maternity Leave and to the role of Head of Business School.

5. Class Reps Feedback

- Wi-Fi in Halls is still very poor. The furthest away from the university main building the poorest the connection is. Students were advised to direct all comments over Wi-Fi to gmuwifisupport@gmu.ac.uk
- Many students have gone home for Christmas and did not return physically on campus. Therefore they did not use their return flight and have lost the fee. Companies will not return the fee if the flight was not cancelled. Students who find themselves in financial hardship are advised to contact the University student funding service studentfunding@gmu.ac.uk or complete the online form to ask for support in the form of discretionary funding <https://www.gmu.ac.uk/study-here/student-services/student-funding-service/application-for-financial-assistance/>
- Some Class Reps raised concerns that they were not getting any response from the Student Funding Service. It was advised to contact the Head of Student Services for any concern with the service.
- The resilience workshops run by the Student Counselling Service are very helpful. There was a demand for more similar workshops.
- Some students are leaving Halls due to the very limited number of face to face courses this semester. Some would like a refund. Students are advised to contact Accommodation on accommodation@gmu.ac.uk, who have set up a system for rent rebates and some students may be eligible for it: cases are being looked at on an individual basis.
- Some students said they were happy with Native Events and enjoyed joining in.
- One class is unhappy about feedback provided for one assessment. They feel the feedback is unfair and confusing. Class Reps are advised to contact the module co-ordinator to discuss this, then if unhappy with the module co-ordinator response raise their concerns with the Programme Leader at the SSCC. In the event of continued dissatisfaction students should contact the Students' Union Help Zone on helpzone@gmu.ac.uk
- Some students feel online teaching is not going as well as in the first semester and that some lecturers are not engaged. This was noted. Class Reps are advised to raise concerns with the course with the Programme Leader
- Class Reps have no direct way to contact their full cohort. This is of particular challenge for large cohorts. There were various suggestions coming from the

attendance such as using Hub discussion board, Pebble Pad or via the Programme Leader. Chiara Menozzi will take this forward and explore ways for Class Reps to contact their cohort.

- It was confirmed assessments regulations had been updated. Further updates are to be announced in the coming weeks. Students can access the last updated regulations on <https://www.qmu.ac.uk/about-the-university/quality/committees-regulations-policies-and-procedures/regulations-policies-and-procedures/updated-assessment-regulations/>

Students should note that there is no longer an automatic second first (uncapped) attempt.

6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 11th March @ 12.15 – 1.15 on Collaborate

Minutes written

8th February 2021

Cecile Guilloteau, Student Representation and Support Coordinator

Minutes approved

Chiara Menozzi, Student President