

Minutes for the BIO Staff Student Liaison Committee 2019/20

Date/Time: Wednesday 30th October 2019 from 13:00 to 15:00

Venue: NEWSCI 0.03

For background information concerning the SSLC please see the 'Student Representation Code of Practice' that is now available at: <https://portal.uea.ac.uk/documents/6207125/8540534/Student+Representation+Code+of+Practice+2015-16.pdf/86f57373-5624-48f6-8e67-f1b7356f5ab9>.

Present – Aaron Johnson (AJ), Ali Demirci (AD), Amna Asif (AA), Ben Cook (BC), Charlotte Price (CP), Daniel Akinmaiyejolu (DA), Graham Riley (GR), Jack Jones (JJ), Kash Hinds (KH), Lewis Spurgin (LS), Lindsay Westgarth (LW), Liz Clarke (LC), Mark Coleman (MC), Phil Leftwich (PL), Sadiq Ghadri (SG), Sheena Macrae (SM), Amal Khizer (AK), Daniel Grant (DG), Joshua Carrara (JC), Becky Lewis (BL), Jade Howard (JH), Zoe Winter (ZW), Helen James (HJ), Maria Vardakou (MV) & Emma Skeet (ES)

Additional – Simon Burroughs (SB)

Apologies received from Gary Rowley, Marna Bailey, Sarah Lucas, Toiby Maskell & Isla Hoskings.

1. Welcome

JJ introduced himself as school convener, welcomed everyone to the meeting and stated the purpose of the BIO Staff Student Liaison Committee (SSLC). A 'round the room' took place with each person stating their name and their role in the committee.

2. Apologies for absences

As above.

3. Start of Term Feedback

PL asked for feedback from the students about their experiences of the start of term. CP added that this agenda item has come from SL (who couldn't make the meeting) but was keen in particular to get the opinions of new students and their experience of the induction process.

No feedback from returning students.

Feedback from new students:

- There was a lot of information to take in during the 1st week, it might be useful to condense some lectures.
- Foundation Year (FY) students are getting a lot of the information that they have heard previously. Might be useful making it clearer which lecture and talks are essential for all students and which can be skipped by FY students. MC in agreement that this could be made optional.
- Lab timetables for FY students were 'hit and miss' – some students were missing lab sessions on their timetables. Could induction talks include lab details? MC responded that he has tried this in the past but that there needs to be a 'Single Point of Truth' which is the Evision version. The school has been dissuaded from creating their own timetables and circulating them. BL pointed out that the issue with the FY labs was that Outlook was not syncing properly with Evision – this could be mentioned at the start of Induction week and the start of every lecture/talk that if students have IT issues they can resolve it in the following ways and then showing these ways. HJ and MC are involved in a UEA wide working group which is looking at timetabling issues. They are aware of the issues with Evision and notifications and are prioritising looking at this. (21.00)
- Other students reporting no issues with Outlook displaying their timetables and the details (lecturer name, module name, time etc.)

AP: MC to report back at next meeting on outcome/proposals from working group on timetabling issues

- CP asked how students felt after the 1st week – Did they feel prepared enough when studying began. Student response that they did, the various UEA apps helped. HJ spoke about UEA introducing 'Week 0' in 2020 which will streamline the induction process and be more school specific.

4. Senior Advisor Report – Dr Graham Riley

GR presented his [report](#) and gave a short overview.

JJ asked the students present about their experiences with their advisors – had they met with them, had they found them useful?

Mixed response from students. Some reported that they had met up with their advisors but others reported that apart from their initial contact they hadn't had any more contact with them. Discussion that students experience with lack of contact was not unique and that others had told them that they hadn't had much contact from their advisors. Students in agreement that they would prefer the advisor to initiate contact with them. Discussion about various online booking

systems and the pros and cons of each. MV reminded students that if they have concerns, such as a lack of contact from their advisor, then please do say something – MV, MC or the SSLC contacts can all be approached if a student is having issues with their advisor.

5. Call to Co-opt Student Representatives for Vacant Course Rep Positions

PL explained that the initial call for Course reps is undertaken by the Student Union (SU) but that the BIO SSLC has the ability to co-opt into vacant positions. Year 3 course rep positions are available but no Year 3 students were present in the meeting. Discussion about organising advertising for vacant positions and the SSLC.

AP: PL to create advertising (PowerPoint Presentation/Posters etc.) to give to Module Organisers/Lecturers to display

MV is happy if any 1st Year Course Reps want to introduce themselves at any of her modules – who they are, what they do, how to contact them – MV can accommodate this so please approach her if interested.

HJ asked where she could find the list of course reps. JJ explained that its on the SU website but that you have to be able to log in to access it.

AP: SB to curate the list from the SU and place on the BIO SSLC section of the SCI Student Zone

AP: SB to create a new section on the BIO SSLC section of the SCI Student Zone to advertise the available positions.

Student suggestion that an email is sent with pictures and details of who the BIO course reps are, as better advertising is needed. Suggestion that course reps contact PL, JJ or MV directly if they would like to present themselves to students before or after any teaching events, as to who they are, what they do and their contact details. PL stated he was happy with this but that it needed to be student-led, so students would need to make contact first to arrange a suitable time, venue etc.

JJ asked about best way to contact students. Student response unanimous that emails are their preferred contact method. Discussion evolved into how best to communicate and engage with students – discussion involved social media, advertising and historical SSLC student engagement. ES spoke about some of the ways that ENV SSLC is trying to improve engagement such as through social media accounts – Instagram etc. LS responded that RIN are not keen for Schools to create their own bespoke social media accounts, as they dilute UEA's core

messaging and attract fewer followers. CP confirmed that BIO doesn't have an Instagram account but does use Twitter and Facebook.

AP: BIO Course reps to provide bio.requests@uea.ac.uk with a photographic 'Headshot' if they are comfortable doing this.

AP: SB to add to agenda for next meeting, item on 'Student Engagement and the SSLC'.

6. Library Update – Dr Liz Clarke

From Dr Liz Clarke's 'News from the Library' –

Changes for 2018-19

1. Changes to borrowing, loan periods, renewals and requests.
No. of books that can be borrowed has been increased for all users:

	This academic yr (1 st Aug 2019-)
Staff and research PGR	30
PgT	20
UG	15

All books are now 7 day loan, unless High demand (3 days) or Reference only.

All books will automatically renew unless requested by another user. You will be emailed if this happens and given 3 days to return the item to the library.

2. New subject guides-<https://uea-uk.libguides.com/?b=g&d=a> now including on the Biology subject guide a link to our new study guide: **First Assignment and beyond.**
<https://sites.google.com/view/firstassignment/about>
3. **Digital Voyager- Library MOOC** looking at digital tools for study and reflection and how to manage your digital identity online. Running in November –provides 5 hours credit towards Campus and personal Activities within the UEA Award run by Careers centre.

LC finished her report by asking that course reps can report any library issues to her such as library resources, getting access to study rooms. LC can't seek solutions to problems if she isn't aware of them. No students reported any library issues at the meeting.

7. Any Other Business

1st year lab sessions – Student reported that lab sessions could be cut in time or have the time better managed as students are finishing way ahead of the allotted time. Response from PL that time is carefully calculated, and that teaching is appraised frequently (with work added or subtracted according to student and staff feedback). Students will also respond to teaching sessions in differing ways so teaching cannot be tailored only to students who complete ahead of others.

Reading Week – Question from student about why other Schools have reading weeks but BIO doesn't. PL replied that BIO is considering introducing a reading week and it is being discussed in meetings. For context BIO has a lot of teaching that it tries to include which is why BIO doesn't have one. HJ concurred saying that BIO used to have a reading week but it was removed due to the restraints it was placing on teaching time.

AP: PL to speak to Harriet Jones (BIO) to ascertain what is being discussed re: BIO Reading Week and if students will be consulted