

Union President – Oliver Murray

Area of work: Student Experience	
Sabbatical Plan Goal	Details
Goal 1: Improve safety on and off campus through collaborative projects	<p>Work so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Formed a working group with our Lettings Team and UoS Residences Team to evaluate developing a new housing accreditation system or fix SASSH Preliminary conversations with SUSU COO about addressing tenancy gaps with plans to presently proceed with an event the night of June 30th Contact established with UoS health and safety team to begin investigating AED provision on campus as well as distribution of trauma kits Discussion of security app business case with Security Services Team AED placed in B46 (Physics) to address spatial gap in provision Agreement with the University to employ an additional member of staff to improve/monitor the SASSH accreditation system to improve student quality Establishing monthly meetings with University's VP Operations (COO) to discuss infrastructure on campus and its role in keeping students safe Student and Advice Centre consultation on June 30th tenancy gaps to inform concrete plans Working group established with SUSU COO, SUSU Head of Advice & Lettings, and I for the 'Big Night In' to address tenancy gap issues
	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Security Services Team on security app business case following completion of procurement – to be included in handovers to Union President and VP Welfare & Community Continued conversations with University's VP Operations – formalised for next Union President's term SUSU representative included in University Gold Command emergency meetings – to be discussed later this month in monthly with VP Operations Final planning and implementation of 'Big Night In' – weekly meetings
Goal 2: Enhance engagement and representation at halls and campuses	<p>Work so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sites strategic group formation led by Director of Marketing and Events Induction of Boldrewood and NOCS Officers – investigating inclusion at sites and the usage of common spaces Discussion with Representation Team about individual Halls representation Weekly visits with Sabbatical Officer team rotating through Avenue, NOCS, WSA, and Sir James Matthew sites to conduct surveys, advertise events, and assist staff teams Met with the University of Southampton Malaysia Students' Association to discuss how we can help improve student experience at their campus, monthly meetings organised with Head of Activities, VP Activities, and I moving forwards Halls Officer include in the Halls Experience Board Work alongside University's Student Engagement Team and Halls Officer to improve events in halls NOCS Officer included in Estates planning group Upgrades to NOCS common room including enhanced extracurriculars

	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of Halls Officer and Sites Officer roles to students based at these locations – include in handover for when these roles are elected to work with the University and SUSU Marketing Team to produce and place graphics • Implementation of feedback gathering systems at sites – for discussion with Sites Working Group over the next few weeks
Goal 3: Work with the University to improve alumni services and support available	<p>Work so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Met with Library Services to discuss alumni room • Collaborated with UoS Director of Careers, Employability, and Social Enterprise to inform new Employability Action Plan focused on aiding alumni in the transition out of education and into the workforce • Agreed to work with ODAR’s Graduate Ambassadors to determine fund allocations • Discussion with Director of Careers, Employability, and Student Enterprise about further measures to support students leaving University into market
	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalisation of ODAR data findings to inform decisions moving forwards – data still being gathered, to be included in handover • Catchup with new Director of Library and Learning Services about alumni room – this project is currently on hold until above data is gathered
Goal 4: Implement Social enterprise projects to aid students in the cost-of-living crisis	<p>Work so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduction in The Shop meal deal price from £3.99 to a competitive £3.75 • Pushed for prioritisation of a student, volunteer, and staff loyalty system • Spoke to members of the UoS Executive about food collection/donation, playing a role in the UoS catering food donation for ‘SUSU Food For All’ • Doubled volume of food available in our foodbank by switching to more efficient purchasing system • Implementation of free food from the NOCS café on Wednesdays and Fridays that was previously designated as food waste
	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalisation of loyalty system app development for implementation – IT issues has delayed significantly, project to be included in handover
Area of work: Leading the Students’ Union	
Sabbatical Plan Goal	Details
Goal 1: Work diligently as Chair of the Trustee Board to influence and enact organisational change	<p>Work so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Successful recruitment of a new CEO • Vigilant attendance of SLT meetings • Appointment of a new Deputy Chair of the Trustee Board • Secured reprioritisation of Building 42 renovation as it nears end of lifespan • Chairing of Audit & Risk and Finance & Resources Trustee Board subcommittees • Implemented fortnightly updates for Sabbatical Officer team to inform students • Review and completion of CEO probation objectives • Received timeline of university estates work with SUSU refurbishment set for the third quarter of 2027 – immediate concerns and upgrades shared with the University’s Executive Director of Estates & Facilities • Fortnightly meetings established with Deputy Chair, CEO, and I to discuss governance and organisational concerns/priorities • In collaboration with CEO and COO negotiated an additional uplift of approximately £500k to SUSU block grant (75% for increased utilities 25% to increase clubs/socs grant funding)

	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further recruitment of two new External Trustees following insufficient applications over the past few months. Moving to a focused approach with CEO reaching out to contacts in our local area due to established relationships. As Chair I will aid in the selection process of applicants • Early planning and conceptualisation of what a SUSU refurbishment would look like – to be included in handover documentation to next Union President • Conducting Democracy review of our elected positions and how we can refine and shape roles so that they can function more effectively – initial meeting on May 30th to discuss, bulk of work to be included in handover
<p>Goal 2: Develop collaborative relationships with members of the University Executive</p>	<p>Work so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established regular meetings with members of the UoS Executive in addition to meetings with members of University Council to ensure that student voice can be heard University-wide • Through relationships at University Council, with the backdrop of the Council Effectiveness Review, I have pushed for increased direct student representation which has been met with positive attitudes. Nominations Committee will be discussing this in the coming months with likely implementation the next academic year • Monthly meetings established with Vice-Chair of University Council to discuss Council, Nominations Committee, and Remuneration Committee papers and general strategic objectives of the university – formalised going past my term • Further established relationships with other members of the University that we have not formed contact in the past such as the Director of Catering and Head of Public Affairs so that student voice is heard across the University • Expand relationship building to include additional members of UoS Executive and relevant members of staff
	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include key contacts in handover document to next Union President and ensure that meetings are established during handover week commencing 26/06
<p>Goal 3: Enhance the transparency of SUSU and the University</p>	<p>Work so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begun conversations about regular panels for both SLT and members of UoS Executive so that students can pre-submit and directly ask questions to remove ‘faceless’ elements that have long surrounded these positions • Held University Q&A Panel on the 30th of January with minor attendance but useful conversations that proved beneficial to students present • Received feedback that fortnightly updates from Sabbatical Officer team give students a greater sense of work that SUSU is conducting • Concluded that due to lack of interest, and no further concerns expressed by students, that this goal did not need to be progressed
	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include in handover to next Union President experience with this objective and any advice that may inform future decisions in this area
<p>Goal 4: Effectively manage and further build upon external stakeholder relations</p>	<p>Work so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attended Russell Group Students’ Unions residentials and online meeting series • Developed partnerships with Sabbatical Officers from RGSU to share best practice and address issues jointly • Successfully pushed for establishment of Russell Group Students’ Union committee to lead the organisation moving forwards and further improve our position nationally • Contact with local SUs (Portsmouth, Solent, and Winchester) established with one meeting conducted thus far with another one proposed for June

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships established with key members of the Southern Unions group Regular contact established with Leader of the City Council
	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with Solent Sabbatical Officers about doing a joint approach to regular meetings with the City Council to represent the whole student body in our city – placeholder meetings placed in diary for end of May Form ties with local businesses – SUSU Business Development Manager working on this point in form of a local businesses fair in October Include in handover the need to reach out to local SUs much sooner
Area of work: Sustainability	
Sabbatical Plan Goal	Details
Goal 1: Increase the visibility of sustainability related projects, initiatives, and goals	<p>Work so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigation of publishing emissions and green energy production data Work with our Digital Team on updating the sustainability section of our website Facilitating discussion at student co-design panel on the 9th of February about sustainability at the University Collaboration with City Council on recycling schemes in the city as well as raising awareness of proper waste disposal methods Discussion around food wastage in University venues and donations methods Data from University venues on weekend food disposal to be collected and an action plan to be drafted to address these issues NOCs Food Wastage essentially halted with student food redistribution in place – other sites determined not to produce significant wastage on average rate Discussion of sustainable policies for all business partners that we work with, this will include the banning of all flyers for this next academic year and discounts/prioritisation for partners that meet sustainability goals <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enacting transparent publication of UoS emissions and green energy production – continued conversations for next Union President and Head of Sustainability
Goal 2: Empower students to make sustainable changes	<p>Work so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of new Sustainability Faculty Representative (SFRs) roles Successful recruitment and induction of all five SFRs Sustainability Officer invited to UoS Sustainability Implementation Group Planning of Blackout, Waste Wars, and Swap Shop events Discussion with UoS Executive about establishment of allotments and the utilisation of Campus Collective as indicator of student interest in concept. Currently in process of collecting materials to begin construction by Glen Eyre. Recruitment of FSS SFR to the University’s Investment Committee to push for finances to be allocated to sustainable funds Monthly meetings with SFRs and Sustainability Officer Pre-planning of Sustainability Week (commencing 23rd of April) Implementation of Blackout event Student consultation on Sustainability Week with relevant societies and officers Sustainability launched successfully with positive student feedback <p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Liaise with Campus Collective about usage and present details to UoS – lack of engagement from Campus Collective, further efforts to be included in handover

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examine options for implementation of SUSU grown produce over coming weeks on VegOut (next to Plant Pot) balconies • Collaboration with School of Environmental Science to launch Meliora event showcasing student produced work centred around making sustainable impacts • Involvement of students in formation of SUSU Sustainability strategy for production in the next academic year
Goal 3: Draft and implement a SUSU Sustainability Strategy	<p>Work so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drafted the Head of Sustainability role description alongside the CEO • Plans in place for Head of Sustainability interviews on the 17th of February with shortlisting complete • Recruitment of the Head of Sustainability role and induction of staff member completed with formalised relationships established with university and external partners
	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full audit of SUSU’s waste, emissions, supply chain, and energy usage to determine benchmarks to develop strategy KPIs – handover to next Union President • Compilation of data into coherent document for strategic implementation alongside student consultation – handover to next Union President
Goal 4: Examine and amend University and City Council strategic plans to thoroughly embed sustainability	<p>Work so far:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular catchups with UoS Estates and Transport teams to identify areas for strategic improvement surrounding Passivhaus principles, green energy production, electricity saving schemes, recycling, and transportation
	<p>Next steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thorough examination of City Council strategy and establishment of contact to discuss alongside Solent in the future – placeholders meetings in coming weeks to begin this discussion, information to be included in handover

Other

With the end of my Sabbatical Officer term in sight, I felt it would be valuable to Senate members to include information about what the last few pieces of work I have left in office to conduct in addition to business-as-usual activities and work contained within this report.

The Southampton City Council local elections were held on the 4th of May. SUSU worked to push student voter registration and raise awareness of voter ID requirements through our ‘Use Your Voice’ campaign, gaining significant media attention from both BBC Radio Solent and BBC Politics South. Whilst data hasn’t been published yet, it can be expected that despite efforts by both SUSU and the University, registration and turnout amongst young/student voters will be disproportionately low due to a range of factors. To address this, I will be lobbying the University to return to the Opt-Out voter registration system that automatically registers students when they enrol, significantly increasing the number of student voters. Further, past my tenure, I will be working with the Public Affairs team at the University to begin planning communications and engagement for the next general election.

Two weeks ago, I interviewed five different bidding companies for the university’s laundry tender. A requirement I negotiated within this tender is that machines must operate free at point of use via payment included in the price of rent. With this bulk purchasing system, the price to use machines will significantly decrease to approximately £2/week, addressing an issue that has been present at the University for decades. The tender process is still being finalised with ongoing evaluation of score matrices by two other panellists and I to award the bid. Despite this

work yet to be concluded, I am confident that no matter the provider deemed successful, this will serve as a massive win for students, saving millions of pounds over the course of the contract.

Finally, as alluded to at the start of my report, I am finalising work on the 'Big Night In' project to provide students with a free and safe place to stay for the night of June 30th between tenancies. Planning is ongoing with this piece of work, but based on information gathered from the Advice Centre, there is a moderate level of demand amongst the student population for this to be put in place. I look forward to seeing the true scale of impact this project will have!

Glossary

- SASSH = Southampton Accreditation Scheme for Student Housing
- ODAR = Office of Development and Alumni Relations
- UoS = University of Southampton
- SLT = Senior Leadership Team
- KPI = Key Performance Indicator
- FSS = Faculty of Social Science
- Passivhaus principles = No thermal bridging, superior windows, mechanical ventilation with heat recovery, quality insulation, and airtight construction