



Open University
Students Association
Frankfurt Branch

Minutes of Annual General Meeting **28th January 2006 at 14.15 hrs**

<u>Present:</u>	David Baker	Ian Megraw (Social Officer)
	Liam Bruton	Joachim Meyn (Chair)
	Gloria Campell	Nsuh Ngafor
	Krystyna Cullinane	Kimberley Poppitt
	Özgür Derman	Peggy Preciado
	Hans Finch	Peter Schomakers
	Matt Hart	Sylvia Siegler
	Mike Hisham	Daniel Stadtmüller
	David Hollingbery	Anette Theobald
	Tina Keil (Treasurer)	Beverley Tkalcec (Secretary)
	Cora Langnau	Ben Ugwu
	Faustina Madukanya	Deborah Welb

The meeting was opened at 14.00 hrs by the Chair (Joachim Meyn) who welcomed all members.

TOP 1: Report of the Officers:

Chair: Joachim introduced OUSA to all new students, informed about the advantages of having a student card and explained how to obtain one. OUSA cards could be obtained directly by Joachim after the AGM. ISIC cards (which are more recognized internationally) can be obtained by contacting the ISIC website (www.isic.de) and sending a copy of your student academic, a photo and 10 Euros. He also thanked Tina for setting up and monitoring the OUSA-Frankfurt website.

Treasurer: Tina that no grant had been paid to OUSA Frankfurt this year because we had not spent the last two years' grant. However, this year some money has been spent on the OUSA-Frankfurt website and and AGM arrangements, therefore, the current balance in our account is UKP 111.44.

NERF: In the absence of our present NERF (Northern Europe Regional Forum) representative, Bernard Haupt, Beverley outlined briefly the functions of NERF. Responsible for all northern Europe OUSA branches, NERF acts as the centralized information and support resource both from OUSA to the branches and vice versa. It holds regular on-line meetings to which all branch NERF delegates attend and during which any matters, problems, suggestions are aired and information is passed on to the branches.

TOP 2: Frankfurt' Motions to Conference

Beverley presented the ten motions prepared for submission by the Frankfurt branch to this year's OUSA conference in April as follows:

1. This Association asks that short courses could also be paid via OUSBA. This is especially relevant to overseas students, who have to pay much higher fees. At the moment, short



courses have to be paid in advance and cannot be paid via the OUSBA account.

2. This Association proposes that those certificates that can be gained by completing a number of short courses (e.g. Certificate in Web Applications Development) be offered alternatively as a tutored course.
3. Although this Association recognizes the efforts the OU has made recently to improve exam feedback, it is still felt by many to be unsatisfactory. This Association asks that the feedback given be more personal and related to the students own performance or weaknesses in a more detailed manner.
4. This Association calls for the fees for overseas students to be reduced and more financial pressure (or stricter ruling) to be imposed on those who drop out of courses. Overseas student fees are much more expensive than UK fees and the OU provides little or no satisfactory reason (transparency) as to why this is so. Since the OU loses the government subsidy for any UK student not turning up for the exam or not submitting the final ECA, many overseas students feel that their fees (sometimes three times as high as for UK students) are in fact subsidizing the large number of UK drop-out students.
5. This Association proposes that overseas course fees (including those in the Rep. of Ireland) be shown in Euros on the OU website and that payments in Euros be allowed, instead of having to pay in pounds (e.g. set up a Euro account).
6. This Association proposes that, upon first registration with the OU, the new student should be asked to tick a box as to whether his/her name and email address may be given to his/her local OUSA branch, so that he/she may receive information of local OUSA events.
7. This Association proposes that course material on videos and tapes be replaced by more modern electronic media, like DVDs and CDs, since nowadays many people no longer own video recorders or cassette players.
8. This Association calls upon the OU to take more account of the special difficulties often experienced by both UK and particularly overseas students in regard to the postal receipt and submission of ECAs. The ECA is posted to the student towards the end of the course with instructions to return it within a fixed number of days. However, if the ECA arrives late (because of postal delays), the student could be put at a disadvantage in that he or she has less time to complete the ECA, potentially leading to him/her failing the course. This Association proposes that ECA's be made available electronically on the closed course website so that all students can begin work on their ECA at the same time.
9. This Association proposes that CMAs be replaced by computer forms on the respective course website. Instead of using a computer-readable form (to be filled in by pencil) a computerized form with tick boxes can be used.
10. This Association proposes that (although not compulsory) TMAs may be submitted via E-Mail (eTMAs) for all courses. At the moment, those students living in areas less accessible or further away are losing much preparation time through TMA postal delivery times. In Western Europe most students have to send the TMA's off at least one week in advance to ensure timely delivery.



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TOP 3: Election of Frankfurt's delegate to OUSA conference

Faustina was proposed, seconded and unanimously elected as Frankfurt's delegate to the forthcoming OUSA conference in April. Faustina (who represented Frankfurt also at last year's conference) accepted the election.

TOP 4: Report on last year's social activities

Ian gave a brief report on the activities of last year, including study skills session and regular dinners. He also informed about the response to his questionnaire (on the Frankfurt branch website) about what activities would be desired in the Frankfurt branch and asked for further input.

TOP 5: Introduction of our Website

Tina (web designer and webmaster of the Frankfurt OUSA website) introduced the website (www.ousa-frankfurt.de) and invited all students to visit it regularly and take advantage of its links and information. She particularly drew attention to the discussion forum set up for Frankfurt branch members to discuss any views or matters accordingly.

TOP 6: What's in for 2006?

Ian further outlined the activities planned for this year ... The next Frankfurt branch dinner is planned for Saturday 4th March, venue and time to be informed in the near future. Gloria offered to bake cakes for future OUSA events, where desired.

TOP 7: Election of the officers

The following officers were all nominated, seconded, unanimously elected and accepted their positions, which they will hold for one year until the AGM in January 2007:

Chair:	Joachim Meyn,
Secretary:	Beverley Tkalcec
Treasurer:	Tina Keil
NERF representative:	Daniel Stadtmüller
Social Officer:	Ian Megraw

TOP 8: Miscellaneous

Upon request, Joachim explained a little about using FirstClass conferences and encouraged all students to use it if they can, since it is a great resource and a wealth of help and support, especially for us in Germany, who cannot get to many tutorials.

TOP 9: Student ID cards

This was covered under TOP 1 (see above).

Joachim closed the meeting officially at 15.05 hrs.

8th February 2006
Beverley Tkalcec