



11-12 Trumpington Street
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January 10th 2005

Dear

Congratulations on your election to your faculty board! This letter is aimed at providing some basic information and advice to get you started. My name is Jacob Head and I am CUSU's Education Officer. Along with the CUSU's Academic Affairs Officer, Drew Livingstone (a full-time CUSU sabbatical and the most senior education-related member of CUSU), we are here to offer any help and advice which you may need. Both Drew and I are former faculty board members and have seen the full spectrum of things which can happen during board meetings so we should be able to provide advice on almost anything which can happen.

Student faculty board members have an important part to play in CUSU and are one of the most important groups of people after the College JCRs and MCRs. CUSU holds regular, informal meetings for student faculty board members called "the Faculty Forum". Speaking as an ex-faculty board member, these are extremely useful as an opportunity to get together with people from other faculties to discuss issues which come up in board meetings. Even if nothing particularly interesting is happening in your faculty, it is still worth attending as it can be very useful to find out what is happening elsewhere in the university. We are planning on holding meetings on the following dates this term, in the bar on the ground floor of the University Centre (a large concrete building that can be found by walking to the end of Mill Lane and turning left):

- Tuesday, 17th January, 5PM
- Tuesday, 31st January, 5PM (for those in Arts faculties)
- Wednesday, 1st February, 5PM (for those in Science faculties)

At the first meeting of the term, we will be electing four members of the Faculty Forum to serve on the CUSU Council. The Council is the sovereign body in CUSU and is mostly made up of JCR and MCR Presidents and External Officers. It meets in the evening 4 times a term and is an excellent way of getting involved in university life. Additionally, one of those elected will become the Faculty Liaison Officer who is a member of the CUSU Executive and has widespread powers to run his/her own campaigns, as well as ensuring that the views of the faculty board members are heard in the CUSU Executive. If you want to be

involved with CUSU, then standing for one of these positions is one of the easiest ways: you can nominate yourself during the meeting on the 17th January and the election will be carried out at the end.

CUSU can also provide help with reversing flawed or otherwise problematic decisions made by Faculty Boards. Decisions made by Faculty Boards usually have to be ratified by the General Board of the Faculty and its education sub-committee. Drew sits on the subcommittee and the CUSU President, Laura Walsh, sits on the General Board. CUSU has had quite a lot of success in reversing decisions at these higher levels and often the threat of Faculty Board minutes being debated by the General Board is enough to stop a decision being made against the wishes of the students.

Finally, and if all else fails, CUSU can provide help and resources to run campaigns. These can range from large-scale protests (such as the ones which occurred last year against the closure of the Architecture Faculty) to small information campaigns within a faculty or department. CUSU also has the advantage of sharing its offices with Varsity and TCS and so can help with writing and distributing press releases.

If you do have any questions or problems, please do contact either me (education@cusu.cam.ac.uk) or Drew (academic@cusu.cam.ac.uk) for a chat. Also do check CUSU's website (<http://www.cusu.cam.ac.uk/>) for information about what is going on. There is also a section devoted to the Faculty Forum which should keep you up to date with meetings, minutes and agendas: <http://www.cusu.cam.ac.uk/campaigns/education/facultyforum/>.

I hope to either hear from you soon or see you at the first Faculty Forum!

Yours sincerely,

Jacob Head
CUSU Education Officer