

13 February 2020

**Re: Evolving Goldsmiths**

Dear Warden, SMT and Council,

We write this letter in the spirit of concern about the proposed changes to the College structure as described in the *Evolving Goldsmiths* plans. We want to preserve the friendly and stimulating intellectual environment which we have enjoyed for so long. At the same time, we would be more than willing to take part in a number of planning groups to work with SMT to find solutions to the challenging financial situation.

Many of us are longstanding members of staff who have seen cohorts of students, from undergraduate through to post-doctoral scholars from across the world, go on to occupy key positions across so many professional fields. We feel that the *EG* plan overlooks, and in effect disavows, our strengths and our commitment, as academics, to work productively alongside administrators, technical and support staff. This whole element of our work and its public value, the way in which we train young people to extend and replenish our various academic disciplines, seems to be sadly missing from the *EG* proposals.

Many of us feel that *EG* marks a course of action which goes beyond addressing the deficit and seems more a matter of changing, and sadly undermining, the whole culture of the College. While never a wealthy institution of the University of London, we have over the years, steered a careful course which has built a reputation for daring and exceptional thinking and in many respects we are a world-leading institution. We are sure that there are other ways of getting rid of the deficit without threatening to overturn everything that we hold dear.

Of course the loss of so many undergraduates with the removal of limits of intake for Russell Group universities requires serious attention forthwith. But might it not be a better idea to stage a series of planning initiatives that are inclusive of our community and that could attend to this urgent situation in a constructive way? Might we not also find a clearly defined period to fully confront the issues without rushing into a highly compressed restructure that is set out in two phases without details as to the second phase? In effect, we need time to devise a really excellent plan to deal with these difficult circumstances.

Our academic community has long worked together to face up to challenges. We have all worked with and alongside the SMT in a friendly everyday environment. For example, the previous warden, Pat Loughrey, when appointed, established a series of Senior Professor dinners and from these evening events a whole stream of ideas developed and have been duly implemented, for example the new Law Degree, the PPE degree and the Critical Fashion Studies seminar.

We know that on some of the current system of metrics, Goldsmiths is perceived to be in a weak position. It has always been difficult to compete with the facilities and resources of Imperial College and the LSE but our students appreciate that they get to be taught by experts in the fields, year in year out. Surely we need to find ways of defining with more precision exactly what we provide for our potential students that is both uplifting and

realistic rather than turn ourselves into a rather bland imitation of neighbouring universities in London.

In conclusion, we are very worried by the proposed School structure and the centralisation plan this entails. This seems to be at a general level a disempowering and de-skilling exercise, albeit in the name of easing the loads of Heads of Departments. We urge you to reconsider this drastic course of action and indicate our willingness to take part in productive debate.

With best wishes

Professor Victoria Alexander, ICCE

Professor Michael Archer, Art

Professor Dennis Atkinson (emeritus), Educational Studies

Professor Vikki Bell, Sociology

Professor Claudia Bernard, STaCS

Professor Joydeep Bhattacharya, Psychology

Professor Mark Bishop, Computing

Professor Lucia Boldrini, ECL

Professor Marie-Claude Canova-Green, ECL

Professor Pat Caplan, Anthropology

Professor Josh Cohen, ECL

Professor James Curran, MCCA

Professor Abby Day, Sociology

Professor Sophie Day, Anthropology

Professor Will Davies, Politics

Professor Aeron Davis, MCCA

Professor Jane Desmarais, ECL

Professor Dejan Djokic, History

Professor Tony Dowmunt, MCCA

Professor John Drever, Music

Professor Windy Dryden (emeritus), STaCS

Professor Natalie Fenton, MCCA

Professor Clare Finburgh, Theatre and Performance

Professor Marianne Franklin, M CCS  
Professor Des Freedman, M CCS  
Professor Matt Fuller, M CCS  
Professor Anna Furse, Theatre And Performance  
Professor William Gaver, Design  
Professor Rosalyn George, Educational Studies  
Professor Victoria Goddard, Anthropology  
Professor Richard Grayson, History  
Professor Monica Greco, Sociology  
Professor Alice Gregory, Psychology  
Professor Julian Henriques, M CCS  
Professor Stephen Johnstone, Art  
Professor Caroline Knowles, Sociology  
Professor Yulia Kovas, Psychology  
Professor Frank Krause, ECL  
Professor Kristen Kreider, Art  
Professor Carl Levy, Politics  
Professor David Margolies (emeritus), ECL  
Professor Adam Mars-Jones, ECL  
Professor Angela McRobbie, M CCS  
Professor David Morley, M CCS  
Professor Daniel Mullensiefen, Psychology  
Professor Kate Nash, Sociology  
Professor Michael Newman, Art  
Professor Richard Noble, Art  
Professor Osita Okagbue, Theatre And Performance  
Professor Rajyashree Pandey, Politics  
Professor Tom Perchard, Music  
Professor Angela Phillips, M CCS  
Professor Jan Plamper, History  
Professor Len Platt, Educational Studies

Professor Irit Rogoff, Visual Culture

Professor Michael Rosen, Educational Studies

Professor Marsha Rosengarten, Sociology

Professor Evelyn Ruppert, Sociology

Professor Charlotte Scott, ECL

Professor Sanjay Seth, Politics

Professor Maria Shevtsova, Theatre And Performance

Professor Cris Shore, Anthropology

Professor Atau Tanaka, Computing

Professor Anna Traianou, Educational Studies

Professor Alexander Watson, History

Professor Joanna Zylinska, MCCA