Library goes 24 hours

From Monday 7 January, the Library is testing out 24-hour opening – in a pilot that will run over the spring and summer terms.

Each week from 8.45 am when it opens its doors on a Monday until 7.30 pm on a Saturday night the Library will remain open to Sussex students and staff. Sunday opening will remain 12.30 pm to 7.30 pm.

With more than 146 hours a week, this means Sussex will have one of the longest opening hours in the whole of the 1994 Group of research-intensive universities.

Cath Morgan, Acting Librarian, stressed this is a direct response to requests by students for longer opening hours: "We want to provide students with access to library resources throughout the week – night and day. Students tell us this would be an important improvement in the Library; we are keen to see how students respond."

The new after-hours service is primarily aimed at providing study space, with access to books and electronic resources. It will also allow users to borrow and return books using self-service machines. The café space will also remain open, with vending machines. Access will be by Sussex student and staff ID card only.

The staff on duty overnight from 9.30 pm will be dedicated security staff – responsible for the health and safety of building users, but not providing advisory or issuing services.

The Library team considered different options – including extended opening only in the run-up to exam periods – but believed it would be most straightforward for users to have a common service throughout the year.

Numbers are expected to peak in the run-up to assessments and exams. The University will be looking carefully at numbers using the Library during the pilot, and at which areas and zones are most popular. A decision on whether the pilot has been successful will be made over the summer.

The Library is also now undertaking a survey of users to look at other improvements that can be made in library services.

Supporting our research students

Postgraduate research students and postdoctoral researchers will have better support from Sussex under plans approved in principle at Senate for the creation of a doctoral school.

The University's research strategy, developed in 2006-07, aims for significant growth in research activity at Sussex, and an important part of that will be achieved through increasing the number of postgraduates and postdoctoral researchers.

Professor Bob Allison, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research), will be leading the next steps in the development of the school. Speaking to Senate on 5 December, he said: "Enhancing the planning and support we provide to this vital community of scholars at Sussex will be critical if our wider strategy is to be successful."

In a changing research-funding environment – in which increased emphasis is placed on the scale of postgraduate activity and on professional skills training for research students – other leading research-intensive universities in the UK as well as overseas have successfully developed this model of leadership and support for research students and postdoctoral researchers.

The next step in the creation of the doctoral school would be to develop its precise role and focus. This could include:

- Leading University-wide initiatives to build the quality of postgraduate research, helping to maintain and develop best practice and standards;
- Providing leadership for improving generic skills training and support;
- Co-ordinating Professional Services to boost the recruitment and retention of research students;
- Working with all schools and departments on strengthening support for research students and postdoctoral researchers.

While research students would remain firmly located within their department's research activity, the doctoral school could offer a 'virtual' home to bring students together from different disciplines.

In the short term the school would not have a specific physical base, but creating a dedicated space for research students could be one of the possible options in the medium term.

The doctoral school would be supported from within the new Research and Enterprise team in the Professional Services, which arises from the Professional Services Review. A Director for that team is now being recruited, with adverts appearing today (Friday 14 December).

The Senate papers, with further details on the proposals for the development of the doctoral school, are available within the Committee's section of Sussex Direct.

Inside

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The Vice-Chancellor reflects on his first 100 days at Sussex.

4 Dedication
Two students' hard work ensures a church gets its name.

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6 Get ready
The University is gearing up for the QAA audit next year.

7 Café culture
Catering review aims for greater choice and healthier eating.
BOOKMARK

Allam Ahmed (Lecturer, SPRU) (ed.)
World Sustainable Development Outlook 2007: Knowledge management and sustainable development in the 21st century
Greenleaf Publishing, £65 (hardback)
ISBN: 9781906030320

The theme of this year’s Outlook is the different dimensions of knowledge and technology management in the new era of information revolution and how they relate to sustainable development.

Allam Ahmed (Lecturer, SPRU) (ed.)
Science, Technology and Sustainability in the Middle East and North Africa
Inderscience, £160 (hardback)
ISBN: 097776302

The objective of this first volume of a series devoted to the Middle East and North Africa is to critically examine the complex relationship between science, technology and the environment.

John Bessant (Honorary Professor) and Joe Tidd (Professor, SPRU)
Innovation and Entrepreneurship
John Wiley, £32.99 (paperback)
ISBN: 0470032693

An accessible introductory text written primarily for students of business and management studies. Contemporary issues in both innovation and entrepreneurship are used to engage and excite students, and lead them to the relevant theory, models and lessons.

Vicky Lebeau (Reader in English)
Childhood and the Cinema
Reaktion Books, £10 (paperback)
ISBN: 9781861893529

From Lolita to The Sixth Sense, the figure of the child in cinematic works has been a contested site of symbolism and controversy. Childhood and the Cinema examines how the child in film has ultimately been used to embody the anxieties and aspirations of modern life.

Brian Rappert and Catriona McLeish (Fellow, SPRU) (eds)
A Web of Prevention: Biological weapons, life sciences and the governance of research
Earthscan, £49.95 (hardback)
ISBN: 1844073734

In a world where there is widespread fear that legitimate scientific research could be used to develop weapons of mass destruction, this book examines the financial, security, health and practical issues at stake, assesses current regimes for regulating high risk scientific knowledge and proposes a ‘web of prevention’ to safeguard research and protect people.

Peter Nicholls (Professor of English and American Literature)
George Oppen and the Fate of Modernism
Oxford University Press, £55 (hardback)
ISBN: 0199218269

George Oppen is a poet who is quite rapidly coming into prominence, featured in anthologies and appearing on university curricula. This book gives a detailed account of his life and work, offering close readings of many of his poems and tracing in detail his political and philosophical ideas.

New centre to look at inequality in higher education

A new research centre on campus brings together researchers who share interests in the sociocultural and interdisciplinary aspects of higher education.

More than 70 national and local scholars, policymakers and practitioners attended the launch last month of the Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research (CHEER).

In her welcome, CHEER’s director, Professor Louise Morley, argued that current policy debates in the UK and in the wider international policy community frequently equate and reduce equity to quantitative change e.g. counting more students into higher education.

She said: “There is limited theorisation of how wider systems of power operate and the cultures that they generate to promote or impede inclusion.”

Louise also suggested: “Commentary on higher education is frequently constrained by the imperative to critique existing structures. Sociologists of higher education have to spend a lot of time saying what they don’t like, rather than envisioning new models.”

In his keynote address, Professor Sir David Watson (former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Brighton and currently Professor of Higher Education Management at the Institute of Education) focused on the ethical responsibilities of universities.

“The value of higher education is that others do not have it,” he said, “and this ethic can promote elitism and impede equity.”

He was critical of some of the over-used concepts in higher education policy such as ‘excellence’ and ‘meritocracy’, and posed some challenging questions about whether the pressures on universities mean that their reputation for probity and virtue is in the process of deconstruction or rapid deterioration.

CHEER has expertise in particular structures of inequality, e.g. gender, social class and disability, and on how they intersect.

Its activities will include research, publications, consultancy, developing theory and contributing to policy.

For further information, see www.sussex.ac.uk/education/cheer

Stocking up on ideas

Wise men and women: Perfect partners were paired up at a ‘Christmas stocking’ event on campus on Tuesday (11 December), in order to create exciting new research projects for 2008. More than 250 academics attended the event, which aimed to encourage collaboration between researchers in different departments.
Sussex makes a surplus

The University has been able to report continued good progress towards its target to achieve at least a 4% surplus each year on turnover by 2010–11. This planned surplus is required to give the University capacity for investment in its strategic priorities.

The University’s Treasurer and independent member of Council, Consuelo Brooke, reported to Council in November that this is the first time since the last Research Assessment Exercise (RAE), in 2001, that Sussex has published an operational surplus.

In her report, Consuelo made clear this is a significant achievement, coming one year earlier than originally planned, and she congratulated staff throughout the organisation who have made such a result possible.

However, she advised that the University has to be realistic about the increasingly competitive higher education context and ensure it takes advantage of future opportunities for growth.

In the financial year ending July 2007, the University achieved an operational surplus of over £4 million. Leaving aside finances for the Medical School, total income rose by 10% to £120 million, with the major increase – some £4.5 million extra – relating to the fee arrangements for home and EU undergraduates that first came into effect in October 2006.

Income from research contracts rose by 6% – although much of the increase was accounted for by inflation and by the recent national initiatives to fund research at its full economic cost and to devolve funding for doctoral training to individual universities. Income from international students has remained static year on year.

The latest forecast for 2007–08 also shows a surplus of some £1.5m – although this is less than originally planned, mainly due to the growth in international student numbers for autumn 2007 not being as strong as had been originally aimed for.

Director of Finance, Allan Spencer, said that overall the efforts by staff to focus on generating income from research and growing student numbers, as well as sensible planning and controlling costs, are continuing to give Sussex a stronger financial base.

But the finances demonstrate the need for ambitious plans to deliver step change in activity in specific areas if the University is to make the financial head room to make significant academic investment and cope with a more volatile higher education context.

Council papers details on the outturn for 2006–07 and the forecasts for 2007–08 are available on the ‘Committees’ pages of Sussex Direct.

My first 100 days

I’ve been at Sussex now for 100 days – a good time to reflect on some achievements so far.

Planning the future: For me, an early priority was the establishment of a robust process for planning our future, which DVC Paul Layzell and his team have been driving forward.

I have particularly valued the many face-to-face meetings that have taken place during the last few months and the multitude of helpful and positive comments received through the ‘questions and ambition’ consultation – which encourages me that Sussex is indeed ready for “step change”.

I was pleased that my first Council and Senate meetings also supported processes to refine the nature and content of the proposed Sussex research themes and to identify innovations in our approach to teaching and learning, which Bob Allison (PVC Research) and Joanne Wright (PVC Education) are now working on with groups of staff. If you have ideas as to how we move these agendas forward, please get involved and directly influence Sussex’s future.

Growth: I am keen that we should achieve significant growth through this planning process, both in student numbers and income from research grants and contracts. We shall be paying particular attention to the development of programmes that will attract undergraduate and postgraduate students from overseas.

In strengthening our postgraduate research offerings, innovative developments such as the doctoral school should help to ensure consistency of support across the University and provide new opportunities for academic and social interaction.

Campus development: I believe we will need to move ahead quickly with development to ensure that we have adequate high-quality student accommodation, that the Library and other learning resources can be used flexibly and are appropriate to take us forward in this 21st century, and that the social environment for students and staff is among the best on offer.

One complaint that has come to me directly from all parts of the campus is the lack of good-quality social and eating space. I was pleased that the plans for catering, developed under the leadership of the Registrar, were generally well received by staff and students who attended the recent open meetings. I hope that we will be able to provide excellent facilities for staff and students throughout the working day, and in the evenings and during weekends.

Partnerships: I have been talking to a number of important partners in Brighton and the wider south-east region. Sussex’s future will depend on having both a sound local academic and financial base and a network of serious partnerships.

For example, we are actively working with the VC Julian Crampton and his team at Brighton University to seek new opportunities to enable us to build on the success of BSMS. We are specifically looking at ways in which we might work more closely in a variety of academic areas such as creative arts, languages, social work and possibly other health-related sciences.

To facilitate the development of partnership working, I plan to host a series of events over the next few months to bring together a variety of potential partners from industry, higher education, local and central government, alumni who have expressed a wish to work with us on new ventures, and other friends of the University.

Organisational structure: Once the future strategic direction has been defined, we will need to consider whether the current organisational model will be adequate to deliver the new vision. I plan to hold a series of meetings early in the new year to gather opinion on the desirability (or not) of further devolution of management responsibility and the organisational structure that is most likely to produce the best academic result for Sussex.

I would finally like to thank you all for the warm reception that I have received and for the support and enthusiasm I have witnessed to take Sussex forward to even greater heights.

Happy Christmas and season’s greetings.

A longer version of this article appears on my new blog: see www.sussex.ac.uk/vc
Student sleuths solve riddle of no-name church

Some serious digging in the archives by Sussex archaeology students has solved a centuries-old mystery surrounding an ancient church.

Husband-and-wife history sleuths Tony and Lesley Voice, from Horsham, uncovered a letter written in 1275 to King Edward I, while researching the history of North Stoke church, near Arundel in West Sussex, at the National Archives at Kew.

The couple are keen historians and were searching the archives as part of a church archaeology course with the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE).

Students on CCE’s annual summer open course, The Recording of a Sussex Church, analyse and record the archaeology of a medieval church using written descriptions, drawings, measurements, photographs and, in some cases, geophysical sensing.

Tony and Lesley Voice studied the carvings and stained glass in North Stoke church, and scoured records at West Sussex Records Office and at Kew, to piece together its history.

When Tony discovered a 13th-century scrap of vellum - a letter from the Bishop of Chichester to the church’s patron, Edward I - he realised that the church was dedicated to St Mary the Virgin – a fact lost since the Reformation. Medieval churches were normally dedicated to saints.

He said: “I found the letter by accident really, as it was attached to another document. It was without doubt the most exciting discovery I have made in all my years of archival research. I am filled with a great sense of pride that such an historic building is regaining its true status.”

Tony added: “The CCE courses enabled me to expand my knowledge and understanding.”

CCE tutor Bob Hutchinson, who taught Tony and Lesley Voice, said: “Church archaeology is a bit like detective work – it’s real-life Da Vinci Code stuff. Buildings such as churches offer lots of clues about their past, but this find is quite special.”

As a result of the research, the church’s custodians, the Churches Conservation Trust, held a rededication ceremony at the church last Saturday (8 December), which was attended by the Roman Catholic Bishop of Arundel and the Anglican Bishop of Horsham, along with members of the University of Sussex and the High Sheriff of West Sussex.

Getting into the festive spirit

Over 300 people came to the University carol service to start their December in festive style.

The popular event took place on Sunday (2 December) at the Meeting House.

The University Chaplain, Revd Canon Dr Gavin Ashenden, was thrilled with the event. He said: “As part of the ‘Sussex tradition’ we read from literature taken from the last 700 years of intellectual and spiritual culture, and sung a mixture of carols by candlelight.

“The Chamber Choir were hugely impressive with their input from Benjamin Britten, and we raised over £600 in our attempt to raise money for Aids treatment at the Sussex Beacon.”

He added: “The atmosphere, as always on these occasions, was charged, mysterious and delightful; balanced by the quaffing of mulled wine and the ritual eating of mince pies.”

Historical: The stained glass which the Archaeology students Tony and Lesley Voice studied the stained glass of North Stoke church to piece together its history. As a result of their detective work, the church has just been rededicated.
Employment and inequality: Closing the gap

An innovative conference last month made use of a cartoonist, who captured thoughts, comments and themes in visual form.

Delegates at the national conference – on employment and inequality – then had a chance to comment on Graham Ogilvie’s drawings and the messages they conveyed.

“The cartoons encouraged and promoted feedback in an unusual but involving way,” said conference organiser Mike Boice, from the Centre for Continuing Education (CCE).

The event, which took place at The Old Market in Hove, looked at how to get everyone a fair deal with employment opportunities.

It brought together a broad range of policy makers, researchers, service providers and community members as well as employers and agencies working in all sectors at local national, regional and European level.

Sessions from key speakers were integrated with evidence collected by researchers at the Universities of Sussex and Brighton as part of a project on employment and inequality in Brighton and Hove (www.sussex.ac.uk/cce/1-4-13-9.html).

For a full report, see www.sussex.ac.uk/cce/equalconference07.

Maths masters meet

For the 25th consecutive year, talented youngsters took part in maths masterclasses at Sussex, culminating with a day of math challenges on Saturday (8 December).

The Royal Institution Mathematics Masterclasses, organised by the Sussex Branch of the Mathematical Association, took place over eight Saturday mornings, running through the autumn term.

Each session is led by a different visiting presenter, who gets the students forming small groups and making something. Volunteer teachers from Sussex schools help to explain concepts and answer questions from the groups.

Sixty children in Year 9 from schools in East and West Sussex and Brighton and Hove took part in the classes. The children had been nominated by their schools.

Charles Goldie, Emeritus Professor of Mathematics, who is involved with the event, said: “The aim is for the students to have fun.

“For the visiting teachers there’s the opportunity to work with some exceptionally bright children and to take some ideas back to their classrooms.

“For the University the hope is to encourage these children to keep on with the maths they enjoy, wherever it takes them – and possibly to attract some of them to enter Sussex, in any degree course, not just maths.”

On Saturday, the maths classes were rounded off with a few competitions.

New mathematics education community

Academics from the Sussex School of Education have launched a new mathematics education community at Sussex.

More than 50 people from schools, colleges, local authorities and the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust met over a seasonal drink with teachers of mathematics from the University, united by their common concern to help students enjoy and succeed at maths.

Dr Pat Drake explained that curriculum changes and widening participation make it timely for people from different phases in education to come together, to cut across boundaries and to try to devise strategies that enable students to have successful mathematical learning experiences.

Professor Jo Boaler showed some video of 17-18-year-old American students engaging enthusiastically in problem-solving activities, and asked the question, “What do students need to have learned to work in this way?”

The event on 5 December was supported by the team from InQbate, where it was held, and by the Regional Development Office.

Winners: The winning team of the Sussex Mathematical Challenge with Pro-Vice-Chancellor Professor Bob Allison (centre).

Author Brian Bolt, one of the presenters, set a mathematical challenge and gave a copy of his book as the prize for the best attempt. Another presenter, Paul Ramsey, offered a prize of £20 for cracking a code.

The final session of the classes was devoted to a team game called the Sussex Mathematical Challenge.

Professor Bob Allison, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, presented attendance certificates to the students who came to all or almost all of the sessions.
Preparations underway for Institutional Audit

Preparations are well advanced for an independent audit of the University next year.

In April 2008 the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) will send a team of independent auditors to Sussex to make sure the University is "providing higher education, awards and qualifications of an acceptable quality". The QAA audits every university on a regular basis and Sussex was last audited in 2004.

Professor Joanne Wright, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Education), stressed the importance of the audit: "It's absolutely right that Sussex students have confidence in the way that the quality of teaching is maintained through their degree programmes."

She added: "We are making improvements in academic support for students, such as feedback on assessment. And we are committed to further improvements during this academic year, for example by strengthening the arrangements for academic advisors.

"Implementation of the new teaching and learning strategy will also help us to enhance the student learning experience."

A draft of the University's briefing paper (which describes and appraises the systems in place for managing academic standards and quality) is being prepared. A draft will be available online in the new year and the final version will be submitted to the QAA in March.

More than 600 students responded to an online questionnaire that will form the basis of the student submission.

QAA auditors will come to campus for an initial three-day visit in April before returning for five days in May, when they will meet students and key members of staff.

The QAA will publish a final audit report, containing an overview of its findings, in October 2008.

Sussex graduate to stand for Parliament

Sussex graduate Sam Gurney - a former President of the Students' Union - will be Labour's candidate for the new Kensington constituency in the next general election. He was the overwhelming choice of party members at a selection conference on 24 November.

Sam, who studied History in the School of African and Asian Studies from 1992-95, grew up in North Kensington and went to school there before coming to Sussex. He currently works as a policy officer in the International Department of the TUC (Trades Union Congress).

Kensington will be a new seat made up of parts of the Labour-held Regents Park and Kensington North constituency and of Conservative-held Kensigton and Chelsea.

The constituency hit the headlines in October when Tony Benn, who lives in the area, announced he would put his name forward as a prospective candidate. But he withdrew when it became clear that there would be no immediate general election.

FIRST CLASS

Four academics have been promoted to professorships: Darrell Evans (Developmental Tissue Biology, BBSRC); Philip Harris (Physics); Fiona Leach (International Education); and Christian Wiese (Jewish History).

UK Business Innovation (UKBI) has given its Achievement Award for 2007 to Mike Herd, director of the Sussex Innovation Centre (SmC). Mike received the award at a gala dinner during UKBI's annual conference in Brighton on 29 November.

The Society for General Microbiology has awarded a prize to Pooja Saxena, a finalist in Molecular Genetics, for an outstanding piece of coursework submitted during her second year. Pooja was presented with the award - £100 and a year's free membership of the Society - by her project supervisor, Dr Mark Paget. Mark was himself honoured by the Society in 2004 with its Fleming Award for his work on redox sensing in bacteria. Pooja has been working on a similar topic for her final-year project and now wishes to pursue a PhD in a related field.

Award winner: Pooja Saxena receiving her prize from her project supervisor, Dr Mark Paget.
Plans to improve catering and retail

Greater choice and healthy eating are set to appear over the coming years on the menu of fewer, larger campus cafes – which will have extended opening hours.

The review

The views of nearly 1,200 members of staff and students have provided input to a large-scale review of catering at Sussex. A team from the Russell Partnership, the higher education sector’s leading strategic consultancy on catering and retail, held a mix of individual and open meetings in the summer, and carried out an online questionnaire, to better understand what staff and students are looking for from catering on campus.

The Partnership were also able to bring valuable external experience of the catering provided at more than 60 other UK campuses, and their understanding of how demand for food is likely to develop and change in the future. They say, for example, that ethically and locally sourced food is increasingly important as people make choices that take account of their impact on the planet.

The findings

Their findings at Sussex confirm that there is a real opportunity to improve provision on campus. And these findings are not just based on the comments they’ve received; the hard statistical evidence is that staff and students Sussex spend less on campus than is typical elsewhere – suggesting there is significant unmet need.

There was also a strong message from staff that they need somewhere on campus where they can entertain visitors – with many staff currently having to go off campus to Lewes or Brighton instead.

The proposals

Based on the findings and recommendations for future improvements, the University is proposing a significant development of catering provision over the coming five years.

The proposed changes are designed to provide greater choice, extended opening hours and a better mix of food provision.

To help provide this, the plan will provide for fewer, larger cafes spread across the campus, in the optimum locations for different groups of staff and students. This model could help to bring people together from different departments.

The next phase of the work will be to plan out changes required to Bramber House – bringing in up-to-date equipment, fitting a new kitchen space, bringing a new café to the ground floor and modernising the restaurant space on the first floor.

The University will also be looking to identify the best possible space for high-quality dining – with the idea of using some of the Gardner Centre being discussed, which could fit well with future development of the building for social or academic use.

The timetable

Development of the cafes across campus will take time to roll out, with plans developed on an area by area basis.

In the short term, the new style of provision will be showcased in one location in the next academic year – so that staff and students can try for themselves what is proposed.

Plans will be shaped up over the coming months, with the first new developments being made in readiness for 2009–10, depending on the levels of investment required.

Further information

For more information, see www.sussex.ac.uk/catering/review

IT Services developments

Planning and development for Information and Technology Services (ITS) is moving ahead apace. A major report on future systems development has been delivered by consultancy Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) and an interim Director is taking up the reins in January, while an executive search process for a permanent appointment is undertaken.

A 10-year ‘road map’ for the development of the University’s corporate information systems has been produced as a result of a major review undertaken in September and October by PWC.

Professor Paul Layzell, Deputy Vice-Chancellor, has direct responsibility for both ITS and the Library. He is pleased with the way in which PWC has achieved a thorough understanding of Sussex’s needs through close and collaborative work with Sussex staff, and the clarity and depth of the report’s recommendations.

The PWC report paves the way for a systematic, long-term process of investment in strategically important IT systems such as finance and human resources, delivering systems that are ‘fit for purpose’ and meet the needs of the University and its business processes.

Paul says: “Robust and modern IT systems are vital for the future success of the University, and this report provides a sound basis on which to plan our investment in those systems. This work will however involve many parts of the University, not just ITS.”

Importantly, PWC make clear that to be successful the ‘ownership’ of systems must rest with those who lead and manage University processes, rather than with ITS. This will be an important element in the development of new and replacement systems to support the University’s work.

The report provides reassurance that the underpinning Oracle system on which the University’s database is built is a sound platform for future development. PWC has however recommended a greater use of external proprietary systems – which should deliver well-crafted and tested functionality.

The report recommends that ITS devotes time initially to getting its systems and processes in place following the Professional Services Review, which recommended structuring ITS around four areas: Client Services, Computing and Multi Media Services, Programme Development Services, and Infrastructure Services.

Paul makes clear this will require discipline and understanding from the University community: “ITS will need to focus its efforts over the coming year and prioritise development work in key systems, rather than seeking to respond to every request for development support.”

To help with this process and with preparing the ground for the long-term developments arising from the PWC report, the University is appointing an interim director, starting in January 2008.

The search for a new permanent director to succeed Trevor Potten is being supported by recruitment consultants Veredus, with a search process starting and adverts expected in the spring term.

For a summary and full copy of the PWC report, see the papers for the Information Services Committee meeting of 12 November 2007, accessible via the ‘Committees’ pages of Sussex Direct.
Small ads ↓

**Wanted:** House/flat rental or house-sit from Mar 08. 3 beds ideal (will consider 2 or 4). Pref: Kempthorn/Queens Pk/Hanover/l Dias. Ideally 6 mths but pos 1.5 yrs. For 2 doctors + daughter. Non-smokers, no pets, good refs. E d.baker@roe.ac.uk.

**For sale:** 2 wooden single beds, with or without mattress, £60 each, £100 for 2. E m.j.penton@sussex.ac.uk.

**Free:** Pentium III PC, 19 in Hitachi monitor, Epson C42 + inkjet printer, large PC case. C Charles on 055025, E c.m.goldie@sussex.ac.uk.

**Missing:** Brown/grey, close-clipped farm terrier. Disappeared opp Plumpton station between 7 am & 8 am Fri 30 Nov. T June on ext 3815.

**Wanted:** Studio or 1-bed flat to rent in new year for young couple, Hove or central Brighton. J Grigg, ext 7063, E j.f.grigg@sussex.ac.uk.

**For sale:** Blue 2-seater sofa, VG. Ideal buyer collects (from Peacehaven). £35 ono. Sarah, T 7686 or E s.e.pannell@sussex.ac.uk.

**Wanted:** Double room to rent in Brighton house with broadband connection. Max £425 pcm incl. E ocm25@sussex.ac.uk.

**To let:** Double bedroom in Lewes family house. Own bathroom, TV, broadband. Garden, Baby grand piano. £380 pcm incl. T Sarah & Ted on 471323.

**To let:** Room overlooking garden in house off Lewes Rd. W/R, free wireless broadband, cleaner, unrestricted on-street parking. Share with white, non-smoking F owner & friendly dog. Pref mature student or staff. £425 pcm incl. T Marie on 07793 733968, E mg21@sussex.ac.uk

Academic event ↓

**MON 17 DEC**

**1pm SPRU seminar:**

J correspond to Lyon (York & Trenton), Climate change and the Convention on Biological Diversity. Room G24/25 Freeman Centre.

News in brief ↓

**Library surveys students**

Students are invited to help the Library identify its priorities for the next few years, via an online survey at www.sussex.ac.uk/library/survey. Hard copies are available from the Library's Enquiry Desk during staffed opening hours. The survey closes on 18 January.

**CCE short courses, Jan-Aug 08**

The Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) offers 10- or 20-week courses, taught mainly at evenings and weekends. Subjects include: Archaeology, Art, Art history, Career development, Churches, Classical and ancient civilisations, Community development, Creative writing, Creativity and the arts, Cultures and societies, Deaf studies (BSL), Ecology and nature, Film studies, Geography, History, Landscape studies, Lifelong learning, and Literature. See www.sussex.ac.uk/cce

**DVC joins Eduserv board**

Paul Layzell, Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Professor of Software Engineering, has joined the board of trustees of Eduserv, an educational charity that runs the software licensing and content deals for higher education.

**Nominations invited for NTFS**

Nominations are now open for the individual strand of the National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS). Fifty awards, of £10,000 each, will be made to recognise and reward individual excellence.

Sussex currently has four National Teaching Fellows and is looking forward to continuing this record of success in 2008.

Any nomination needs to be endorsed and signed by a Dean or Director of Professional Services. (There may be more than one nomination from each school.) Nominees may be in any academic or professional role that supports the student learning experience.

Further information is available online at www.sussex.ac.uk/tldu/1.5-9.html and at www.heacademy.ac.uk/NTFSindividual.htm

Completed nomination forms should be sent to Dr Vince East, TLDU, Mantell Building, E v.east@sussex.ac.uk, by 5pm on Monday 21 January 2008.

**Pilot study of video conferencing**

ITS Multimedia Services have launched a pilot study to measure current demand within the University for video conferencing services and to predict the logistical and costing implications of rolling out a full service in the future. For a trial period (until Easter 2008, or until 40 video conference have been booked), staff can have access to the facility free of charge. For further information, email mso@sussex.ac.uk.

All articles are also featured on the internet at www.sussex.ac.uk/press_office/bulletin

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**Pause for thought**

The Meeting House Quiet Room provided warmth and welcome shelter for staff and students who braved the wet and windy elements to observe World AIDS Day on 30 November.

The Christmas tree in Library Square had been decorated by students with red ribbons—the traditional symbols for the day.

After the lights on the tree had been switched on, there were brief speeches on AIDS/HIV issues from Sussex academics, support staff and students.

The event also included songs from a quartet of students from the University choir.

Afterwards staff and students enjoyed mulled wine and mince pies.

**Nominations invited for honorary degrees**

You are invited to nominate a distinguished individual for an honorary degree. See www.sussex.ac.uk/secretaetariat/1.2-11.html for criteria and the nomination form. Nominations should be submitted by 21 December.

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**Bulletin**

The Bulletin is written and produced by Alison Field and Lisa Brace, with contributions from Jacqui Bealing, Maggie Clune and Rob Read. We welcome any news, story ideas, letters or small ads from the staff and students of the University. The next issue will be out on 11 January, with a copy deadline of 1pm on 4 January. Please contact the Press & Communications Office in Sussex House, ext. 8888 or email bulletin@sussex.ac.uk.