

MCR Committee Meeting - 6th of June 2013

Present: Tehnuka Ilanko (President), Maryam Serajiantehrani (VP), Janja Soldo (Treasurer), Katharine Moore (Secretary), Catherine Taylor (Social), Katy Hedgethorn (Social), Irushinie Wedage (Green).

Apologies: Annie Yue Zeng (Social), Nishtha Lamba (Social), Itxaso Barriuso (General), Jelena Illic (General), Hannah Haberkern, (Computer Officer), Hima Balachandran (Welfare).

1. Bookcase (Katy).

- It was decided that a medium sized bookcase from Argos would be purchased for the MCR to display the books currently stored in the cupboard. The cost of the bookcase is £21.99.

2. Open meeting and updates from committee members (Tehnuka).

- Suggestions for the agenda for the open meeting should be emailed to Tehnuka.
- Currently on the agenda are:
 - Discussion of magazine subscriptions for the committee to consider.
 - Any board games that the MCR could invest in.
 - An update from Janja, Katy, Catherine, Maryam and Irushinie on the finances of the MCR, past and future events, updates from grad liaison meetings and any green updates.

3. Elections & handover (Tehnuka).

- Currently the following positions have had nominations from grads: President, VP, Treasurer and Welfare Officer.
- With these roles filled, plus members of the current committee who are able to continue to help run the committee over the summer, the organisation of freshers' week should be manageable.
- All members of the current committee should prepare handover documents and email them to Tehnuka ASAP.

4. MCR BBQ (Katy).

- This event is planned for the 23rd of June.
- Food and drink will need to be ordered nearer the time. This will be organised by the current committee and the newly elected committee.
- All committee members should be present to help set up the event if possible.

5. Updates from College Council, grad liaison and CUSU (Tehnuka, Catherine and Maryam).

- The main point from the grad liaison meeting, which the committee was unhappy with, was the intention of the accommodation office to increase the notice period for all graduate accommodation from one month to three months.
- It is felt that this is unreasonable and impractical considering the high cost of living in Canning and Eliza and how quickly the private property market moves in Cambridge.
- It was suggested that an accommodation survey of the MCR should be carried out and the issue of accommodation will be followed up over the summer.
- The College has accepted 100 new graduate students for the next academic year.
- It is expected that 45-50 will actually arrive. The target of the College is that 33% will be PhD students.

- It is expected that the MCR committee will be around College to meet the new grads in freshers' week.
- Elsa Strietman agreed with concerns about the lack of catering for grads in their first week, and will look into the matter.
- It was proposed that the money from the taxi scheme, which is not used, should be available for grads to claim money back for late night taxis if arriving back late from a conference etc.
- Council update- A change in fee structure has been discussed for some time now. It is very likely that the College and University fee will be combined into one fee but further details are still under consideration. It would then be up to the University and College to decide how to split the money.
- CUSU have made suggestions about the new sports centre on the West Cambridge site. They proposed that Colleges should pay the base rate for usage of the facilities for all students. Murray Edwards have decided that this would not be a good way to spend their budget.

6. Student luggage delivery services (Tehnuka).

- Tehnuka was emailed information from a private company who delivery student luggage anywhere in the UK and internationally.
- They are offering the MCR a 10% commission on any business that is directed to them from the MCR community.
- It was felt that this service wasn't required by members of the MCR and it may reflect badly on the committee if it was felt that the committee were trying to earn money on behalf of the MCR through this scheme.

7. Travel grants (Janja).

- This year the MCR spent £1,800 on travel grants.
- Janja discussed that this was quite a significant proportion of the MCR budget for a small proportion of the MCR community.
- However, Tehnuka argued that the travel grants are really beneficial to the students who do receive them and enable them to attend conferences which their departments may not be able to pay for.
- For each student, £75-£100 is not really a lot over a three year PhD.
- Also, students who receive travel grants may not take advantage of the free formal spaces. It is more likely that the travel grants are given to PhD students, the majority of which live out of college. These students are therefore less likely to benefit from free formals, and the free wine at formals.
- It was felt by the committee as a whole that travel grants were a good idea to offer academic benefits to the MCR community in addition to all the social benefits such as bops and formals.
- The MCR has the funds to support students and travel grants for conferences are a really good way to enable development in their academic studies.

8. AOB

- None.

Next Meeting: Tuesday 11th of June (Open meeting)