

**MINUTES OF THE  
EASTER 2016 TERMLY GENERAL MEETING OF THE  
DARWIN COLLEGE STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION (DCSA)**

Held in the  
Common Room  
Darwin College Cambridge



On Tuesday  
31<sup>st</sup> May 2016  
at 20.00

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

The chairperson, Stephanie Ashenden (DCSA President), called the meeting to order at 20:08. The DCSA Secretary, Elaine Gray, recorded the minutes of the proceedings.

**II. CERTIFICATION OF NOTICE AND QUORUM**

Approximately 25 students were in attendance at any given time during the General Meeting. The quorum of 50 fee-paying students (10% of fee-paying Darwin students) was not reached.

**III. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES**

The minutes of the Lent 2016 Termly General Meeting, held on 15th February 2016, were approved with no amendments.

**IV. MATTERS ARISING**

Stephanie read out an email she had received about the David Mackay Memorial Fund to make the students aware of an upcoming event.

## V. MOTION II

*Text of the motion:*

**“To review the annual process of kitchen equipment removal”**

“In recent years, kitchen equipment including pots/pans and crockery have been removed over the summer break from student accommodation kitchens and donated to charity. Although this is a honourable endeavour, it often occurs without the knowledge of current students, resulting in loss of their property. In addition, incoming Darwinians arrive with an additional financial and logistical burden of having to acquire new equipment unexpectedly.

We propose that this process be reviewed. We recommend that students are notified and given the choice to actively donate items to charity or incoming students.”

Proposer: Maximilian Stammnitz (mrs72)

Secunder: Michelle Cooper (mlc74)

*Discussion of the motion:*

The proposer, Max, summarised the issues leading to the motion, mainly that there is a problem with items disappearing from students' kitchens, including crockery and electrical equipment. Max has already spoken with the Domestic Bursar about this issue.

Q1. *Is there a safety issue if items are not PAT tested?*

A1. *Yes there is.*

Comment: *College probably don't want a large accumulation of items left behind by students.*

*There could be boxes in students' kitchens – one box to put things in to donate to charity and one box for things to be PAT tested / kept.*

Comment: *College already tests equipment.*

Comment: *But only at the beginning of the year.*

Comment: *If items are not PAT tested then college can remove them.*

Q2. *Who will co-ordinate this?*

A2. *The Domestic Bursar in conjunction with the Accommodation Office.*

***Call to vote made at 20.14:***

**“All in favour to review the annual process of kitchen equipment removal?”**

**25 in favour**

**0 against**

**0 abstained**

## VI. MOTION III

*Text of the motion:*

### **“Institution of full-time Academic Tutor”**

“While studying in Cambridge can be an enriching experience, it also presents a high-pressured academic environment, with a tendency to exacerbate academic and personal difficulties, as well as a broad range of mental and somatic complications - as it has been widely recognized not only by the CUSU and the GU, but also by the DRC, the Counselling Service and the University itself. These difficulties are the more frequent among more vulnerable student groups, such as the LGBT community, people of colour, people with disabilities, and those coming from very different cultural backgrounds.

As a Graduate College, Darwin should offer, besides the academic and general support to its students, a supporting structure directed at the specific needs of more vulnerable graduate students. Having a large number of students, many of whom only spend one year in Cambridge, Darwin College should provide closer support to those who need it, making sure that every student’s particular situation is taking into account. There is thus the need for support besides that provided by the bodies responsible for the admission and registration of students, as well as the general management of the students’ practical needs. This should include opportunities for students to discuss academic difficulties, e.g. in dealing with their supervisor or the unfamiliar culture in their department or laboratory, and with general academic skills such as writing.

We are aware that the Darwin’s Deanery is being restructured, and that tutors will be hired to consult with students. We fully support these changes. However, we feel that a few meetings across the year might not be enough for some students, especially those more vulnerable. As is the case in other colleges, a fully employed Tutor, available to assist more frequently and on more personal basis, would go a long way in solving this problem.

The DCSA will suggest, support and pressure for the appointment, by the College, of an Academic Tutor. Their role would be to support students in need of closer help regarding the complicated relations between personal life, academic work and the general adaptation to Cambridge, having in account the specificities of each case.”

Proposer: Pedro Feijo (padmf2)

Secunder: Lesley Steinitz (lh435)

*Discussion of the motion:*

The proposer, Pedro, explained the reasons for the motion: the College is considering reorganising the structure of the Deanery to separate the administrative side of the

Deanery from tutors, who will support students through their time at Darwin. The current Deanery does not fulfil this task and is not capable of helping students with their personal life. The College will hire Darwin Fellows part-time to act as tutors to meet with students twice a year. The proposer feels a full time tutor would be more beneficial and is needed for people who need extra help, such as those with mental health issues. It would be better to have a tutor who is not involved with the bureaucratic side of college and is just there solely for students.

The President, Stephanie, stated the Dean is the full time Graduate Tutor. She explained the new Deanery structure and that new students will be allocated to tutors/Deans and continuing students will be allocated to the Dean and all will always be available to meet with students. She stated that the College would not be able to bring in another Dean.

Q1. *Each department is different, which may account for some of the problems students have.*

A1. *There are already subject specific people in College students can visit.*

Q2. *Do any other colleges have full time tutor?*

A2. *Some do.*

Q3. *Will all students meet their tutor three times a year – they might not want to?*

Comment: *College will try to keep tutors subject specific.*

Comment: *A full time graduate tutor – the Dean – is always here and you can see him any time.*

Q4. *What is the difference between the motion and new structure being implemented?*

A4. *Tutors need to be hired for their tutoring skills, not based on their academic merit. Their sole job would be to support the students with more difficulties. It does not exclude the possibility of also hiring part-time tutors, i.e., it is not compatible with what the Deanery is proposing.*

Comment: *At a previous university there was a similar system as the new one it worked very well.*

Q5. *How can one full time tutor meet everyone at the start of year?*

A5. *The motion does not state this – the motion would adopt some parts of the plan that is to be implemented – it is that a full-time tutor dedicated to students would compliment this.*

Comment: *DCSA should push for recommending what they want the tutors to be like.*

Comment: *The process for new students needs to be crystal clear.*

Comment: *If the new format does not work then the DCSA will feed this back to college.*

Comment: *We need the tutors to be capable of dealing with welfare issues.*

Comment: *The new system means that not everyone goes to the Dean with their problems - the work is spread between several people.*

Summation speech:

*The motion is not to change everything. A full-time academic tutor could never be there for everyone. There is some concern with hiring Fellows to look after students – we don't want Fellows as tutors because they are here for their academic formation and not because they are tutors. We want tutors who can be there for welfare and academic formation.*

Comment: *Tutors need to be more approachable.*

Comment: *Cannot generalise that all Deans/academics are unapproachable.*

Comment: *Doesn't matter what position the tutor is and who does it, we just need people who care about the students.*

**Call to vote made at 20.35:**

**“All in favour of the institution of a full-time Academic Tutor”**

**9 in favour**

**5 against**

**11 abstained**

Following the vote the DCSA President and Secretary stated that they will put the proposer and seconder of the motion in touch with the new Dean who will be starting in time for Michaelmas term, Duncan Needham.

## **VII. MOTION I**

The Proposer of the motion, Michelle, was unable to attend the GM due to extenuating circumstances. Normally the DCSA would not allow the motion to be discussed by someone other than the Proposer, but the President and Secretary discussed this and agreed it would be allowed this time if the Secunder agreed to speak on the matter.

*Text of the motion:*

**“To effectively facilitate food waste composting in all student accommodation across Darwin College”**

“Under the leadership of our Catering Manager Ivan Higney, Darwin College has made significant steps towards reducing food waste and facilitating composting in the buttry. Over time, this has a significant impact on reducing waste to landfill and supports natural cycles. The residents at 10 Barton Rd have initiated a food composting system in their large kitchen, with the voluntary assistance of individual cleaning staff. Over a short 4 week data collection period (carried out in November 2015) the composting bins collected just over 5kg of food waste which was diverted from traditional bins and composted through the council's food waste program. This is a significant figure for the 7 students using this kitchen and highlights the impact Darwin College could have if scaled across all accommodation. (Note that composting in this kitchen has continued since this date).

As leaders committed to reducing our environmental impact, we believe that student accommodation composting is essential. We aim to create a similar shift in composting as was achieved for recycling – now a social norm. This would require support from cleaning staff to empty compost bins as part of their regular rounds and a solid communication campaign to communicate the environmental benefits of composting. It is hoped that this initiative will support life long behaviour change for students who take up composting in Darwin accommodation, thus increasing our impact and identifying Darwin as a leader in environmental stewardship.”

Proposer: Michelle Cooper (mlc74)

Secunder: Maximilian Stammnitz (mrs72)

*Discussion of the motion:*

The motion was briefly discussed by the seconder, Max, who stated they had spoken with the Domestic Bursar and the Clerk of Works about the matter. The idea is to implement a way for students to dispose of food waste for composting. Some of Darwin’s accommodation already has composting bins and these are used by the gardeners. Students can request the bins. There will be a monetary benefit to college, as the Clerk of Works reported that many students drain compost down the sink, blocking it, which means they need to be regularly cleaned/replace parts.

Q1. *Who collects the compost?*

A1. *Cleaners.*

A1. *The process will probably start slowly with a trustworthy student taking charge in a few particularly suitable accommodations.*

Q2. *Do we have the bins?*

A2. *We can request small bins for kitchens, however most houses on campus site (e.g. Newnham Terraces, Rayne Building) lack the large green composting bin to gather these wastes.*

A2. *We need to educate people on what can be recycled.*

A2. *Could have the Green Officer promoting this.*

Comment: *During Freshers’ week we could have someone from Housekeeping/Green Committee telling people what can/cannot be recycled/composted.*

**Call to vote made at 20.43:**

**“All in favour of facilitating food waste composting in all student accommodation across Darwin College”**

**25 in favour**

**0 against**

**0 abstained**

## **VIII. ELECTION HUSTINGS**

Each candidate was invited to give a short speech and answer questions from those in attendance.

Candidates were invited to speak in the following order:

**Position: Treasurer**

Stefan Winzeck

Stefan was unable to make it to the meeting, but Stephanie read something out on his behalf and he answered questions via email during the meeting.

**Position: Sports Officer**

James Liley

James was unable to make it to the meeting, but Stephanie read something out on his behalf and he answered questions via email during the meeting.

**Position: President**

Elaine Gray

**Position: Secretary**

Thea Precht

**Position: Admiral of the Punts**

Michael Gale

**Position: Women's Welfare Officer**

Stephanie stated that a manifesto submitted for this role was withdrawn.

Hannah Jongsma

**Position: Men's Welfare Officer**

Andrej Turk

**Position: Entertainment Officer**

Alex Casalis de Pury

**Position: College Council Representative (2 positions)**

Isak Herman

Ariana Phillips

Stephanie stated that re-open nominations (RON) would also be available during voting for the position of College Council Representative.

## **IX. AOB**

Online voting opens Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> June 5.00 and closes Saturday 4th 00.00.

**X. ADJOURNMENT**

There being no other business, the meeting was adjourned by Stephanie (President) at 21.29.

*The foregoing minutes were approved by the DCSA Executive Committee on \_\_\_\_\_.*

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*Stephanie Ashenden  
Chairman, DCSA President*

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*Elaine Gray  
Secretary, DCSA Secretary*