

Student Council Meeting Minutes

02/05/2024

Bethel:

Supported COL crisis - £3000 for Bower Students.

Organised UWE Bristol got talent gives students an opportunity to showcase talents

Ran UWE Bristol World Cup, now have funding to make this a continuous event

Supported Fayaz and Sabiha with exam distress packages.

Planning societies awards

Collab with Centre for Music for the partnership Amplify Event. BBC1 Extra coming to the Union on the day to be a judge.

Planned and organised Diversity Day, workshops.

Approved £13,500 on top of funds for societies to organise events and activities.

Society Discount Services for committee members across all SU shops.

Organised TedEx UWE, including 2 students to share ideas.

Qu: Is the top up fund a grant or to lend?

Bethel: It's for services to utilise to do whatever they want to do.

Qu: How will it be divided into societies?

Bethel: It will be divided among the societies that have requested it.

Qu: How would societies not part of the Council know about this?

Bethel: I believe all committee members are being told about the fund they can apply for.

Qu: How do you find have TEDx at UWE compared to Arnolfini.

Bethel: UWE was not ideal but due to the political climate at the moment with Palestine (and the Arnolfini not showing the Palestine Film Festival as a result), we do not want TEDx to be a part of that.

Qu: Why weren't there checks for the event? Echos could be heard in the background. This could have been prevented if there had been more preparation.

Bethel: Arnolfini had all the tech in place to prevent this. The tech team, when editing, will try to reduce the background noise for when they go online.

Qu: The people affected by the tech problems did not even come second or third – what's your take on this?

Bethel: Two of the people who did not come third or second will be performing at Love Saves the Day, which is a bigger platform than UWE Bristol's Got Talent.

Qu: If students were affected and they raised this, how will this be rectified?

Bethel: I'm going to pass feedback on to the next President about the issues received.

Qu: With societies that didn't get enough people to stand, will they be closed off soon or retrying to get the committee going?

Bethel: The student experience is a priority, and societies really benefit from this, so will not shut societies down, rather try to give people more time to become interested.

Qu: Is it possible to make it so it can be automatic rather than having to opt in when it comes to things within my location?

Bethel: The funds will keep piling up when the other societies may need that money but won't be able to access it.

Fayaz:

Organised the wellbeing festival, whole week of events across campuses. Free herbal teas, wellbeing services (5 services)

WonkHE trip: learn best practices and bringing them here at UWE –

Working on academic credits, non-academic credits

Provide cost efficient meals at SU bar

Exam distress (gave away 600 bags)

UWE podcast recorded.

Student Wellbeing champions (14 recruited) organised exam distress events

Survey around safety

Made ASV video about boys being boys, how to change stigmas

For our Future Manifesto with NUS

National Conference – submitted campaign for ? Equality which passed, now lobby the SU to work on the policy.

Qu: The prayer room, people are praying on the floor, you are muslim yourself, no prayer matts, issue for last 4/5 months. Why haven't you addressed this? Why are people praying on the floor and why in the CFS?

Fayaz: There is a multi-faith prayer space 5 year plan. Been working with the Islam Society and they are happy it's in the CFS. It's the biggest space available.

Qu: If there are issues with space that's fine, but why is it not well equipt?

Qu: Why was CFM given priority to move to farmhouse?

Fayaz: Islam Society have been using the Farmhouse for a while, but with the uni developments the CFM has to go there. About the matts, I haven't looked into this sorry but I will and will back back to you on this.

Qu: Ideas for COL support and students struggling with wellbeing due to inability to eat? Free meals are coming to an end. Any replacement support?

Fayaz: Having a chat about this – because of COL the uni has less funding for this, but hopefully the next Presidents can lobby for this to move forward.

Qu: you attended the NUS conference and submitted a policy – please ekaborate on what was in the policy? Mainly regarding equality for international students?

Viljo: this can go in the NUS section which is 30 minutes long.

Qu: When is the action going to start happening with the Bower travel?

Fayaz: Forwarded the survey to the UWE transportation team who are working with Bristol City Council, also discussing the lighting. They will do some walkaround surveys. As the new council comes in, we will be able to lobby them.

Krishna:

Balck History Month – supported the sports area.

Vartity – continued tradition of varsity with uni of South Wales.

Promoted MOVE.

Says thank you for all the hard work of the student athletes.

Lots of people have given up on healthy diets to rise in unhealthy foods, so distribued 700 bags with healthy snacks. CFS like it so will be carrying this on.

Qu: you mentioned everyone has lectures on Wednesdays – what are your solutions?

Rahul: Had a LTSEC meeting and presented this problem. We will start this for the new academic year. Will personalise their timetables – have a meeting with deputy registrar Rachel Cowie.

Qu: Other than bucks and Wednesday session ends in 9 months, what have you improved?

Krishna: Telling students how to be active and be involved with sports.

Qu: When you're speaking it's in first person, but your report is in third, so did you write it?

Krishna: Some reports we have to write in third person, and I don't have time to change it so copied it from there.

Qu: Will athletes also be affected by the food funding?

Krishna: I think so but maybe that's something the new Presidents team can push. They were happy with what I did for them, so they did this in their well-being week.

Qu: Students have complained that you didn't get involved in UI sports or Bucs to get this position, so would like to know why you were staying uninvolved?

Krishna: From my side I've been a responsive student, I've been replying to emails and talking to opps team. So would like proof to take this forward.

Qu: Is there possibilities to have more than just sports at Bucs?

Krishna: I didn't get any requests about the chess, but can keep a note about and put it in the handover.

Sam:

Employability events

Payments fee

Co-lead in Diversity Day

Went to London for Governor's Forum

Qu: You mentioned about the Insta live – how many students attended and on what basis was the success measured?

Sam: Don't know how many people joined.

Qu: Can you tell me about your involvement in Diversity Day?

Sam: I was there.

Qu: Would like to direct this question to the other president, was he fully involved?

Viljo: Can we leave this for the end?

Sam: Fully involved.

Bethel: I planned it with Maya Osborne. Got much more support from Fayaz with food. Sam was a colleague was a colleague. I got support from the SU, Fayaz, and did Diversity Day with Maya Osborne.

Sam: False information.

Joel: We're moving on, can revisit at the end if there's time.

Qu: You put in your report that you are involved in LGBT History Month. I went to every single planning meeting for LGBT History Month and you were not present for any of them. Why?

Sam: I am an ally but not a member so was not fully involved.

Qu: Nobody else on those panels who are part of the SU were members of the LGBT community, just the students. You didn't come to any of those meetings

Sam: I remember sending apologies.

Qu: If (as you wrote in your report) you are committed to creating a well inclusive environment, what's your contribution on supporting the LGBT community?

Qu: Your actions are not following your words.

Sam: You are getting it wrong, I was involved and had meetings and sent my ideas.

Qu: Is the student payment plan available for all students or specific students? Also the alumni discount has been reduced from 25% to 20% - are you going to lobby the university about this?

Sabiha:

Can we go straight to questions?

Just to mention about LGBT month, I was at the planning meetings. I wanted to take a lead on it with Sam, but we are modest. We want to give students the lead.

Qu: How are going to achieve the goals in reimagining representation?

Sabiha: We have had 3 meetings around how to reframe the work around student reps. We're going to start with the SU. We'll have a whole committee of LSRs who will be meeting me fortnightly/monthly. Then I'll have my conference with all the general resp. Something we find ourselves asking is why Reps is such an empty space. I go to academic board, LTSEC where my only weapon against UWE is feedback, I get from reps. So how do we empower reps to give me the feedback?

Qu: How are you going to implement this?

Sabiha: Meeting with Heather, when we have a plan we'll take it to higher meetings. We'll have meetings and planning.

Viljo: SoSS, as an experiment, reps terms won't end at the end of the academic year. We'll model this with LSRs to see if we can make that work an ongoing basis.

Qu: In what criteria was the Women's Hall of Fame selected and by what criteria were you selected as well?

Sabiha: The criteria was a student or staff who has gone above and beyond for UWE.

Qu: How did you go above and beyond to get nominated?

Sabiha: I have supported the students. A lot of the time I would have clashes with staff at the SU where I would not give priority to the meetings, I have with them and to be there for students and to speak to students. The staff at the SU challenges us to do that 'oh you don't speak to the students much or you have to go to other places to go and speak to students.' When we actually do it, the feedback we get is 'oh presidents are just roaming around the campuses and not speaking.' it's just a constant battle with the presidents and students and the staff at the SU because there are expectations that are set. Because we are elected student leaders, we have our own way of dealing with them.

Qu: If you have achieved so much, why is there nothing much in your report? On the academic board you mentioned about President and VP Education attending, but what's the outcome of your role within 9 months?

Sabiha: For the academic board, I'll give the credit to Sam because he attended meeting and the last meeting he took the lead, and he spoke to Steve about better payment plans for the students.

Qu: What's the outcome of the academic board?

Sabiha: Sam do you want to expand on academic board?

Sam: Master language barriers, telling students what to do in terms of assessments beforehand.

Qu: What are your examples of understanding students better?

Sabiha: What it means to be a student rep, how we set out these expectations, so you are not just a class rep? When you are giving me feedback, how am Sam and I the only people speaking up when we go to meetings with 3 LSRs? It seems like the SU is not doing anything when actually you are not doing anything.

Qu: Why had the issue with the grace period been resolved?

Sabiha: That is an academic regulation that changes every year. I need to have a whole presentation on this at LTSEC which will get taken from there.

Viljo: Change to the regs was brought up on day 2 of the job. So I would suggest collecting our own data on this so Saby can make the case. The regs are only dealt with once a year and they are quite resistant to it.

General Questions:

Q: To Bethel, some societies were automatically closed. No members were told when voting was open or closed, so the societies got shut down. Only when students raised this did they stay open, they wouldn't have otherwise.

Bethel: When I send out emails, I email everyone, not just one person. What I'm realising is that it goes into spam for a lot of students.

Q: Will people be told next year about the 24 hour voting period? It doesn't seem like enough time.

Bethel: Something I will look at to change it to 1 week.

Q: To President, when you describe yourself as a co-lead and your colleague said otherwise. Why aren't you being transparent?

Sam: I was a co-lead also in Black History Month. I was a co-lead in Diversity. His manifesto clashes with mine. We both started this. I was transparent, from day one. The food was my idea (to have cultural food in the university). I don't think there are any transparency issues.

Q: When you say things and they don't seem right and your colleague says otherwise, this is unacceptable and not transparent.

Sam: I fully contributed to this diversity event. I think this is a personal issue.

Point of order.

Q: Is there going to be a Welfare Awards?

Fayaz: We are bringing the Welfare Awards and Student Experience Awards into one. Nominations open until 8th May!

Q: President, is there any campaign or idea you as a team have taken for word to lobby the university?

Sam: I wouldn't say it's a leadership issue, everyone has leadership issues. All the meetings we go to, everyone puts their ideas forward. Everyone has different priorities. We are having a meeting on how we can resolve the bus issue.

Q: You mentioned about Cost of Living finances. The summer ball was £27 and now its £55. Do you think students can afford this?

Sam: So this is a concern for us, so we will look into this.

Q: Were you aware of this?

Sam: No.

Q: Who are the wellbeing champions? Where are they based, what's going on? What is it about?

Fayaz: 14 students, anyone can put forward their name. We do trainings, we met 5 times the past couple terms. There's an event in March. Crochet event in the space for students to come, relaxing thing.

Q: you mentioned diversify on your report. Why is this not taken for the uni? Why is there no diversity within the uni?

Fayaz: There is no waiting period, you can meet staff within a week.

Q: Recently my friend wanted a meeting with the wellbeing services and it said 6 weeks.

Fayaz: Sorry about that, there is a shortage of staff. The last update i heard was 1 week. I am working with the ongoin service. Students from BAME backgrounds can reach out anonymously.

Q: President, Mosque situation. Students are praying on the floor. Why have you not brought this to the Wellfare presidents?

Sam: This is the first time I am hearing this.

Q: All the issues raised you're hearing for the first time.

Sam: Just because we are Presidents doesn't mean we know everything. It is your duty to reach out.

Bethel: For the mats issues, I am trying not to contradict, but we will be able to solve this issue. We will reach out to ISOC to get mats.

Q: For everyone, have you got any events in the pipeline for the May awareness months that could have a theme or day?

Fayaz: About mental health, we have a feel good week. We are doing a mental wellbeing festival, so at bower we have some events (pizza, clay etc). It's hard to get students involved.

Krishna: Mine got postphones. But i can send out invites and make students aware. I will get speakers to talk about MOVE. Makeing you aware, it's an informative event.

Q: Saby, this is a question about learning language models and ChatGPT. Do you know how this will be market in the future?

Fayaz: I sit in a meeting that talks about this meeting. I won't be able to share more because it's confidential but can give you more info later.

Sabiha: My question to staff, it isn't really brought up, but my question would be how is the lecture able to check if the student has used it or not? So it goes both ways.

Krishna: They will be working to counter that. (not clear on what this means)

Q: (I am unsure on this, inaudible)

Sam: do you have a problem with me? Be respectful, I'm the President so please be respectful.

Q: Some sport societies have had issues with meetings being pushed or cancelled due to conflict with CFS.

Krishna: It's a sport club thing. I was not aware of it. I would be happy to bring this up. I need facts and proof, so can you forward this email.

Q: This is to the three of you who are ending your role. How are you going to do the transition of power? The last presidents didn't support you as well as they should have.

Viljo: One of our (..) in our strategic plan is to invest in our Presidents. They have a handover week, with inductions etc.

Q: What have you done to support the muslim community during Ramadan?

Sam: You should not ask me that question. I'm not a Muslim. It's VP Societies who should deal with that. If I am invited, I will be there (invited by ISOC). Our priorities are different.

Bethel: The SU support the Islamic society to support Muslim students during Ramadan.

NUS conference:

Fayaz: I was the lead for the liberation conference. We discussed decolonisation campaign, to trans liberation. The policies were discussed and passed, so we will lobby NUS and the university. International students, trans liberation.

Sam: I will give a brief overview. Students want change, Palestine, NUS reform. I attended two of the policies.

Fayaz: the policy we submitted was a campaign for international students equality, which was passed with 335 students. Change working hours from 20 to 30 or scrap it. IHS charges -