

OH THE HUMANITIES!

Issue 4

December 2010

The newsletter
for Humanities
students

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What is a course rep?

Your Course Reps are elected by students on each course and are intended to be your first port of call if you have any problems or queries regarding your course. They're chosen individually for each course and their responsibility is to represent you to make sure that you are happy with the way that your course is run by providing means of feeding back academic issues and a link between students and academic staff. They are overseen by the School Rep of each academic school. Look at the relevant pages to find out more and contact your rep.

What is the role of a Course Rep?

Making themselves known to the students on your course.
Identifying course and school related issues and actively seeking student opinion.
Attending and participating in appropriate departmental meetings.
Getting involved in the course and school feedback system.
Feeding back to students on course developments and the outcomes of meetings.
Liaising with other Course Reps in the department.
Liaising with the Students' Union on appropriate issues.

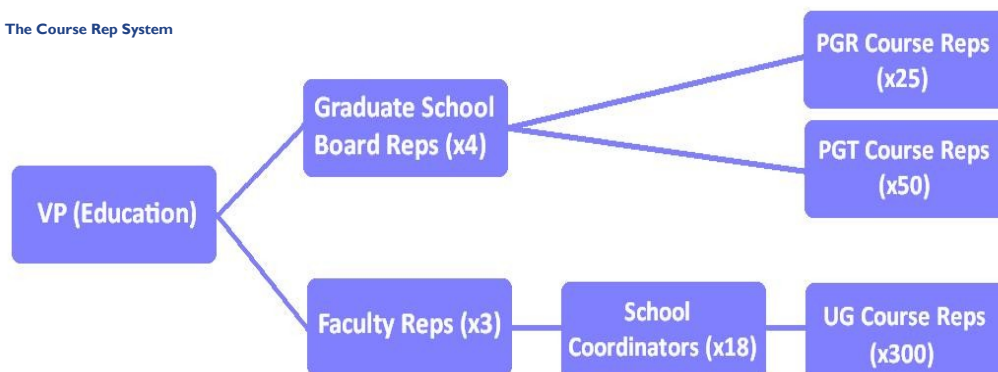
What issues can they help with?

Teaching resources – Availability of lecture rooms, lecture room facilities, disabled access, etc.
Study resources – Availability of books and other resources in the library, access to workstations, laboratory facilities, etc.
Course content and structure – Is the course description anything like what actually happens? Do lectures and seminars focus on the important topics? Have changes been made to the course without warning or consultation? Is the workload distributed reasonably throughout the course?
Feedback – Are the feedback mechanisms for your coursework clear and appropriate? Do you know what happens to the unit evaluation forms you complete?
Hidden course costs – Have students been given adequate information about the costs of photocopying, attending field trips laboratory charges, etc? Are the charges made reasonable?
Teaching methods – Do students have the opportunity to experience a variety of teaching methods, such as small group work as well as lectures? Do lecturers make use of facilities such as PowerPoint, OHPs or videos when appropriate? Do they cater for all types of student?

School Reps

The School Representative is the senior Course Rep in their School and is responsible for co-ordinating and supporting all other Course Reps in their school. They co-chair their SSLC (Staff-Student Liaison committee) and help the VP Education run academic campaigns to make an impact within their school.

The Course Rep System





Laura Budd

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Faculty Rep

Hello everyone! Firstly I would like to thank all those who voted for me in the October elections and made me your Faculty Rep this year! I am a fourth year French student and in my first year I was a course rep and in my second year I was SECL school rep while last year I was away in France.

So far this term has been quite busy, what with the national demo in London against the rise in tuition fees, getting all of the course reps elected and starting to attend various meetings. I am pleased to

say that it has been a good term and I am really looking forward to putting ideas and plans in motion next term. My role is to first and foremost represent you all on a faculty level and to liaise with Lauren (VP Education), Karl (Dean of Humanities) and the course reps, in particular the school reps. We have a meeting every three weeks to discuss current issues, organise campaigns and support each other.

I would really like to encourage you to use your representatives this year. Please give positive feed-

back as well as telling us about any problems you may have - we need to maintain the good things as much as we need to improve the bad!

Please feel free to email me anytime. Next term I will have 'campus hours' where any students can come and talk to me and give me feedback they have. The day and time is still to be confirmed.

More of what I have been up to since being elected and some humanities news can be found on page 6!

Vice-President Education

Hi all! I'm Lauren Crowley, your Vice-President (Education) and I was elected in March along with four other full time officers to promote, extend and defend your rights here at the university, in the local community on a national level, with my main focus being the educational experience.

I'm also the officer responsible for the course representative system so that means issues that are brought up through this system will be tackled at the appropriate point. A part of my representative

role is also to campaign on the issues that affect you whether they are big issues that many people mention, down to the course specific issues that I can help the course reps to resolve.

This year keep your eyes open for more to do with improving assessment and feedback, library resources and of course, the issues that revolve around tuition fees and cuts to education amongst many others.

As your representative I am always here to help you and be held accountable to you and I am contactable at

union-education@kent.ac.uk so please always feel free to use me!



Lauren Crowley

union-education@kent.ac.uk

Dean of Humanities

It is great to see the Newsletter for Humanities Students now into its third year. The Faculty was delighted with the results of the 2010 National Student Survey, with top ten placing nationally for six of its subjects, and over 90% overall satisfaction in nine subjects (out of a total of 16 subjects reported in the survey). Schools are now working hard to meet the Faculty's target of every subject being in the top 10 nationally combined with a minimum overall satisfaction of 90% in NSS 2011, which starts in January for final year students. As part of its commitment to the enhancement of learning and teaching, the Faculty held its first Learning and Teaching Forum in September attended by over 100 lecturers from across the Faculty, at which colleagues showcased good practice and innovations in

teaching for the benefit of the Faculty as a whole.

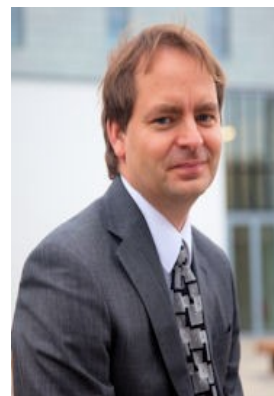
The enhancement of assessment has been a big theme for the Faculty in the last couple of years. Last year we introduced a single template for feedback for the whole Faculty designed to ensure that every piece of work receives constructive feedback on ways to improve. This has proved popular with students and has been praised by our External Examiners. This year the Faculty is introducing one-to-one feedback for at least one piece of assessment on every module. Early indications are that where this has already been implemented it is proving popular with students.

The Faculty is also working hard to improve library facilities by, for example, making more material available online, ensuring that reading lists are up to date, and ensuring that students understand how to access the full

range of resources that the library has to offer.

At a recent meeting I had with the Faculty and School reps, it was clear that the issue of employability was high on everyone's agenda. The University has just agreed a new Employability Strategy. All of the Schools in the Faculty are developing activities to strengthen employability, as well as helping students to articulate the valuable skills that they have acquired during their studies that are highly valued by employers: skills of communication, critical thinking, team working, planning and organisation, for example.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with the excellent and very active Faculty and School reps to improve further the learning, teaching and student experience in the Faculty of Humanities.



Karl Leydecker

Have you got any ideas for the next Humanities Newsletter?

At the moment the newsletter goes out each term. We will happily publish more issues if we have the content. What would you like to see in the next one?

Please email your comments and suggestions to ljb44@kent.ac.uk or write a message on the Facebook page: **'Humanities Students at UoK'**. Please also 'like' this page to receive regular updates on what is happening in the Faculty.



Christopher Munroe

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American Studies School Rep

Hi I'm Chris Munroe, and I was elected as your School Representative for American Studies this year!

I'm a second year student, a mentor and I am also a second year course rep. I believe the Centre is fantastic and as American Studies students we are in a unique position because of the interdisciplinary nature of the course. In this

regard course reps are essential and as school rep I will work hard this year to emphasize the importance of course reps to your academic life.

This year I hope to set up a year abroad guide with the help of 4th years who have just returned from their year in the states. I am looking forward to working together with all

the American Studies course reps to continue the invaluable support that the department offers.

If you have any issues with the course then please do not hesitate to contact me and I can point you in the right direction.

Architecture School Rep

I am currently a third year Architecture student. Architecture is an exciting yet demanding course.

At the moment the Architecture School has a great sense of community and I want to ensure this remains.

Work is stressful, and I am keen that people are comfortable to raise any issues.

I will strive to make sure they are sorted as quickly as possible. Anything that relieves the stress of work and keeps morale high is a good thing!



Louise Billingham

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Arts School Rep

Hello,

I'm Carly and I am a fourth year MDrama student. As School of Arts Rep I will represent you and your views.

This year I want to push for an accessible water fountain on the ground floor of the Jarman building

which is desperately needed. I wish to build stronger relationships between students within different disciplines so that we are aware and appreciative of each others work.

My biggest aim is to promote employability opportunities within the

school, especially during the current climate and impending financial cuts to arts.

I am excited for the year ahead and I look forward to representing you for the rest of this year!

Carly



Carly Anderson

cea8@kent.ac.uk

English School Rep

Hi, my name is Sam Kessler and I'm the student representative for the school of English. I do English and American Literature with Creative Writing and am also the third year Creative Writing rep.

It's my first year being a school rep, or a course rep for that matter but I have already been trying to improve the course My main plan for the year is to start talks and lectures to help English students find a direc-

tion for when they finish their course.

As it's my final year at Kent and I'm not planning to do a masters as of yet, it seems to me that there are a huge amount of options English students could take, which is why many students even at this stage aren't completely clear what they want to do. I want to change this by following the school of History's lead and implementing an Alumni day where previous

students can come and give talks about how they got their jobs and how their course applies to what they are doing, as well as things like CV workshops specifically for English students.

Any English students, feel free to email me any issues or problems you have with the course or just with university in general and I will try to help you as much as you can.



Sam Kessler

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Emily Dennis

ed80@kent.ac.uk

History School Rep

Hi, my name is Emily and I am the representative for the School of History, and I am also the third year History course rep and the President of the History Society.

I have been a course rep since my first year and was the School representative for History last year as well, and I feel really passionately about the relationship between stu-

dents, their representatives and their department.

During this academic year I hope to work on all the work I have been doing over the past two years which is working closely with Lauren and Laura and the other reps to bring a greater conversation between students and their reps to make sure they are getting the education and the

change that they are looking for.

I am also helping to organise events combining the History Society, the School of History and the reps and students.

SECL School Rep

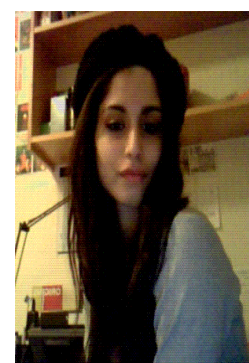
Hello everyone, my name is Priyanka Sinha. I am in my first year of English Language and Linguistics. I am a course representative for my year as well as the school representative for SECL.

This is my first time as a representative for anything and would like to

give it my best. Since this is a very large school, it would be nice to see more interaction between SECL course reps from different years. Also I would like to make other students aware of who they can contact if they have problems of any kind. I'm interested in

finding out what people think about their courses and to get their opinion on various issues such as the availability of library resources, feedback sessions and so on.

Email me with your comments or questions and I'll try my best to help you out :)



Priyanka Sinha

ps323@kent.ac.uk

News

National Demo 10.11.10

I went to the National Demo in London with 500 other students from Kent and protested peacefully against the rise in tuition fees. It was great to be with over 50,000 students, united and showing the Government that we don't agree with tuition fees going up to around £9,000.

The vote in Parliament takes place this Thursday, 9th December.

National Course Rep Conference 2010, Birmingham

Despite the snow problems, Lauren Crowley, creative writing rep Sam and I managed to get to Birmingham on Tuesday 30th November. It took us 7 hours to get there and 5 to get back to Canterbury but I am really pleased to say it was worth it! The sessions we attended were really

useful and have certainly given me some ideas of what I would like to work on next term.

Kent Union AGM

The AGM took place on Tuesday 16th November. Aaron Porter and our Vice-Chancellor attended and spoke about the rise in tuition fees. A number of motions were also put forward and voted on and the outcomes will be ratified at the next Union Council meeting.

Module Evaluation

The end of term is approaching and we will soon be completing module evaluation forms. For some subjects, this is being piloted as an online form. I urge all of you to be honest and complete these forms and fully as possible so that schools get accurate feedback on the modules they are

delivering.

National Student Survey 2011

Spring term will see the return of the National Student Survey which all finalists are invited to complete. The results are taken very seriously by the university. It gives students the chance to feedback what they liked and didn't like about their course.

Essay Feedback

Currently being trialed in the faculty is essay feedback, a one-to-one session with your lecturer to discuss your essay. Next term I will be collating feedback on how this was carried out across the Faculty. However, feel free to send me an email with your opinion on this new initiative.

Next issue: Questions for a member of university staff. Look out for an email with more details next term!

VACANCIES!!! There are still a few vacant course rep positions. An email will be sent out this week so please email ljb44@kent.ac.uk if you would like to get involved!