

Societies Council Meeting 2 Minutes



Minutes of Societies Council Meeting 2 held on Monday 16th November at 4pm on Microsoft Teams.

In Attendance:

Douglas Livingston (DL)- Chair (Until Agenda item 12)
Zoe Nicholson (ZN)- VP SCEBE
Natalie Elliot (NE)-Head Of Academic Societies
Chris Opoku (CO)- Head Of Logistics
Dorota Makaruk (DM)- Head Of Communications
Lora Addison (LA)- Clerk/Staff Support

1. Welcome & Declaration of Interests

DL welcomed everyone to the meeting and no members declared interests.

2. Apologies

Elaine Penman (EP)- Head Of Faith & Culture Societies has sent apologies.
Lewis Akers (LEA) Head of political, hobby and social societies was absent without apologies
JoyceIn Asensu (JA)- Head Of Membership & New Societies was absent without apologies.

3. Matters Arising from previous meeting

LA had posted on the societies council Facebook group to arrange this meeting, but this matter will be ongoing from meeting to meeting.

LA also used Facebook to arrange the Dragons Den' panels. This matter is now resolved.

DM has promoted training and 121s on socials. This matter is now resolved.

ZN has begun planning Feel Fab Feb and will update in a later agenda item, this matter is now resolved however ZN will continue to update on the progress.

LA has sent NE the Academic Societies info sheet. This matter is now resolved.

Everyone has shared their information and image with DM to promote on socials. This matter is now resolved.

4. Approval of Previous Minutes

DL asked members to use the virtual hand to approve the minutes of the meeting from Friday 25th September 2020

Approval 5
Reject 0
Reject part of minutes 0

5. Policy Motions

1. Professional Doctorate Name Change

The society have requested to change their name to Doctoral Research Society due to the Professional Doctorate programme ceasing to exist.

It was noted that this name change had already been approved via Facebook poll but at this meeting a formal vote took place.

Approval 5

Abstain

Against

2. Funding League- Criteria Changes

LA asked members what they thought about changing the criteria of the funding league. DL suggested moving this to the next meeting when we have a full council present, but opened the question to the meeting to note any initial thoughts.

NE does think there are changes which need to be made for example, some criteria are harder for some societies than others such as attending SLP (Student Leaders Programme) which will differ depending on size of committee. NE agreed with DL and suggested members review the league, and come to the next meeting with some suggestions. NE encouraged members to think strategically as we could use the funding league to further encourage engagement/society activity.

Members agreed.

ACTION: LA to share info on the funding league on the Facebook group and everyone to review and come prepared to the next meeting with some changes.

3. New Societies Approval

- Sustainable Development Goals
- GCU Consultancy Society
- GCU Minecraft Society

It was noted that these societies had already been approved via Facebook poll but at this meeting a formal vote took place.

Approve 5

Abstain 0

Against 0

4. Dragons' Den

LA shared that unfortunately we only had one application for Dragons' Den this year from Nigerian Students' Society, this is likely due to the move to online activities. LA asked members if they would like to invite this society to present.

NE asked if the society need to present or if Societies Council can allocate funds based on the application form, LA responded not necessarily and it was up to council to decide.

DL said that having been involved in the application process last year, the presentation was extremely beneficial as it allowed experience, and he would like to invite them to present.

NE and DL suggested carrying the rest of the funds forward to Trimester B and holding a second funding round.

DL called for a vote on inviting the Nigerian Students' Society to present and disbursing the rest of the funds at the beginning of Trimester B.

Approval 5

Abstain 0

Against 0

ACTION: LA will invite the Nigerian Students' Society to present and will inform council members of the time and date they choose.

5. Memberships Update**

LA shared the Memberships from August, September and October and explained that some societies did not have good membership numbers. LA noted that between 20-50 was about average, and any societies with less than this should be supported. Societies with more than these members are performing exceptionally well and LA congratulated them.

NE asked if LA could send out the membership stats from this time last year to compare. LA agreed to do this and noted that some societies have definitely been affected by the move to online activities but a few societies are not seeing dramatic changes in membership numbers from previous years.

ACTION: LA to share membership stats from October 2019 with council members.

6. Feel Fab Feb**

ZN said that she did not have a huge update for this meeting as the Student Mental Health Agreement has been a priority for the moment. ZN shared that the Full Time Officers (FTOs) had set a team objective to work on building communities this year and had contemplated cancelling Feel Fab Feb but

instead running similar initiatives all year round. However, ZN shared that the final decision was for Feel Fab Feb to go ahead and she will soon be looking to recruit societies to get involved.

7. Starter Societies**

LA shared that in addition to the societies that council have already approved this year, there are some other ones currently completing the process. These include PENZA, Greek Cypriot, Built Environment and Women in STEM.

8. Societies Engagement & Support

LA shared that societies don't seem to be as active as usual and asked council what we could do to help.

DM agreed and has noticed this also, she thinks this is because people are bored of being online and also struggling to come up with new ideas that people will want to get involved with.

NE also agrees and said that everyone has screen fatigue and can be hard to motivate yourself.

ZN said that she understands how everyone is feeling, and suggested incorporating this issue into the funding league criteria e.g. 3 online events.

DL noted that the winter months can be tough and that council should be encouraging people to get outside during the day before it gets dark,

NE suggested putting together a guide on how to use different online platforms for example MS Teams as this may be an issue that people are having.

LA agreed with NE and said this is something she is actually working on at the moment. LA shared that people can do different activities such as bake offs, getting outside and different online campaigns and that societies don't need to sit on a zoom call to engage with members.

CO noted that council could perhaps run a campaign to encourage this, such as go for a run challenge.

DM noted that GCU Ethical and Environmental group (E&E) are doing a step challenge right now to encourage activity.

LA suggested council get involved in the steps challenge, and promote on Societies Council social media to set a good example to societies. Members agreed, but DM added she is already in a team but can promote on the socials. DL added that other council members who are not present will need to be consulted.

ACTION: DM to promote the E&E step challenge on social media

ACTION: LA to create a poll and ask council members if they wish to enter the step challenge.

DL suggested talking to sports clubs for advice, ZN said this was a good idea but some clubs are back up and running so might not be keen to help out.

DL mentioned the health professional society panel he attended set up by NE and suggested encouraging this for other groups of societies for support.

9. Upcoming Social Media Content**

DM shared that the Instagram followers have gone from 147 to 190 and the Facebook likes have gone from 130 to 174.

DM apologised for not being as active on social media due to personal issues, council members told DM not to worry and that she has done a good job so far.

DM updated that she has aimed to follow all societies on Instagram and Facebook, but was unsure if some pages she found were still active. LA provided guidance on this.

DM said she has created some content on what Societies Council do in order to increase visibility.

ACTION: DM to post about what Societies Council is and what the purpose is.

LA asked council members though that societies struggled with how to use social media, and asked if there was an appetite for dedicated social media training.

DL noted that he has attended a twitter masterclass and it was useful.

DM said she noticed that a lot of societies don't use social media so this could be why and LA could ask societies if they feel like they need training. It was agreed that Trimester B would be a good time to run this training.

ACTION: LA to ask the societies if they wish to attend social media training.

CO noted she is studying multimedia journalism, and can send over some useful resources and links. LA said this would be helpful to share on our social media.

ACTION: CO to send LA useful resources on social media use.

10. Verbal Reports- Updates since last meeting

DL attended Student Voice and updated on the matters discussed. DL updated that all new societies were approved by Student Voice. There is another Student Voice meeting in December which DL will attend.

DL had read out an update from EP that she has been contacting societies under her remit but has struggled with engagement.

*****DL Exited the meeting, ZN chaired the meeting from this point onwards*****

ZN has been attending societies catch ups with societies coordinator and attended Student Voice.

DM has no further updates, but will be aiming to make informative posts and will get in touch with less active societies. ZN congratulated DM on her social media content so far and NE agreed.

ACTION: DM to get in touch with less active societies to provide guidance.

NE has identified 15 possible academic societies and has contacted the head of departments for these areas. She has had 3 responses. Computing and pharmacology will revisit the issue in the new year and has a meeting with the Head of Surveying and Construction tomorrow. NE also hosted a Health Professional Societies meeting which was attended by Nursing, Nutrition & Dietetics, Radiography and Occupational Therapy. NE noted this was beneficial, and suggested this for other schools. ZN suggested a generic academic society panel might be useful. NE said she was thinking of hosting a Christmas interdisciplinary quiz, and inviting different societies to join as teams.

ACTION: NE and LA to attend meeting with the Head Of Surveying and Construction.

CO will be contacting the Nigerian Students Society to provide support on their Dragons' Den application, and will email societies to ask about why they didn't apply for Dragons' Den. CO will also aim to help societies with engagement at online events.

ACTION: CO to support Nigerian Students Society with their funding application

NE suggested encouraging societies to tag the Societies Council socials and DM can share the posts, DM agreed.

11. Date of next meeting

LA asked when council would like to meet again. It was agreed either towards the end of this term or in the middle of January to discuss funding. LA will create a poll.

ACTION: LA to create a poll to determine next meeting date.

12. AOCB

ZN asked if members had anything else to discuss. NE asked if anyone had feedback on blended learning to take to the Equality & Diversity panel, ZN suggested that since there were not many council members present a post on Facebook might gather better feedback. NE agreed.

***** The meeting concluded at 17:21 *****

Matters Arising

Action	Date of Meeting	Notes	Progress
LA to post poll on Facebook to find out availability to sit on the Dragons Den panel.	25 th September		
All to send DM photos and bio by 29 th September.	25 th September		
DM to promote training and 121s on the social media channels.	25 th September		

ZN to begin planning Feel Fab Feb	25 th September		
LA to set up a poll for the date of next meeting.	25 th November & 16 th November	This will be an ongoing matter from meeting to meeting.	
LA to send NE PDF document on academic societies.	25 th September		
LA to share info on Funding League.	16 th November		
Everyone to review the funding league and come prepared to the next meeting with suggestions.	16 th November		
LA to invite the Nigerian Students' Society to present and will inform members of the date/time chosen.	16 th November		
LA to share membership stats from October 2019.	16 th November		
DM to promote the E&E step challenge.	16 th November		
LA to ask members if they wish to enter the step challenge	16 th November		
LA to ask societies if they wish to attend social media training	16 th November		
CO to send LA useful resources on social media use.	16 th November		
DM to post social media content on what Societies Council is and the purpose.	16 th November		
NE and LA to attend meeting with Head Of Surveying and Construction.	16 th November		
CO to support Nigerian Students' Society with their funding application.	16 th November		