Dear Undergraduates,

Hello! My name is George Breckenridge and I’m a second-year undergraduate Geographer, studying at Fitzwilliam College. It has been a great privilege to serve as your undergraduate academic representative in the School of the Physical Sciences in 2018 – not just on the Council, but also within the educational policy committees. Having been within these structures, I have spent time learning how they operate, and come to know personally how decisions are made, as well as by whom. This is a knowledge that absolutely takes time to construct, and absolutely affects what you can get done in a role like this.

In 2018, I served simultaneously at department, faculty & school committees, and I wish to do so again in 2019 alongside my recent appointment to the reformed, university-level Exams & Assessment Committee. Whilst these roles are substantial existing commitments to student voice within the university governance, it is also their comprehensiveness that best prepares me to continue serving as your Undergraduate Representative on the Council of the School of Physical Sciences in 2019. Holding these roles simultaneously will allow me to fulfil their responsibilities most efficiently, and harness their authorities most effectively, for the purposes of greater student influence in the processes that affect them. Unless you’re on multiple committees, it is hard to get stuff done.

In 2018, in this role, my tenure oversaw serious legislative improvements for students:

- An initial rollout of lecture capture in departments of the School, and serious discussions about how this can be adopted further in remaining departments. These lobbying efforts including meeting with the Director of Education of the School, as well as the PVC’s office and department-specific proposals.
- A pro-divestment lobbying letter being officially, on-record, tabled to a meeting of the University Council via the presentation of the Vice-Chancellor.
- An influential response to consultation of proposals for the introduction of a ‘Foundation Year’, which formed a substantial part of the School’s supportive response to the since-implemented proposals.
- Appointment to the reformed Board of Examinations, giving the School of Physical Science students a representative with real weight at university-level governance in 2018/19.

In 2019, I hope to renew these efforts through re-election, bringing about:

- An effective implementation of lecture recording in the Department of Geography, to complement existing trials to be rolled out further for lecture capture within the wider School.
- A campaign focused on the welfare issues related to examinations, with a review of how assessment is undertaken and viewed in the Natural Sciences Tripos & Mathematical Tripos.
- A continued commitment to access issues, with affirmative support of ‘foundation-year’ proposals and reviews of the university’s current approaches to student admissions from disadvantaged backgrounds.

I promise to be an active and honest representative for students of the School of the Physical Sciences, and to serve the role with the dedication that it’s honorable responsibilities command, so far as is possible and appropriate. I do indeed hope this extensive manifesto serves to demonstrate that I have the enthusiasm, experience and commitment required to be your representative for 2019.

Many thanks, George Breckenridge, Part IB, Geography – Fitzwilliam College