The StudentView

Student newsletter, February-March 2015
College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences

Emerge 2015
Welcome to the second issue of the StudentView. This term is already behind us, and students must have already started revising for their exams. The term has gone by too fast, it seems, so this issue will offer a useful reminder of all the exceptional activities that have taken place in the last couple of months; from the Emerge event in Economics & Finance to our Games Jam, from Education students trialing new teaching methods to our incessantly active performers in the Arts@Artaud events, from innovations in educational methods and professional development to intellectually challenging student opinion and staff work, this issue aims to bring to the attention of staff and students in the College the highly diverse activity that it accommodates.

DG

Editor
Dr Dimitrios Giannoulopoulos
Associate Dean (Student Welfare), College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences
Contact: Email, Twitter and LinkedIn

Assistant Editor
Laura Brown
MA Student, Publications Assistant

CONTENTS
Feature: Emerge GameJam

Student Lives:
CelebYouth
Education Students Trial New Teaching Methods
Attendance in seminars and academic performance

Performing Arts: Arts@Artaud
Brunel Author Series
Student's Play in Production

Reading and Film:
CCSR Events—The Comedy of Sacha Baron Cohen

Student Initiatives: Magna Carta Anniversary

Education: Security and Intelligence
Find it, Ref it, Cite it.

Student Voices: Student Lands Dream Job in Norway
Women in UK Politics

Professional development:
PCC in CBASS
'Top Marks' for Teacher's Fair

Global View: 'Culture on the Move' Seminar Series

Staff View:
A Conversation with Benjamin Zephaniah Research Seminar
Professor Fischer Discusses Magna Carta
Susan Easton new monograph
Ready to Lead? Then Drop the Detail
The 2015 EMERGE event at Brunel was held on Wednesday 4 February, and aimed to build Finance and Economics students’ skills and self-confidence in a range of ways, including press-release style interviews and debates. External participants included members of the London Borough of Hillingdon Council, Quivira Capital, and internal academic and support colleagues from across the University.

Participants were given one of three topics to discuss—

- The Debt Crisis
- Energy Tariff Regulations
- The HS2 Project

They were then given a limited amount of time to prepare their own argument regarding their chosen topic, while the external participants were briefed and given a set of example questions with which to quiz the students. Real topics were important here as they developed students’ critical thinking skills whilst still being grounded in reality.

Each table had around five student participants, as well as five ‘interviewers’, who were there to consider each side of the students’ debate. The debate also served to develop the students’ verbal communication skills, as they were not aware of what they would be asked before the task commenced.

The day was funded by a university initiative that provides funding for departments with excellent NSS scores, allowing those departments with a proven track record to flourish, further improving their student experience and developing their partnership with students.

Emerge was ‘about giving the students confidence in their performance’, Professor Ashley Braganza, Head of E & F, explained to the waiting participants.

The event was a great success, and there are now plans to hold it on a regular basis.

To read the full article, including a student testimonial, click here.
Enthusiastic gamers had the opportunity to test the games produced by students who participated in this year’s Global Game Jam, which has been running internationally for five years and takes place over a 48-hour period every January. The title for this year’s event was ‘what do we do now?’ which set the basis for the theme of the games, yet produced a plethora of different results.

Over just one weekend, the 65 students produced 13 games, such as Temporal Mouse Run, which is a ‘simple but tricky platformer using only one key’.

Third year Creative Writing with Games Design student Nichole Henry stated ‘I worked with Computer Science students, rather than other Games Design students so it was nice to work with different people...it was great to see so many varied games that were influenced by the same starting idea.’

At the end of the weekend, the groups were able to present their projects to each other, each having produced ‘a playable experience, created under extreme circumstances’. A week later, the games were showcased to invited guests who were given the opportunity to test the games and converse with the developers.

Some of the games on offer included:

- Meeting - an interactive 2-player puzzle in which the players have to work together to figure out how to leave the room.
- 26 Letters - a black and white cartoon style game in which each letter of the alphabet is assigned to a different tool which could help the player through the level.
- Blackout - an atmospheric game in which the player must attempt to stop thorns from attacking the deer character. The game is an analogy for the ways that bullying can affect the deterioration of mental health.

For more information and to read Games Design lecturer, and manager of the event Chris Cox’s diary of the weekend, click here.
CelebYouth is the first large-scale UK-based study of young people’s relationships to celebrity culture. Back in July the CelebYouth team, led by Dr Heather Mendick at Brunel, launched a new website examining celebrity’s significance in the construction of young people’s aspirations, trying to make the findings from their ESRC-funded study as widely accessible as possible. This mythbusting site (www.celebyouth.org/mythbusting) is aimed at those who work with young people – including teachers, careers educators and youth workers. The site presents evidence from the two-year study to debunk a series of powerful and stigmatising myths about young people, including ‘young people want to get rich quick’, ‘young people have low aspirations’, ‘young people don’t value hard work’ and ‘young people are obsessed with celebrity culture’.

Heather said “As researchers, we started our study because they were tired of hearing politicians and media commentators speaking about the ‘dangerous effects’ of celebrity on young people without talking to young people about how they engage with and understand celebrity. It seems like every day we hear fears that young people just want fame (as footballers’ wives or Reality TV stars) rather than achievement based on hard work and skill, but our research shows quite the opposite.”

As well as the mythbusting section of the site, there’s also a page of stories of six of the 148 young people who participated in the research exploring their memories, hope for the future and struggles in the present. A third page contains eight videos of young actors from the Tricycle Theatre (London) performing extracts from the data, and talking about everything from celebrity drug taking to the celebrity philanthropy and debating whether Tupac is a good role model and whether Katie Price is a businesswoman. A final page offers material on how to do social research that could be of use for sociology A level students and teachers.

The team plan to expand and develop these resources during 2015, with the support of Dr Akile Ahmet and finding from a Brunel Knowledge Transfer Secondment. In the meantime, they’d love to hear from teachers, youth workers, careers educators and anyone else who works with young people so that we know how best to approach this.

There is also a main project blog where you can read more about the research and which contains regular posts about popular culture, young people, gender and social class. Other posts include: ‘WAGs and Wannabes? Depictions of Girls’ Ambitions in Contemporary British Cinema’, ‘Nightcrawler: neoliberalism, psychopaths and bullying culture’, ‘Feminisms from 16 to 60’ and ‘Real love?’ Unpacking John Lewis’s festive gift’
On the afternoon of February 3rd, 2015, Brunel’s Post Graduate Certificate in Education science students were involved in the trialling of exciting new teaching materials which have just been launched. Brunel is the first Initial Teacher Education provider to have been invited to appraise the new resources. Gareth Price, a representative from Practical Action, a group who promote the use of appropriate technology to alleviate poverty, worked with the students. He shared a new set of educational materials for use with young people aged between 7 and 16 to illustrate how technologies devised with the user communities can improve their quality of life. The topics addressed included: the supply of drinking water; how food can be cooked in a way which doesn’t lead to problems associated with smoke from traditional ovens; flood mitigation strategies; food preservation techniques as a means of improving food security for the poorest people. All of these activities can be used to illustrate and develop the content of the school Science curriculum, and illustrate the key role of Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths in the sustainable development and social justice. One of the students, who first encountered the educational work of Practical Action when the PGCE group attended the Annual Meeting of the Association for Science Education recently, commented, “It brings relevance and cultural aspects to science; it links science to the world around you and makes it something that doesn’t just belong in the laboratory.”

The P.G.C.E. science tutors have welcomed the opportunity to trial the resources, not least because it builds upon their work in engaging mixed specialism students (the Biologists, Chemists and Physicists on the course) in complex and authentic problems, which promote collaborative peer teaching.

Further information about the work can be found at http://practicalaction.org/our-approach
Attendance in seminars and academic performance

By Dr Alexandra Xanthaki, Reader, Brunel Law School

One of the pet hates in my current teaching has been for some time the limited attendance in seminars. The seminar attendance is not assessed but it has been viewed as one of the major problems, even in Level 3 modules where one would assume students would focus on their studies.

I did the following exercise in my Level 3 undergraduate LX3072 module on International Human Rights: After reflecting on how to make seminars better and more interesting, without any substantial change, I did the following in order to

1. test the assumption that attendance in seminars does indeed improve the performance and
2. convey this to students in a simple and clear way that uses their experiences.

After the end of my lecture on ‘Poverty and Human Rights’, a topic which coincided with a seminar and which was the topic of their coursework, I asked all students attending the lecture to write a short piece on broadly the topic of the coursework. After I collected the short pieces of work, I made two piles, one containing the work of students who attended the seminars according to my registry; and one of students who had not attended the seminar. Of course all students who completed the exercise had some background knowledge as they had all heard the lecture on this topic.

The results of my exercise showed beyond any doubt that the performance of the students who had attended the seminars were much better. The paragraphs from these students ranged from fifteen lines to a page, much longer than the students who had not attended the seminar. This indicated familiarity with the topic and enhanced ability to discuss it, an indication that the knowledge has been digested. The answers to the question were more balanced without big ‘black and white’ statements, again showing understanding of the complexities of the issue. The answers were more focussed on human rights issues, rather than economics and statistics, and raised more relevant arguments. They showed an understanding of the wider picture; made important links between definitions, rights, mechanisms and arguments. This was exactly what we tried to do in the seminar and I was very happy to see it really coming through in most of the answers of those who attended.

The papers also included arguments that went beyond the obvious, a positive effect of reflecting on this issue for some time when preparing and discussing the issue in the seminar (and hopefully afterwards). Finally, I was happy to see a solid understanding in many of these papers of the human rights mechanisms (references to Special Rapporteurs, Committees etc).

In contrast, the papers of the students who had not attended the seminar showed different levels of understanding of the issue, but answers were considerably shorter and arguments were more simplistic. Some papers had factual mistakes, the terminology was wrong and the level of understanding of poverty was inadequate.

I have to say that even I was surprised at the notable difference between the two sets of papers, especially since both sets were from students who attended the lectures.

I conveyed the results to all IHR students, both with an announcement on Blackboard and in an email sent to each one of them. The results also contained some generic feedback which could be useful for their impending coursework.

It remains to be seen whether the announcement of the results has made any difference in the attendance, but at least I am now more confident that indeed, seminar attendance has a positive effect on students’ performance in my module.
StudentLiVes (Performing Arts Events)

Brunel Author Series

The most recent event of Brunel’s author series saw MA The Novel students Rebecca Pizzey and Emma Jeremy interview Joe Dunthorne and Ross Raisin. As part of the evening, both Dunthorne and Raisin read from their novels, and discussed their writing with those attending the event.

Arts@Artaud

The last Arts@Artaud event for the second term took place on Wednesday 11th of March at 7pm, featuring poetry, live music and theatre, as well as the official launch of Brunel's 2nd Creative Writing anthology of short stories.
Michelle Inniss, who is currently in the final term of her part-time Master’s degree in Creative Writing: The Novel has recently been hugely successful in securing funding for her play ‘She Called Me Mother’, which she is producing with the help of Cathy Tyson, and Cara Nolan, who will direct the show as well as oversee its production.

Inniss and Tyson have been friends since they met in secondary school in Liverpool. Tyson will play the lead role - Evangeline - in the play. She is a BAFTA and Golden Globe nominated actress, with her film and television career spanning three decades. She is also no stranger to Brunel, having graduated in 2012 with a BA in English and Drama.

The play explores the life of Evangeline, an elderly homeless lady from Trinidad, partly based on someone Inniss met whilst travelling through London. ‘I wondered where were her family, what happened to her loved ones? This play explores how she ended up in that situation’ stated Inniss, with Tyson adding ‘when she sent the script to me, I fell in love with the language instantly...you don’t often see elderly black women on the stage, and it’s such a wonderful opportunity to bring an overshadowed character to life.’

Black Theatre Live received over 50 applicants for the funding overall, and this is the first new play to have been received in this way. The association is supported by Arts Council England, which is committed to increasing the amount of black and ethnic minority theatre on the touring circuit.

The play is expected to be shown in eight theatres later this year.
Student View (Comedy)

A Symposium on the Comedy of Sacha Baron Cohen

The seminar was led by three speakers - Dr Richard Howells, Dr Helena Bassil-Morozow and Dr Simon Weaver, who offered their thoughts and research conclusions to the audience. The key focus of characters selected by the speakers were Ali G, Borat, and to a certain extent, Bruno and The Dictator.

No laughing matter? – Dr Richard Howells, Reader in Culture, Media and Creative Industries at King’s College London

"Race is the new sex," Richard announced during the opening statements of his presentation. He compared the Victorian attitudes surrounding the discussion of sex to our current attitudes on the subject of race, arguing that people could say a whole manner of sexual terms in public without offending most, but when it comes to race, we restrict ourselves. In relation to this, he stated that Sacha Baron Cohen is fully aware of this taboo and uses the character Ali G to break down that barrier and force people to talk about things they wouldn't normally talk about.

Richard clarified that Ali G, who he focussed on throughout his presentation, needs to be separated from Sacha Baron Cohen himself. A competent and professional Jewish actor who graduated from Cambridge University, Cohen secured serious acting and singing roles in musicals such as Les Miserables (2012) and Sweeney Todd (2007). He compared Ali G to a ventriloquist dummy for Cohen – a puppet who states outrageous things that Cohen would not normally say himself or get away with. Furthermore, Cohen rarely takes part in interviews as himself, indicating that the audience never gets to know or understand the 'real' person. It seems that there is always a chance that his 'victims' would see the interview where he appears as himself, recognise him and therefore rumble the joke.

According to Richard, the joke here seems to concern identity rather than race. Is Ali G a white man pretending to be a black or Asian man? Richard argued that it is quite obvious to most people that Ali G isn't black, yet no one challenges his catchphrase: "is it coz I is black?" when he says it. During a clip shown during Richard's talk, Ali G mentions that "the white boys at Channel 4 wouldn't allow" a particular activity on his show. It seems that although the character appears to be white, he doesn't consider himself as white, so "adopts pantomime of dress, style, and physical gesticulations" from the culture that he associates with.

But what is Ali G's true identity? Is the audience laughing with or at him? Do they agree with his 'beliefs'? Going back to the real man, Richard comments that "Cohen practices transgressive humour – and that's what people like. We anticipate it." There seems to be this awareness that he’s pushing the boundaries and comfort zone for most.

Read Richards' Biography online.
A Symposium on the Comedy of Sacha Baron Cohen (cont.)

The Gonzo trickster - Dr Helena Bassil-Morozow - Lecturer at University of Essex; Goldsmiths College, University of London.

Tricksters in myth can challenge and disobey the established order. But what is a ‘Gonzo trickster’? According to Helena, it indicates taking a personal risk to make a social statement, and she believes that behaviour is practiced by Cohen. The oxymoronic nature of the Borat character means that “he either dupes victims into being offensive or forces them to expose their own prejudices.”

Cohen has discussed this before; being a ‘foreigner’ can encourage that response from people which is why he selected Kazakhstan as the home of the character Borat. An example appears in the Borat film where he sings ‘throw the Jew down the well’ and countless Americans start singing along with him. Does this mean that they agree with those views or are they not aware of what they are singing? Helena refers to this as “blind imitation”. Cohen plays on this himself during a rare video interview with the BBC, where Borat said: "I'd like to state I have no connection with Mr. Cohen and fully support my government's decision to sue this Jew."

By being 'foreign', Borat relinquishes a responsibility to understand and appreciate what he is saying, which in turn allows people to drop their guard and perhaps give their true intentions away. As Helena commented, Cohen "blends the boundaries between the normal and the outrageous, fact and fiction."

She raised the idea that Cohen could be seen as a ‘bourgeois bully’ with his Borat film, presenting the local Kazakhstani people as ‘inbred and stupid’. Apparently the local people were not Kazakh but Romanian, and they were not actors, and paid only $30 each to take part in the film. The house interiors shown in the beginning of the film were all real homes, but Cohen created his own stories around them. In outrage at the film, the locals attempted to sue ‘Borat’ over the misrepresentation of their village and felt they were taken advantage of. Helena questioned this and asked; was Borat making fun of people from Kazakhstan or the people that think this is what Kazakhstani people are like?

Take a look at Helena's website and blog.

CCSR Seminar series

This seminar was organised by Brunel’s Centre for Comedy Studies Research (CCSR), an international research centre devoted to the academic study of comedy, run by Brunel’s Dr Sharon Lockyer. As an interdisciplinary centre it considers the production, content, reception and wider socio-political implications of comedy in a variety of formats and from a range of perspectives.

An audience reception study – Dr Simon Weaver - Lecturer in Media and Communications at Brunel University London.


He examined participants’ opinions on humour, offence, representations of race, ethnicity, class, gender, religion, nationality, and the ‘other’. 49 responses took part from Cohen’s target audience - 18-29 year olds - in 10 focus groups of up to 8 people each.

Simon highlighted that Ali G is very ambiguous as a character and argued there is a “polysemic and elusive form of racism” in it. He detailed three strands of liquid racism - ‘postmodern minstrelsy’ – Ali G as a black man, ‘ethnocultural hybrid racism’ – Ali G as a white man pretending to be black, and ‘anti-Asian racism’ – Ali G as an Asian man pretending to be black. It is the combination of the three that creates liquidity and ambiguity.

There was a varied response to each of the films from the groups, but for this seminar, Simon concentrated on racism, particularly Islamophobia or anti-Muslim racism. Simon clarified that there were four perceptions of racism from the participants - those that argue the comedy is Islamophobic or anti-Muslim, those that do not view any signifiers in the comedy that denote either Islam as a religion or Muslims as an ethnic group, those that claim that the comedy might be offensive to a third party, or to themselves if they were from a certain group, and those that claim that the comedy is racist and funny.

The reaction to the characters varied greatly from person to person, from thinking that all of the characters are offensive, that religion should not be made fun of, that it's satire and we should see it as such, finding some parts funny and some not so much, and enjoying the extreme nature of the comedy. These differences of reaction are primarily due to differences of background, or individuals from similar backgrounds reading the comedy in a different way.

Read Simon's profile on the Brunel website.

Q&A

The seminar ended with an open question and answer session which prompted a fascinating and thought-provoking debate on the difference between the topics of race and sexuality, and offending people. Everyone has their own floating yardstick which can change depending on the comedian involved and the topic spoken about. The panel were asked about Ali G visitingBrunel to interview Professor Heinz Wolff, and what could be next for Sacha Baron Cohen.
Students from Uxbridge College and Royal Holloway University joined Brunel students at the Magna Carta Workshop hosted by Brunel Volunteers, as part of a series of Magna Carta anniversary events.

The workshop began with a mini lecture by Professor Justin Fisher, who provided synopsis of the Magna Carta, challenging the attendees to reflect upon its relevance in modern day Britain. The students were encouraged to share ideas and their personal experiences around four key values entrenched in the Magna Carta: Justice, Freedom, Equality and Liberty.

The students then designed and presented four posters based on their discussions - these are in the process of being transferred onto street banners and will shortly be hung up in Egham High Street to celebrate the 800th anniversary of the Magna Carta.

Professor Justin Fisher, Head of the Department of Politics, History & the Brunel Law School said: "I'm delighted that so many students are getting involved in
Know How, Know That and Know Why: BCISS Innovative Teaching in Intelligence Studies

The Brunel Centre for Intelligence and Security Studies (BCISS) was established in November 2003 with a four-part mandate to provide a ‘centre of excellence’ in:

1. Research and publishing on intelligence and security institutions, issues and policy;
2. Postgraduate training in intelligence studies;
3. Advice and consultancy on intelligence issues;
4. Public education and information regarding intelligence and security institutions.

In pursuit of (2) the BCISS team has developed a range of innovative teaching methods that have contributed to the sustained recruitment and post-degree employability of MA in Intelligence and Security Studies (MA/ISS) students as well as producing a substantial number of PhD students.

Innovations on the existing residential ISS programme, include:
- Blending scholarship with practical understanding;
- Teaching and situating practical skills in intelligence analytical practice or 'tradecraft' in an academic understanding of the subject;
- The annual term-long practical in open-source intelligence analysis, the Brunel Analytical Simulation.

Academic staff interested in discussing how to blend scholarly and practical understanding in their teaching, and the use of simulations and practicals, both academically and to support post-degree employability, are encouraged to get in touch with Professor Philip Davies and Dr Mohamed Gaballa, Brunel Centre for Intelligence and Security Studies.

For more information on the Intelligence & Security Studies MA see https://youtu.be/G-JnGGB6waU
Find it! Ref it! Cite it!

Want to find journal articles for your coursework? Not sure how to cite information appropriately? Stuck with how to research material for your dissertation? Ensure you get the grades you deserve by using a range of good quality resources combined with accurate and consistent referencing.

Your **CBASS Subject Liaison Librarians** are here to help you search for information and resources in your subject areas, enabling you to add authority to your coursework and dissertation. We can also advise you on referencing queries including the use of time saving software, such as RefWorks.

See below our profiles and contact details. Follow your Subject Librarian on Twitter to see when we are available at the LibSmart desk or at the shelves to help you find books.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department Business School, Department of Economics &amp; Finance</th>
<th>Department of Social Sciences, Media &amp; Communications</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Kanwal Virdee and Alice Cann</strong></td>
<td><strong>Marian Brown</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:business.librarian@brunel.ac.uk">business.librarian@brunel.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:marian.brown@brunel.ac.uk">marian.brown@brunel.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter: @BSSLibrarian</td>
<td>Twitter: @BSSLibrarian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Library Guides on your subject:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Library Guides on your subject:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/business">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/business</a></td>
<td>Anthropology: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/anthropology">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/anthropology</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economics and Finance: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/economicsandfinance">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/economicsandfinance</a></td>
<td>Film &amp; TV: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/filmandtv">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/filmandtv</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data and Statistics: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/data">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/data</a></td>
<td>Games Design: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/gamesdesign">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/gamesdesign</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(including Bloomberg and Datastream)</td>
<td>Journalism: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/journalism">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/journalism</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Department of Arts and Humanities, Department of Education</th>
<th>Department of Politics &amp; History, Brunel Law School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Martin Hodgson</strong></td>
<td><strong>Claire Mazer</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:martin.hodgson@brunel.ac.uk">martin.hodgson@brunel.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>Email: <a href="mailto:claire.mazer@brunel.ac.uk">claire.mazer@brunel.ac.uk</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter: @ArtsLibrarian</td>
<td>Twitter: @PHLLibrn_Brunel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Library Guides on your subject:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Guides on your subject:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/education">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/education</a></td>
<td>History: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/history">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/history</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English &amp; Creative Writing: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/english">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/english</a></td>
<td>Law: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/law">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/law</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Music: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/music">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/music</a></td>
<td>Politics &amp; International Relations: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/politics">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/politics</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Theatre: <a href="http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/theatre">http://libguides.brunel.ac.uk/theatre</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hi, my name is Felix Doepke and I’ve just gotten my dream job in Norway, my next stop after several exciting years of studying abroad. Previously, I received a Sino-German double degree in Engineering Management from FH Aachen, University of Applied Sciences and Tongji University, Shanghai. Those were some exciting years I would not want to miss. That goes both for the very demanding courses in Germany, as well as the international team experiences and mountain hikes in China. As the final part of my BA, I wrote my dissertation at Siemens’ infrastructure and cities sector, working alongside Chinese and German colleagues.

After a short intermission of Mandarin studies in Taiwan I went on to specialise further, studying MSc. Global Supply Chain Management (GSCM) at Brunel University, London. This course had just the right ingredients for the MSc. I was looking for: it brings together various fields that intrigue me, such as quality management, procurement, logistics, process improvement and strategic management. It also built upon my practical experiences in Siemens’ SCM department. Brunel University offered just this specialisation I was looking for. At the same time, its business school is constantly improving in international rankings, while being located in one of the world’s most exciting cities.

After Brunel, in December 2013, I chose to pursue a career in Norway. I studied Norwegian with a book for studying autonomously and with my Norwegian girlfriend, searched for jobs on various online portals, used my network and consulted Brunel’s PCC.

Looking back, all these steps were important to get where I am now. Knowing at least a bit of the language is essential to become part of the society and also getting a good job, even though most Norwegians are fluent in English. The online search and visits of job fairs (in UK and Norway) extended my network and gave me a much better overview of the job market. Moreover, I constantly used LinkedIn to directly approach contacts in firms that interested me. In addition, luck was on my side when I sat next to a senior manager on an airplane. Calli from the PCC then helped me through this entire process. This included improving the layout of my CV, assessing covering letters and preparing for actual interviews. She also recommended a book to me, specifically designed to prepare for case interviews. Lastly, Calli then conducted a mock interview with me just days before the actual interview, where I could practice answering common interview questions.

Now, I’ve just arrived in Norway and gotten a position at one of the world’s leading consulting firms. This means that I can entirely focus on learning Norwegian until I start, which is really necessary to effectively communicate with colleagues and clients. I am very grateful for getting such a great job. While I worked hard to get there, it would not have happened without the help and inspiration from those around me along the way.
The UK Political Sphere Needs More Women

By Alfredtine Boaitey—LLB Law Student

Politics: ‘The activities associated with the governance of a country or area, especially the debate between parties having power’ (Source: Oxford English Dictionary)

Based on the definition of ‘politics’, it is safe to ask if the whole essence of politics is about the governance of a country or an area, then shouldn’t the people who govern it be a representative subset of the country? This is a vital question because the current gender dynamics in UK politics is an inaccurate reflection of the UK population. For example, according to the 2011 census there are 32.2 million women and 31.1 million men living in the UK. Yet out of 650 MPs only 147 MPs are women whilst the rest are all men. This is a clear example of the lack of female representation in politics. Although current and past governments have made efforts to increase the number of women in Parliament there is still a lot to do to create a modern and representative political system.

Of course, we must not act oblivious to the fact that over 100 years ago there were no women politics. So, we must commend the efforts made by the current and past governments to increase gender diversity in politics. There is evidence to suggest that these efforts have been successful. Since there has been a 22.6% increase in the current number of female parliamentarians in the House of Lords and 22.8% in the House of Commons. However, despite such developments in UK politics, there is no denying that women are still underrepresented.

Now, an obvious reason for the lack of women in politics is because fewer women are pursuing a career in this field. There are undoubtedly various different reasons why this is so. Negative labelling of women politicians does not help. Margaret Thatcher was one of the most divisive political figures in UK politics. She was labelled ‘Iron Lady’ or ‘Mother of Austerity’ because of her strict right-winged policies and political ideology. David Cameron (who does not seem to be much different to Margaret Thatcher, in terms of ideology and policies) has not been labelled the ‘Son of Austerity’ or ‘Iron Uncle’ for his austerity measures.

Women may be reluctant to pursue a career in politics because of the scarcity of women being promoted to senior political roles. Baroness Warsi, ex Minister of State for Faith and Communities, has observed that although the UK obtained universal suffrage in the 1920s and elected the first female prime minister in the 1970s, female representativeness in politics is still relatively poor. Countries in South Asia and Latin America are putting the UK to shame in view of the increasing number of female politicians being promoted to top positions, despite the inequalities faced in their societies. We can take the example of Bangladesh, where the prime minister, foreign minister and the leader of the opposition are all women. Women obtaining these roles at the same time in the UK would be a fiction.

A change in societal attitudes towards politics would lead to greater female representativeness. The following are suggestions that may subsequently lead to increased female representation:

- Educate young girls about the dynamics of politics and why it is a career worth pursuing;
- Shed light on successful projects conducted by female politicians;
- Deter young girls from being intimidated by a male dominated political system. Help them to see that they could change the lack of gender balance by actually pursuing a career in politics.

Politics will only become more representative of women once governments begin to be open to the prospects of having more women in top senior roles. This will inspire more females to pursue a career in politics. They will have significant female political figures to look up to. Theresa May’s role as the current UK Home Secretary is a reflection of what women can achieve.
ProfessionalDevelopment

PCC in CBASS

100% of student users would recommend the Placement and Careers Centre (PCC) to a friend and 96% felt a visit to the service made them more likely to take the next step in their careers. Not surprising then that the PCC consistently receives excellent feedback. Take this ringing endorsement from 2014 History graduate Godfrey Asare, now a Waitrose graduate trainee:

“Your visit to the PCC will be the game changer! Whether you need help deciding what industry you would like to get into, through to support on the psychometric tests, the PCC are there and waiting for you.”

The Placement and Careers Centre is part of the School of Professional Development, together with the Graduate School, Modern Foreign Languages, and the newly established Innovation Hub. The PCC offers high quality careers guidance, information and work placements and consists of three dedicated teams to help you improve your skills and help you get a job.

The three teams in the PCC include:

Job Shop: helps current Brunel students to find part-time and vacation work both on and off campus.
jobshop@brunel.ac.uk

Placements: work with students to secure 12 month placements that count as a credit-bearing module contributing to your degree classification.
placements@brunel.ac.uk

Careers: help students and graduates in their career planning and provide workshops, webinars and individual support to help students recognise, articulate and market their skills and experience to employers. This starts from the beginning of level one all the way through to graduation and for two years after that.
careers@brunel.ac.uk

See a Careers Consultant/Placement Adviser by booking an appointment
In person, by phone 01895 266840 or email:

CBASS Careers Consultants (All years)
Helen.Slingsby@brunel.ac.uk - Theatre, Creative Writing, English, Film and TV, Music, Journalism, Sonic Arts, Media and Communications, History, Politics, MBA (Business School)
Sharon.Burke@brunel.ac.uk - Games Design, Visual Effects, Sociology, Social Anthropology
Bridget.Lavin@brunel.ac.uk - Law, Business & Management (General, E-Business, Marketing, Corporate Brand Management, Business Intelligence),
Calli.Amiras@brunel.ac.uk - Business & Management (International, Accounting, HR, Supply Chain)
Judith.Mcintyre@brunel.ac.uk - Economics and Finance

CBASS Placement & Internship Advisers (Year2)
Donna Brown - Business-placements@brunel.ac.uk Business & Management all
Alison Taylor - Law-placements@brunel.ac.uk Law
Stefania Pepitoni - Economicspolitics-placements@brunel.ac.uk Economics and Finance, History, Politics
Karen Smith - Socialsciences-placements@brunel.ac.uk Media & Communications, Sociology, Social Anthropology, Sociology and Communications, Psychology

Online resources www.brunel.ac.uk/pcc
Have a look at your career options, how to develop employability skills, sample CVs; tips on improving your interview skills and psychometric tests
Job vacancies on the PCC Jobs Board www.brunel.ac.uk/pcc/vacancies

Workshops and webinars
Check out our weekly calendar of events for a variety of workshops and webinars on careers topics and featuring a number of graduate employers - recent examples include Telephone and Skype Interview tips (FDM), Assessment centre success (Centrica), Your Linkedin Profile Matters(SAP)

Careers/Jobs Fairs on the horizon

National Graduate and Summer Internship Recruitment Fair
18th May, 2015, 1:00-4:00pm Sports Hall

Autumn Placement, Careers and Part-time Work Fair
20th October, 2015, 1:00-4:00pm

Connect with the PCC
www.facebook.com/BrunelPCC
This year’s Teachers Fair, hosted by the Placement and Careers Centre, was one of the most successful ever, with 34 employer organizations setting up stalls and around 180 Brunel students coming to visit them.

The employers took part in the afternoon Fair to look for potential recruits for teaching posts from September onwards. The students, who are all training at Brunel to be teachers, chatted to employer representatives and signed up to receive further information about vacancies and application processes.

Around 90% of Brunel’s PGCE students, who do a one-year postgraduate course that qualifies them to become primary or secondary school teachers, get a classroom job within the first three months of leaving the university.

Among employers represented at the Fair were the London boroughs of Hillingdon and Hounslow, Bracknell Forest Council, Buckinghamshire Learning Trust, Kent Learn, Luton Borough Council, The London Diocesan Board for Schools as well as a large number of teaching recruitment agencies, including Apple, Hayes Education, and Reeds, TLTP, The London Teaching Pool and three teaching unions.

Although the Fair was due to finish at 3pm, so many conversations were being had between students and employers that the closing time was extended to allow the dialogue to continue.

Recruiters were particularly pleased with the level of attendance by students studying to be secondary school teachers. In the past the majority of attendees have been those on the PGCE primary course, but this year our Placement and Careers Centre gave a special push to increase the level of interest from those looking for secondary school jobs.

Ryan Kissin, Commercial Manager at TLTP recruitment agency, said: “This was our first time at Brunel Teachers Fair and it was an extremely positive experience, both in terms of the organization of the event and the quality of candidates. We’ll definitely be coming back next year.”
StudentLiVes (global issues)

Culture on the Move: Seminar Series

Seminar Series: ‘Culture on the move: Migration, Living traditions and Cultural Heritage Protection’

- Dr Catherine Wihtol De Wenden (Paris – Sciences Po) discusses: ‘Culture on the move: Whose land is it? Migration & Cultural Heritage’
  Wed 22 April 2015, Moot Court (EJ) , 2.30 – 4pm
  http://www.brunel.ac.uk/news-and-events/events/general-event/ne_408470/
nocache

- WORKSHOP
  ‘Migration, Living traditions and Cultural Heritage Protection’
  Wed 6 May 2015, Moot Court (EJ) , 2.00 – 5pm
  Dr Elizabeth Carnegie, Lecturer in Arts & Heritage at the University of Sheffield
  Mr Panos Christodoulou, Lawyer, Former Director of the Greek Council for Refugees & Children Books author
  Mr Ed Emery, Ethnomusicologist at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS)
  Mrs Sophie Henderson, Immigration Barrister & Director of the Migration Museum Project.
  http://www.brunel.ac.uk/news-and-events/events/general-event/ne_408504/_nocache

- DAY CONFERENCE
  ‘Migration, Living traditions and Cultural Heritage Protection’
  Fri 29 May 2015, Hamilton Centre (Darwin room) 9.30 – 6.30pm
  http://www.brunel.ac.uk/bls/research/events/hrc-human-rights-centre/ne_409449/_nocache

( to register for this event, contact Dr E Polimenopoulou, at eleni.polimenopoulou@brunel.ac.uk or register online —online registration now available here:
https://webapps.brunel.ac.uk/apps/event/UI/pages/online-payment.aspx?
sysSection=3&event=S9NJUKG+iqQ=

Migrants are a vibrant part of the host societies’ cultural life identities and expressions – particularly music, oral traditions, cuisine, and other forms of tangible and intangible heritage.

The Conference ‘Culture on the move’ focuses on the transformation of such cultural identities in light of the need to understand the rapidly transforming social, political and cultural context.

It aims to:
- Interrogating how migration trends may affect cultural policies, and specifically the production of tangible and intangible cultural heritage;
- Exploring the normative, legal and socio-legal, frameworks of cultural policies in relation to cultural diversity and the protection of living traditions and intangible heritage;
- Addressing the difficulties for the migrants to preserve it and to remain linked with their cultural heritage and living traditions;
- Examining how domestic, regional and international laws protect migrants, refugees, IDPs, and asylum seekers’ cultural rights, including protection of their artistic and folkloric expressions, religious/ traditional expressions, food and culinary traditions, languages and dialects, music, myth and oral traditions, and traditional knowledge;
- Identifying legal lacunae in the protection of migrants’ cultural heritage, and more generally, cultural heritage, and marking differences with minority and indigenous tangible and intangible heritage;
- Developing and consolidating knowledge and research in the area of vulnerable groups’ cultural rights, namely migrants, asylum seekers and refugees, and ethnic/religious minority groups;
- Promoting the understanding and application of international human rights standards in relation to cultural rights, including artistic expressions, language, and education.
- Considering the protection of these expressions in the context of debates on multiculturalism and globalization, and the accommodation of diversity;
- Addressing the need for protection of these expressions and knowledge particularly in the frame of war, disasters (including environmental disasters) and other situations amounting to massive migratory afflux, displacements and high number of refugees.
A Conversation with Benjamin Zephaniah

Born and raised in Birmingham, Professor Benjamin Zephaniah was one of the pioneers of the *dub performance poetry* scene in Britain. He has spent most of his life performing around the world in schools, universities, concert halls, and in public spaces. Benjamin is not only a lecturer and poetry performer – he is also a writer, actor, playwright, exhibitioner and musician. Campus Communications caught up with him for a quick chat about some of his work including performing, his book 'Terror Kid' and the BBC TV show Peaky Blinders.

*It’s now your fourth year as a Professor of Poetry and Creative Writing at Brunel.*

It’s a lot of hard work but I really enjoy it. It’s especially rewarding when my students publish their own work or perform in public.

*How has it been so far for you? What has been the best reaction to your performances?*

Believe it or not, I have a fan-base in Papua New Guinea! I travelled over there to perform poetry and was offered three wives for my efforts from the local tribe chief. I had to try and explain to him that I couldn’t take the ladies back with me to England as I would have a visa problem, not to mention the fact that they deserve a choice in the matter! Unfortunately, he thought I was insulting him with my refusal. We needed our translator to explain that I wasn't trying to insult them.

*I heard that your latest novel, Terror Kid, is inspired by terrorist actions around the world. What else inspired you to write it?*

Yes I was definitely inspired by the obvious as you suggest, but I was also inspired by a particular story about a teenager who was robbing banks across the world on his computer without his parents' knowledge, showing that kids seemingly know more about technology than their elders. It fascinated me that the kid didn't even need to leave his room to commit robbery, and his parents didn't have a clue about it. I also explored stereotyping of Muslims, the good and bad uses of technology and the potential it has. The whole thing took 10-15 re-drafts and four years to write – unlike poems, novels cannot be created in a day! This was the most research out of all my books and I had to get the 'computer speak' right, it had to be realistic. To make sure it was accurate, I checked it over with a police officer, computer expert, and solicitor. It's really important to me that my work reflects reality consistently. I am not a fantasy writer.

*You have a lot of strings to your bow, but which is closest to your heart?*

It’s so difficult to choose, but *performance poetry* is where my heart is – but I’m a creative person and it's great to have a few different skills. In West African culture there is such a person called a ‘Griot’ - a historian, storyteller, praise singer, poet and/or musician. The nearest thing in Western culture is possibly a minstrel or bard. I don’t see myself as a Griot exactly, but we don't have a word in English that is close enough.

Most people do jobs that they don't want to do…… I'm so lucky that I can do what I enjoy, influence people in a positive way and get paid for it.

*How would you describe your current author identity?*

I’m writing for ‘reluctant readers’ at the moment, which are school books written for 11/12 year olds in a simple style (at a reading age that's around 5 years old). It's difficult to do as you can't patronise them, you need to write about gritty subjects that they can identify with, like bullying, but you can't make it too difficult to read.
Professor Fischer Discusses Magna Carta

This year marks the 800th anniversary of this famous document. As the Director of the Magna Carta Institute at Brunel, Professor Fisher discussed the nature and principles of the document, its ongoing legacy, and the celebrations planned later in the year.

He identified two different ways of thinking about Magna Carta - its historical and legal significance, and as a principle by which we live - making the point that today it is usually regarded in terms of the latter.

Professor Fisher explained that there will be "a huge celebration at Runnymede [Meadows] on June 15th, which is the 800th anniversary of the sealing of the Magna Carta." This major international event will feature the Queen in attendance.

"We're doing a lot working in schools," he continues, "on the citizenship curriculum, and planning to have an annual Magna Carta day."

Silence and Confessions

Susan Easton’s *Silence and Confessions: The Suspect as the Source of Evidence* has recently been published by Palgrave Macmillan.

In *Silence and Confessions*, Easton examines the treatment of suspects in interrogation and explores issues surrounding the right to silence and confession evidence. This research monograph uses a socio-legal approach to understand the challenges in obtaining reliable evidence and maintaining the integrity of the interrogation process. The book highlights the difficulties facing vulnerable suspects and the problems of identifying and preventing false confessions.
Ready to lead? Then drop the detail

Dropping the detail and delivering the vision is vital to becoming a good leader and developing your career, according to Dean of CBASS, Professor Zahir Irani.

In an opinion piece aimed at civil service workers, Prof Irani added that knowing the difference between being a manager and a leader is also essential to get the best out of a department.

“A fundamental problem for any organisation is the blurring between management and leadership. There’s a woolly sense of difference – of there being some kind of progression from being a manager to becoming a leader due to seniority, from serving time and moving through the grades,” said Prof Irani, Dean of the College of Business, Arts and Social Sciences at Brunel University London.

“But management and leadership are entirely separate roles, demanding a different outlook, set of behaviours and way of working. Leadership is essentially a people business, where your core role is to direct, influence and guide so that people feel able and motivated to deliver the organisation’s vision. Your job is to invigorate, clarify and articulate that vision.”

Prof Irani added that leaders should be intuitive, radical and able to disrupt the norms of how things have ‘always been done’ in a department. Not every decision they make will be popular, he said, but they should give a sense of the wider picture and the direction in which an organisation is moving.

Prof Irani added: “Becoming and working as a leader, then, is not about being an increasingly senior and effective manager. There’s a jump involved. The age-old question of whether everyone is capable of making the leap, whether leaders are born or made, is not a very helpful one. In practical terms, it’s far better to agree that there is a leader in everybody that can be developed.

“Some people find the development easy, some need more help, while others will struggle, just like people would with learning to play golf or the piano.”

The full article is published in Civil Service World here.