CVCP POLL REVEALS WIDESPREAD SUPPORT FOR EARLY START

A poll of members of the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals has shown that a clear majority of university heads are in favour of starting the academic year in early September. The Council of the CVCP has therefore decided to press for an early start to the academic year, as proposed in the recent Flowers Report.

The results of the poll were:
- 66% of those responding wished to see an early September start, if A-level results could be brought forward and the clearing process accelerated.
- 62% wished for the CVCP to press for the achievement of an early start.
- 32% said their institutions had already resolved in principle, or expressed a strong preference for, an early start.
- 34% expected their institutions to have made such a resolution by the middle of 1994.

The CVCP will now convey the results of the poll to the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Standing Conference of Principals (SCOP). Discussions will begin with HEFCE, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and other interested parties, in the near future.

Dr Kenneth Edwards, Chairman of CVCP said: "Many universities would welcome the extra flexibility which could be gained by making an early start; but the opportunity to begin teaching in September depends upon having examination results somewhat earlier than at present. We do not believe that the difficulties are insurmountable, and we shall now be exploring the idea with all those likely to be affected."

HEADING FOR THE STARS

Children from 16 schools in East and West Sussex took part in a Space Exploration Technology Masterclass held at the University last week. Dr Christine Thorburn, who has experience of space work with NASA, introduced the children to space shuttle technology, and gave them a mission to be carried out on a space shuttle simulator.

The event was part of a series of Royal Institution Masterclasses at Sussex, which are the only ones of their kind in the country. They aim to introduce schoolchildren to the types of problems they might encounter in a career in technology or engineering.

Peter Adamczyk of ICAPE, who runs the masterclasses with sponsorship from Smithkline Beecham, hailed the Space Masterclass as a great success. "The children were extremely enthusiastic," he said. "They enjoyed themselves tremendously, and learned a great deal from it."

The day was attended by the Vice-Chancellor and Professor Peter Day, the President of the Royal Institution, who were both very impressed by the children's performance.
Local Alumni

A monthly social evening for local alumni is being launched by the new ‘Sussex Club’. On every first Tuesday of the month starting next week (1 February), from 7.30 pm onwards, former Sussex students will be able to meet up in the bar of the Old Ship Hotel, in King’s Road, Brighton.

“There won’t be an agenda and we’ve no idea how the evenings will develop,” explained Alumni Officer, Sara Dyer. “The simple aim is to offer Sussex graduates an opportunity to meet up with others in the area and have a drink and a chat. We would be delighted if members of staff and mature students would also like to join us.”

In addition to the monthly social evenings, a varied programme of events is being drawn up for the 3,000 plus former students who have settled in the Brighton area. Ideas include a barbecue, cabaret evenings, guest speakers, and supper evenings in local restaurants.

Equality of Opportunity

WOULD ANYONE who intended to comment on the Equality of Opportunity statement which appeared in the Bulletin on 3 December, but has not yet done so, please send their comments to the Personnel Officer by 4 February.

Deaths

ALL MEMBERS OF MOLS were saddened to hear of the death just after Christmas of John Weeden who worked with his brother David in the Chemistry Stores. John will be remembered with gratitude for his unfailingly efficient, his kind and courteous manner and his unfailing willingness to be helpful.

DON YEATES, who retired as a porter in MOLS at the end of last year, died on 12 January 1994. He worked at the University for six years, and his cheerful and chirpy comments will be sadly missed.

We would like to offer our sympathy to both families at this very sad time.

Dr J.D. Smith
Dean of MOLS

News and People

AROUND THE SCHOOLS: COGS

COGS students have been invited to take part in a high-prestige international design project sponsored by Apple Computer, Inc., of California. The theme is to develop a learning tool which aids or increases the use of computer technology by exploiting the data highway and Internet in the educational domain; Apple have donated equipment worth $25,000 to COGS for students to use in their projects. Three interdisciplinary teams have been formed, which will spend the current term designing their tools; a student representing the most successful team will then present its project to the press and Apple staff at Cupertino, California, in July, in competition with representatives from the other institutions invited to participate. The COGS effort in the Apple competition is being co-ordinated by YVONNE ROGERS.

DAVID YOUNG and HILARY TUNLEY of COGS, in collaboration with MIKE LAND of BIOLS and Dave Lee of Edinburgh University, have been taking a Jaguar round race-tracks in the name of science. They have a research project which studies the visual control of steering, and to this end they have been measuring drivers’ eye, hand, and foot movements in a specially-adapted Jag in a variety of familiar and less familiar motorising situations.

JAN METZGER, a final-year undergraduate on the Economics and Artificial Intelligence degree scheme who counts himself as half German and half Russian, has been collaborating with a new high-tech company, Shakespeare SpeechWriter of East Grinstead, since winning a high place in summer 1993 in the Shell Technology Enterprise Programme (STEP) competition. The STEP scheme matches undergraduates with small companies and, if things go well, the company puts the student in charge of a project; at Shakespeare (which is marketing an innovative system that automates secretarial functions from taking dictation to organising files), Jan spent much of the time developing a successful program for translating German software manuals into English.

LARRY TRASK of COGS has been appointed representative of the Linguistics Association of Great Britain on the Committee for Linguistics in Education, and is to be Secretary of CLIE. PAUL HACKNEY, a Linguistics MA student, has recently completed a project to make Larry’s new book, A Dictionary of Grammatical Terms in Linguistics (Routledge 1993), available to COGS readers over the electronic network.

ALISON WHITE of COGS’ Centre for Advanced Software Applications has been organising a pioneer “Supplemental Instruction” scheme in the computer science group this academic year. Supplemental Instruction is a concept originating in America, whereby undergraduates who have already taken a course are paid to act as “mentors” in helping to teach the material to a later year’s students. Mentors receive training and initial advice from the faculty member teaching a course for which Supplemental Instruction is offered — it applies to three first-year modules this year; thereafter mentors and students wishing to use the system meet and study the material without faculty present, as a reinforcement to the faculty input via lectures and seminars. So far Supplemental Instruction is proving very popular with its student “customers”.

MAGGIE BODEN gave the keynote speech at the International Conference on Logic Programming, at Vancouver in October. She was recently included as one of a group of six scientists interviewed for a Radio 4 Eureka series about the nature of the scientific endeavour and how individuals came to be involved in it. Maggie Boden and MIKE SHARPLES have initiated a project funded by the Renaissance Trust, which will produce a multi-media version of Maggie’s book The Creative Mind.

Music makers

The first Music Breaks Free festival begins at the Gardner Centre on 6 February. Organised with the help of Dr Jonathan Cross (Chair of Music), the festival will explore the global history of music, and the way in which contemporary Western composers use the influence of non-European cultures. Artists will include pianists Joanna Macgregor and Michael Finnissy, the percussion group ‘Ensemble Bash’, and the South Bank Gamelan Players.

Last term saw the re-launch of the Sussex University Philharmonia. Jointly run by the Music Federation of the Students’ Union and the Music Faculty the orchestra draws its members from both on and off campus. Entry to the orchestra is by audition for wind players; string players of Grade 7 or above are usually accepted without audition.

The Philharmonia will perform in concert (Thursday 3 March in Mandela Hall): Brahms Symphony No 2, Weber Second Clarinet Concerto (soloist: Caroline Tullis) and the Prelude and Liebestod from Wagner’s Tristan (with soprano, Helen Stanley). Next term’s programme (auditions for singers are now being held) offers a rare and rewarding experience for any orchestral player — a chance to take part in a staged production of Stravinsky’s opera The Nightingale at the Gardner Centre in June. If you would like to become involved in the orchestra and its activities please contact Julian Johnson, ext 2171
SNiffing out environmental problems

O ccasionally we become suspicious of our deodorant’s efficiency. Rather less frequently (in this country at least) do we suspect that our Sunday joint has been adulterated with kangaroo meat. For most of us, life will pass without the need to ever put a date to an archaeological artefact. But should these situations arise, all we need is one test: Electron Spin Resonance.

It does have more serious uses. Electron Spin Resonance (ESR) has been applied to the study of ozone depletion, photochemical smog and acid rain, amongst other environmental problems. Dr Andrew Hudson, the subject chair for Environmental Science, centres his research around ESR, and has documented a fascinating range of applications.

Many environmental problems involve short-lived molecules known as free radicals, which are formed as ‘in-between’ stages in longer chemical reactions. Chemists can detect these free radicals using ESR, and can therefore monitor the reactions in which they are involved. Although no-one realised it at the time, one of the first gaseous free radicals to be detected by ESR turned out to be the most important species involved in the destruction of ozone. Now, almost thirty years later, ESR is still used in surveying the Antarctic ozone hole.

A lack of ozone high in the sky is a problem, but there is also an ozone problem nearer the ground: there is too much of it, and it is poisonous to plants and animals. Chemical reactions that occur spontaneously in sunlit polluted air create the free radicals which lead to the formation of ozone. This low-level ozone is killing forests (particularly pine forests) in central Europe and North America, and in order to guide environmental control ESR is used to regularly monitor pollution levels.

In collaborative studies with the University of Caen, Andrew Hudson has himself been examining conifer damage, and this collaboration will soon be extended into a study of kiwi fruit. He will be using ESR to investigate the damage caused to these fruits when they are grown in a controlled polluted atmosphere.

ESR testing involves putting the chemical for testing in an electromagnet, and bombarding it with microwave radiation. As the field from the magnet is increased, the amount of radiation striking a detector on the other side of the box changes, giving a signature that is characteristic of whatever is in the box.

There are innumerable chemicals that can be identified by the use of ESR. Many chemicals known to cause cancer are detectable, and the by-products of food irradiation can also be traced. But you might be forgiven for devising a simpler way of testing your deodorant’s efficiency.

New Hope of Campus Swimming Pool?

In brief

RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

For more information on any of these sources of research funding, call the Research Office on ext 3761 (Louise Vincent) or Email: louisev@admin.

RESEARCH COUNCIL GRANT APPLICATIONS in the next round will be considered by the new Councils. Make sure you know what the transitional arrangements are for your subject. School and Subject Offices should have joint Councils’ circular of 10 Jan. For most SERC subjects, the closing date of 1 March stands and SERC RG2 form (or computer-produced ERG2) should be used, but the address to which to send it varies.

BRITISH ACADEMY postdoctoral fellowships in the HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES, for outstanding younger scholars, normally aged under 30, for 3 years from October 94. Closing date 28 Feb. 94.

EHE OPPORTUNITIES

Are you a social sciences student and interested in teaching as a career?

Brighton and Hove Sixth Form College need University students to help their pupils do research for course projects and to put together study packs. This would be invaluable experience for anyone wanting to teach Social Sciences at further or higher education level. Travel expenses paid.

Do you have any experience of working with young people?

Would you like to develop your planning, organisational and fundraising skills?

WHITEHAWK COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT urgently need three students to organise a four day Easter Playscheme from 5—8 April, supervised by a Project Leader. The work is voluntary but would be invaluable for students wanting to work in the field of youth work, fundraising, publicity or community development. Could also lead to paid job in the summer. (The playscheme will only happen if student volunteers are found). Time commitment: about one afternoon a week until 8 April.

For further details of either of the above opportunities contact Tessa Gooderson, Student Enterprise Officer, Arts D422, tel: 67(8543).
Monday 31 January — Sunday 6 February

What’s on...

Lectures, Seminars, Colloquia

Monday 31 January


1pm Experimental Psychology Seminar: What’s in a Face? G. Hole, EP3.9, BIIOLS.


2pm Particle Physics Seminar: Dark Matter Searches: Progress, Future Prospects and Ideas. N. Spooner (RAL), PB2A1, MAPSI.

3pm Analysis Seminar: Spectral Properties of Higher Order Elliptic Operators. E. B. Davies (King’s College), PB2A2, MAPSI.


4.15pm Chemistry Colloquium Programme: Nuclear Power; Can We Live With It and Love It? M. H. Ford-Smith, MSLT, MOLS.

4.30pm Economics Seminar: Liquidity and Financial Intermediation. S. Kapur (Birkbeck), Arts D640.

5pm German Research Seminar: H. G. Adler and his Archive. J. Adler (London), Arts D610.

5pm European School Lectures: Chaucer and Privacy. Prof. J. Burrow (Bristol), Arts A2.

5pm Comparative Literary Theory and Philosophy Seminar: The Beyond of Beyond Japan. J. Gange, Arts A70.

Tuesday 1 February

12.30pm Mass Observation Seminar: Voices in Texts: How Writers Draw on Different Discourses at Different Stages in their Writing. R. Ivanic (Lancaster), Library Seminar Room.

3pm Sussex European Institute: Regional Integration — a Comparison of the EU and the East Asia. Prof N. Hirose (Oxford), Arts A70.

4pm COGS Seminar: Message Understanding in POETIC and MUC. L. Cahill, PB1A6, MAPSI.

4pm Algebra Seminar: Generalised Logics in the Representation of Noncommutative Rings. S. Ambler (Leicester), PB2C1, MAPSI.

4.15pm Biochemistry & Genetics and Development Seminar: The Molecular Basis of p53 Function. J. Jenkins (Marie Curie Institute, Oxted), Biological Lecture Theatre.

5pm Social Anthropology Graduate/Faculty Seminar: Brickmaking and Vote-Buying: Understanding Local Politics in Central Thailand. D. Arghirios, Arts E419.

5pm Media Studies Graduate Seminar: Sincerity and Singing on Radio. P. Scanell (Westminster), Arts A183.

Wednesday 2 February


2.15pm Music Graduate Colloquia: Analytical Strategies for Contemporary Music. R. Chrisman (Rutgers), Recital Room, Falmer House.

5pm Applied Maths & Numerical Analysis Seminar: Dynamical Systems in Infinite Dimensions. I. Kostin, PB1A3, MAPSI.

5pm History of Art Work-In-Progress Seminar: Plasterers and Plasterwork: Documenting a Sixteenth Century Profession. C. Gapper (Courtauld Institute, London), Arts B151.

Thursday 3 February

12.30pm Gender and Feminist History Seminar: Mrs Ditton Dances On Deck: Women’s Migration to Canada in the 1830s. S. Haines, Room 303 EDB.

1pm RUPAGIDS Seminar: The New Poverty Agenda and the World Bank. T. Addison (Warwick), Room 120 IDS.


5pm History Work-in-Progress Seminar: Remembering Tolpuddle: Rural History and Commemoration in the Interwar Labour Movement. C. Griffiths (Cambridge), Arts A155.

Friday 4 February

2.15pm SPRU Seminar: Conversion as a Strategy for Transition in Eastern Europe. M. Kaldor, Room 121, EDB.

4pm Chemical Physics Seminar: Conducting Polymer-Silica Nano-Composites. S. Armes and Mathematical Modelling of Gas Plasma Kinetics. P. Jenner, MS3, MOLS.

4pm Astronomy Centre Seminar: Recent Observations of the Ly-α Forest. J. Webb (IAF, France), PB1A7, MAPSI.


CCE Saturday Schools

Birds in Winter: Examination of how birds around Sussex cope with winter conditions. The Wealden Iron Industry. Focus on the technology, location, products and the people associated with the age-old industry.

Both the above £15/ reduced £10 minimum £4.

Venue: University, 12 Feb. Enrol in advance with CCE. Details from Sue Faquelle on ext. 8537.

Staff Development Workshops

Tuesday 15 Feb — Assessing Student’s Learning: Approaches and Methods. 4-6pm, Orange Room. Thur 17 Feb — Seminar Techniques: Encouraging Active Learning and Group Work. 4-6pm, Orange Room.

All who teach at Sussex welcome. Further details from Staff Development on ext. 3849/3806.

CDU Workshop Programme

Mock Interviews — Mon 7 Feb, 1-4pm

2-5pm Job Market Skills — Tue 8 Feb, 10am — 4pm

Design your C.V. — Wed 9 Feb, 10-12am

Job Search for Mature Students — Wed 9 Feb, 1-4pm

Practise Selection Tests: Financial — Thur 10 Feb, 10am-4pm

Careers in Sales, Marketing & PR — Fri 11 Feb, 10-12am

All in Falmer House and must be booked in advance (£25 returnable deposit). For further details contact the CDU on ext. 8429.

Meeting House

Recital — John Birch (organ). Tue 1 Feb, 1.15pm, Chapel.

Farm and Barn Retreat — At Mickeldean, Nuthurst, nr Horsham. £17, 2 Feb 4-6. Contact Richard Fox on 3876.

A Taste Of God — Week of guided prayer, 25 Feb — 7 Mar. Find out more on Mon 7 Feb, 7.30pm, Meeting House.

Miscellaneous

THE CHANNEL TUNNEL: Interested in the politics and organisation of a multinational project? The CDU has arranged a presentation by the Director of the Channel Tunnel High Speed Train Project, Roger Kemp (former Sussex graduate), Wed 9 Feb, 6pm, AS3 ENG. If attending please inform John Ross (CDU) on ext. 8429.

Small Ads

HOLIDAY CARAVAN TO LET in France (sleeps 4) on spectacular hillside site overlooking the Ile d’Or on the Côte d’Azur. Lovely beaches and walking, £180pp from mid-April to end Oct. Contact Sue Bullock on ext. 8361 or 68213 (evs).

FOR SALE: Large 2 bed ground floor flat in Seaford (close to beach) parking underneath. Ideal retirement home. £49,000. Contact Donna on ext 2262.

FOR SALE: Honda Civic DI Auto, 3 Door H/Back. B reg. 12 months MOT, very good condition. £1,650ono. Contact ext. 8043 (day) or 701762 (evs).

FOR SALE: Soprano Saxophone. £500. Contact 738308.

FOR SALE: Light Oak Kitchen Table. 25’ by 35’. £25. Contact Lynne on ext. 8253.

Bulletin

The Bulletin appears on Fridays with copy deadline the preceding Friday. We welcome suggestions for news, details of events, letters and small ads. Please send contributions to Pauline O’Reilly (editor), Mike Brooks (features) or Terry O’Donnell (What’s On) at the Information Office, Sussex House, ext. 8209 or Email: Bulletin@sussex.ac.uk

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