



Minutes of the Furness Syndicate meeting 13 November 2017

Attendees: Wlodek Tych (Chair and Principal) Bev Whitaker (College Manager), Andrew Gibson (Accommodation Manger), Jing Lu (College Advisor), Kevin Huggett (Senior Welfare Officer), Olga Gomez-Cash (Vice Principal), JCR Members: Michelle Gartner, Cris da Cunha, Lewis Williams, SCR Members: Michelle Atkinson, Sarah Kidner, Natalie Miller

Apologies: John Hardy, Susan Armitage, Rebecca Killick, Shannon McCaul

1 Previous Minutes – These were approved by the meeting

2 Matters arising:

No matters arising.

3 Senate Agenda – Items of Interest to the Colleges

Teaching Spaces

The Chair advised that a staff member from the Law Department was asking the question, that if the University is intent on increasing the student numbers, were there any plans to create larger lecture theatres to accommodate the larger numbers. Teaching staff are currently having to do repeat classes to cover the numbers of students they currently have because the current lecture theatres are not big enough. Some classes are even being relayed to adjacent rooms on a screen. **ACTION: Wlodek to report back to the next meeting.**

UMAG are setting up a working group “Knowing Our Students”. The meeting was interested to know what the intended outcome from the group was intended to be. It is believed this is part of the growing participation and recruitment/retention KPI. The meeting would like to know if there will be College input. **ACTION: Wlodek to report back to the next meeting**

KPI's

The Chair advised that progress on the KPI's was challenging. Undergraduate retention is an ongoing problem.

Part 1 Working Group

The Chair reported that there is now a Part 1 Working Group, of which he is a member. An agenda item for the last meeting was a proposal for a two week Welcome Week. One week would be as is now, and one week would be academic.

A long discussion took place on this subject, with grave reservations for this option. There are a lot of potential problems with regards to first years having an additional week of accommodation/living expenses, as a lot are struggling financially already. There would also be the question of when the continuing students would be allowed back into residence, and many more questions from a College perspective.

A suggestion was that Part 1 offering be extended over the first couple of weeks, to be able to give more information and allow first years to have a more informed choice.

AOB

Furness Fellows

Andrew Gibson asked to propose two names for consideration for the next Fellows induction. These were Bev Whitaker and Martin Herbert. These were approved and seconded.

First Year College Reps

Bev Whitaker advised that new system was working better than previously with the registers being collected and returned to the College Office. The new system allows the CM to ask about the fresher's, and a couple of potential problems have come to light through this, and have been dealt with within College.

There are a couple of Reps who are causing concern, and this week (Week 6) will be a final check to see if they are actually doing what they have signed up for. Our Senior Welfare Officer will make the final decision on what to do if they continue to not perform.

There are a few reps who are just putting the registers in the kitchens for the students to sign without actually meeting with them. Again checks will be made to try and stop this.

Beer Festival 2017

Bev Whitaker advised the Beer Festival will be taking place between 6th and 8th December. A Christmas Quiz will be held on the Wednesday, and an Open Mic Night on the Thursday. Peter Welling, at a meeting with the Principal and myself, agreed to look into getting some live entertainment for the Friday, and said he would send advertising information to be sent out to our Alumni. This did not happen, so information was put together and sent out via the Alumni Office. At this time, we do not know if there will be live music, but Bev suggesting asking one of our suppliers to provide a BBQ on the Friday if the JCR wanted this. This was agreed and Bev will contact the supplier. **ACTION: Bev Whitaker**

Possible Linking of Departments with Colleges – Jane Grenville

Jane Grenville, Furness CAT member, asked for this item to put as a suggestion to the meeting. As a possible solution to getting more staff engagement within the College, would the idea of linking specific Departments to specific Colleges be worth consideration?

A discussion took place, with the student body vehemently against this for students. There could, however, be merit for Departmental staff to be linked with Colleges. This would mean that there was a smaller, more coherent group to contact for socials, and may make closer links. The down side is that as the current system means that people from all different disciplines can currently meet each other, rather than just the people they work with on a day to day basis, the new suggestion would remove this.

Thanks

The Chair gave thanks to Bev Whitaker for her service to the Syndicate as she is standing down as Syndicate Secretary when she retires at Christmas.

No further business, the meeting concluded. Date of next meeting 19 February 2018 at 1.00pm in Furness TV Room.