

SRC MEETING

25th August 2020

AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Acknowledgement of Country
3. Apologies and Proxies
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Accept July General SRC Meeting Minutes and Executive meeting minutes from dates: 26-05-2020, 2-06-2020, 16-06-2020, 22-06-2020, 25-06-2020, 13-07-2020, 3-08-2020
6. Office Bearer Reports
7. Elections Returning Officer Pay
8. Election Regulations
9. End of current terms motion
10. Bylaws motion
11. International Collective social media budget motion
12. Enviro Seed Planting Reimbursement
13. Fossil Fuel Divestment Motion
14. Sustainable Bluebird Brekkie and Night Owl Noodles
15. General Business

ATTENDANCE

	NAME	POSITION
1.	Ahmed Ferkh (arrives 6:00pm)	Welfare Officer
2.	Aidan O'Rourke	Assistant Secretary
3.	Camille Smith	Observer
4.	Christina Markovska	Caseworker
5.	Erin Dalton	Education Vice-President
6.	Jessica Hill (leaves 6:10pm)	SA Reception
7.	Josh Logue (arrives 7:00pm)	Councillor
8.	Juneyt Cihan	Councillor
9.	Mariah Brown	Executive Officer
10.	Mehmet Musa	Observer
11.	Melissa Sukkarieh	Queer Officer/Councillor
12.	Melodie Grafton	General Councillor
13.	Miles Carter	General Councillor
14.	Miranda Crossley	Secretary
15.	Nick Esse	Observer
16.	Sam Silcock	President
17.	Tallulah Watson Moyle	Treasurer

25-08-2020 MINUTES

1. *Opening of the meeting*

Meeting opened at 5:41pm on the 25th August via Zoom

2. *Acknowledgement of Country*

President delivers Acknowledgement of Country

3. Apologies and Proxies

Aiden More proxies to 1. Harrison White, 2. Bella Forti 3. Erin Dalton

Erin accepts

Harrison White proxies to 1. Erin Dalton, 2. Bella Forti

Proxy lapses

Jeylan Riza proxies to 1. Juneyt Cihan, 2. Tallulah Watson Moyle and 3. Miranda Crossley

Juneyt accepts

Ahmad Mohamed proxies to 1. Aidan O'Rourke, 2. Juneyt Cihan

Aidan accepts

Shlok Kumar proxies to 1. Josh Logue, 2. Ahmad Mohamed and 3. Aidan O'Rourke 4. Tallulah Watson Moyle

Tallulah accepts

Kurt Cheng apologises

(late) Bella Forti proxies to 1. Erin Dalton

Proxy fails

4. Declarations of Interest

None

5. Approval of July General SRC Meeting Minutes and Executive meeting minutes

Motion to accept the July General SRC Meeting Minutes and Executive meeting minutes from dates: 26-05-2020, 2-06-2020, 16-06-2020, 22-06-2020, 25-06-2020, 13-07-2020, 3-08-2020 on block

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Juneyt Cihan

Motion carried unanimously

6. Office Bearer Reports

Motion to accept all Officer Bearer reports as read

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Aidan O'Rourke

Motion carried unanimously

7. Election Returning Officer Pay

Motion to hire Philip Binns as Returning Officer for the elections held in 2020 and to pay him an upper spend limit \$10,000 for his services.

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Miranda Crossley

Motion carried unanimously

8. Election Regulations

Motion to pass a new set of election regulations to be applicable for the elections taking place in 2020.

Discussion:

- Clarification sought around whether online material counted within the limit in 13.1.6.
- Suggested amendment for 13.1.6 Overspending to read:

13.1.6 Overspending: Using funds, stationery, equipment, supplies, including online materials and promotion, to the value of more than \$100.00 per candidate and/or \$500 per list; whichever is lower

- Amendment is amenable to the mover

Motion to pass a new set of election regulations to be applicable for the elections taking place in 2020 (and an ongoing basis) as disrupted by the secretary on the 24th of August and as amended in this SRC meeting on the 25th of August 2020

Moved by: Aidan O'Rourke

Seconded by Erin Dalton

Motion carried unanimously

9. End of current terms motion

In accordance with the constitution passed in 2019, the current Executive and SRC and Vertigo teams terms expire on the 16th of November 2020 with stipends to be paid in accordance to the by-laws passed in 2015, and, the new Executive and SRC and Vertigo terms will commence on the 16th of November 2020.

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Miranda Crossley

Motion carried unanimously

10. Bylaws motion

To pass by-laws as attached to take effect for the start of the term of office of the Executive and SRC.

Discussion:

- President indicates accidental error about the welfare and education not being on council in most recently updated constitution.
 - President reports that lawyers have stated including the correction in bylaws is sufficient but, in the future, will need to be included in the constitution.

Amendment: 11.1 The Education Officer and Welfare Officer of the Students' Association will hold membership of the SRC.

- Amenable to mover
- Suggestion that the pay for Assistant General Secretary should be \$8000 (as it was in the first draft of the bylaws)
 - Brief discussion with no significant dissent to the amendment

Amendment: for the Assistant General Secretary stipend to be replaced as \$8000

- Amenable to mover

Ahmed Ferkh arrives 6:00pm

To pass by-laws as attached to take effect to take effect immediately (with exceptions of sections 1, 2 3, and 11 which will take effect on the 16th of November) as sent out by the secretary on the 24th of August and as amended in this SRC meeting on the 25th of August 2020.

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Aidan O'Rourke

Motion carried unanimously

11. International Collective social media budget motion

Withdrawn

12. Enviro Seed Planting Reimbursement

Motion to approve a reimbursement of \$61.40 to Anna Thieben for the purchase of seeds to distribute to students to promote sustainable practices in line with the Enviro Collective's seed planting initiative.

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Miranda Crossley

Motion carried unanimously

13. Fossil Fuel Divestment Motion

Preamble

UTS prides itself on its sustainable buildings and initiatives and in September last year became the first Australian university to declare a climate emergency. However, UTS still invests millions of dollars with TCorp. Even though the UTS Sustainability Steering Committee have been asking for clarity from TCorp about UTS' contribution to the fossil fuel industry. We are still not getting answers. Time is running out and UTS must actively remove its support from the companies that are constantly destroying sacred Indigenous sites; murdering fragile species; and poisoning water, air and soil. By the next Sustainability Steering Committee meeting, the UTSSA must show we stand together with staff and that we strongly condemn the idea that UTS may still continue to fund environmental degradation.

If we remain complacent, we are, ourselves, responsible for mass ecosystem collapse; species extinction; millions of climate refugees; and the destruction and death as a result of increasing natural disasters. We must hold the university that is supposedly environmentally conscious accountable for their actions.

Platform

1. That the UTSSA acknowledges climate change is human extinction
2. That the UTSSA stands up for student issues. The increasingly huge turnout at climate rallies in recent years indicates that students are genuinely terrified about their future. Universities must not ignore the science and the fear.
3. That the UTSSA acknowledges that any funds that UTS invests in the fossil fuel industry is unnecessary and should be immediately divested.

Action

1. That the SRC empower the secretary to write a letter to the Vice Chancellor demanding that UTS reinvest all funds currently invested in fossil fuels to more ethical sources.
2. That the UTSSA will consistently work towards holding UTS accountable if they ignore the demand of this letter.

Moved by: Juneyt Cihan

Seconded by: Miranda Crossley

Motion carried unanimously

14. Sustainable Bluebird Brekkie and Night Owl Noodles

Preamble:

The Bluebird Brekkie and Night Owl Noodle initiative is a fantastic welfare initiative for students. While sustainable options are available for students to choose, the UTSSA should consistently support having ethical and sustainable food available in order to not support environmental degradation. The contribution of livestock to the global warming effect is greater than that of the worldwide transport sector. Plant-based foods have lower green-house gas emissions than animal-based foods and therefore decreasing our intake of animal products is necessary to decrease our carbon footprint.

Individual action is sometimes criticised as not being sufficient to prevent climate change from having further devastating impacts. However, as the UTSSA is an association that feeds thousands of people each year. Just as one example, one litre of cow's milk requires 628 litres to produce whereas soy milk requires only 28 litres to produce one litre. In a scenario where 100 bluebird brekkie bags are handed out in a week, by handing out only soy milk instead of cow's milk, the UTSSA would be saving 60,000 litres of water in one single week. The UTSSA should not continue to support the animal agriculture industry. It is an industry that significantly harms the environment, murders animals, has one of the highest suicide rates for employees (within abattoirs), and contributes significantly to climate change. Other universities have already transitioned their welfare food packages/initiatives to plant-based. The UTSSA should not be left behind.

Platform:

- That the UTSSA acknowledges the use of unsustainable products in Bluebird Brekkie and Night Owl Noodles and acknowledges these purchases should cease.

Actions:

- That the SRC empower the secretary to work with the executive officer (and anyone else appropriate) to transition the UTSSA's brekkie and noodles to have consistently sustainable products/meals

In depth discussion surrounding this motion with many attendees speaking against the motion

- Secretary gives context to the motion and its relevance for the Students' Association to adopt given context of previous motion passed (Fossil Fuel Divestment Motion)
- Secretary reports on research undertaken over past few days where over 50 current UTS students signed a petition acknowledging and supporting:
 - If they were to receive a free breakfast bag they would be happy for it to be sustainable and plant-based (and therefore by default, halal)
 - They support the UTSSA in taking necessary steps to reduce its carbon footprint
 - They agree that student welfare is not compromised by handing out plant-based, sustainable and ethical products/meals. Animal welfare does not sacrifice student welfare.
- Majority of meeting attendees state they believe having the option of soy milk or oat milk takes away options/choices from vulnerable students and this motion compromises student welfare
- Many state the research from the petition is not sufficient and more research should be undertaken
- Compromises discussed

Motion to read

Motion: To empower the secretary to work with Christina and Mariah to formulate a survey surrounding the question: "The UTSSA is investigating ways to reduce its environmental impact, reduce the number of animals killed for human consumption, and provide healthier options for students. Would you still use these services if soy and oat milk were the only available milks instead of cow's milk?" The survey will be anonymous, and staff will provide those who have accessed it in the past. The intention is to move towards more sustainable bluebird and Night Owl noodles, if it does not reduce the number of people who will access this service.

Moved by: Miles Carter

Seconded by: Tallulah Watson Moyle

Motion carried unanimously

15. General Business

Motion to discuss the motion Opposition to punitive removal of governmental support for students

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Miranda Crossley

Motion carried unanimously

Motion is discussed

Motion: Opposition to punitive removal of governmental support for students

Preamble:

Adding further to the attacks that have already been levied against the tertiary education sector, and students more broadly, last week, the Education Minister, Dan Tehan, announced that students who fail

at least half of their first subjects at the end of their first year or after will have their government support withdrawn. This includes the freezing of their ability to defer fees through HECS or HELP loans and the removal of their Commonwealth Supported Place, as well as eligibility for study-related Centrelink payments. Students and young people are already at a huge disadvantage in terms of job prospects, mental health outcomes, financial stability, support for disabilities, and so much more. Cutting students out of study if they are struggling, rather than extending additional support, is draconian, and clearly shows that the government does not care about us.

Platform:

1. The UTSSA condemns the proposed removal of government support to struggling students.
2. The UTSSA affirms that students who are struggling deserve increased support.
3. The UTSSA recognises that these changes will disproportionately affect already marginalised student groups, including people with disabilities or mental health conditions, low SES students, and students with other barriers to educational access and support.

Action:

1. The UTSSA will share the NUS post regarding this change from our social media channels.
2. The UTSSA will call on students to attend the National Day of Action planned for the 28th of August, in whatever capacity they can.
3. The UTSSA will work with the NUS in opposing these continuing attacks on students.

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Aidan O'Rourke

Motion passed unanimously

Presentation from Nick Esse who has developed an app for elections

- Nick gives background as to how the app can connect voters to politicians without taking student data
- Members of exec state the returning officer's oversight is important and that the decision should be made by them.
- The returning officer will be empowered to make the decision on this matter

Meeting closed at 7:28pm 25th of August 2020

President's Report

With the start of the new semester I hope that everyone is settling into their new classes whether it be online or on campus. So far this semester it seems like most classes will still be continuing online and many students have been requesting online learning over physical learning on campus.

One of the disappointing things recently has been due to such a high demand of erequests to move out of in person subjects and back onto online learning and staff cuts at the enquiry centre there has been somewhat of a drop off in the timeliness of processing of erequests. Whilst this has been the case in my experience in previous semesters this time it seemed uniquely bad. I brought up this issue with Shirley and she informed me that she had reversed some of the cuts to staff within the week leading up to the census date to speed up the processing of erequests, however, most faculties were still over three weeks behind on erequests by the time census date came about. Whilst we often may focus on academic staff jobs being kept to maintain quality of learning and academic standards we must also fight for administration of the University to be as efficient and timely as possible. Slower administration processes lead to worse outcomes for students especially those that are in a vulnerable situations.

Recently myself and the Vice President participated in a meeting to discuss academic integrity at University and we provided feedback regarding ways in which the University could better ensure academic integrity is upheld at the university. I think that this area is one in which we could try to assist with in the future as it will add value to our organisation for students - if we take responsibility at make academic integrity an issue at the forefront of students minds then we can greatly benefit students.

One of the more difficult aspects of recent times has been writing the new election regulations which have now been edited several times in order to allow for an online election to be taken place. It now looks as if all aspects of the elections is broadly ready to go except for a few specifics that will need to be looked into.

Education Vice President's Report

This past month has been busy in terms of governance of the UTSSA. The Executive and I have been working on finalising our bylaws and election regulations, both of which are long overdue. Proper governance structures are essential to ensure that we are able to ensure accountability and transparency, proper process and procedure, and effective communication of roles and expectations. Our election regulations are particularly important, as they will be used to determine how our election runs in a year with unprecedented disruptions to our normal procedure. The election this year will determine who will be responsible for the UTSSA for next year, which I am sure will be full of its own unique challenges, as well as lingering impacts from COVID.

Beyond governance, I have been continuing to work on operational parts of the UTSSA's support measures for students and the planning for the August 28th National Day of Action. I have also met with representatives of the University regarding the online learning transition and academic integrity changes, which are liable to be a focus of the University going forward. I also had the opportunity to be involved in a livestream informational session and Q&A alongside Sam and Miranda. We were able to explain the UTSSA's role to a number of students, as well as discussing some of the support services we are providing. Overall, I would like to see more opportunities for students to meet their representatives and learn more about the UTSSA and what we do.

I will continue to be working on the ongoing fight against fee hikes. I would encourage everyone to attend the national day of action on August 28, as well as any other actions, and to get involved in the UTS Education Action Group. As always, if you have any questions or concerns, or wish to be further involved, please talk to me in person or get in contact with me at education@utsstudentsassociation.org.

Thank you,

Erin Dalton

Education Vice-President

Secretary's report

Much of this month I have spent focusing on supporting collectives. I have begun writing an article with the welfare collective to push UTS to have more prayer spaces in more accessible locations. I hope you all would have by now seen the video that has been shared widely promoting collectives. I took a lead role in ensuring the videos were submitted and in editing the final video. Thank you so much to collective officers and members for helping make sure this all came together. At a recent welfare meeting it was hugely rewarding to hear new members saying they joined because of that video as it was able to show real students in a friendly and approachable manner. This is something I think the SA sometimes struggles to demonstrate to the student population.

The two motions I've written that I trust will get voted up today have sprung from the work I've been doing within but also somewhat removed from the SA. Part of this is the honours project I've begun which is looking at how universities, like UTS, can minimise their impact on the planet and support sustainable initiatives. I was recently invited to speak at the Science Sustainability Committee meeting where they agreed to fully support a letter that the SA would write to the Vice Chancellor demanding UTS divest from harmful fossil fuels. This meeting was in addition to multiple other correspondences and meetings with staff and students at UTS I've engaged in about their passionate and growing commitment to sustainability. While making UTS completely carbon neutral may not be within the scope of the SA, I'm confident that by representing concerned students and taking a stance along side staff members we can leverage UTS to take the right step forward in divesting from fossil fuels.

I thank all those who have been so committed to the often 'behind the scenes' work of putting together the Bylaws and Election regulations. In particular Sam, thanks for your dedication and commitment to this.

If anyone has any questions or feedback to how I've been approaching the role of secretary this year, I am always here to listen.

Treasurer's report

This month we discussed the upcoming election and how we will usher in the next generation of student representatives. Tonight's meeting is very important for progressing our work in preparing for 2021.

This is always a hectic time of the year and with Covid-19 proving to still be a threat, I stress the importance of recognising and celebrating every achievement, no matter the size.

So, in saying that, I thank everyone for their time in attending this meeting and for adding to the discussions.

Please look after yourselves and stay safe.

Assistant Secretary's Report

The executives' focus over the last month has been on the operation of the union and setting the association up for our transition to new governance.

Firstly, we have discussed carefully the election regulations for this year's election in addition to the By-laws which will come into effect for weeks from today if they are passed. There has been a considerable amount of communication over these documents in the hope we can rectify the institutional and governance gaps which currently exist.

Secondly, since the council adopted the motion to endorse the 'raise the rate' campaign I have put up a post with the view to put up more posts in the future under the authority of the second action point. The welfare collective has also discussed plans to create some infrastructure to create and continue momentum on the issue.

Thirdly, progress on consolidating the association's policies has continued. To date, I have association policies and procedures enacted this year up until (and excluding) the last meeting. Policies and procedures yet to be included are those moved last meeting, pending the minutes being taken as a true and accurate record. Inherently, collecting the changing policies and procedures is ongoing.

Fourthly, I would like to state my vehement opposition to Dan Tehan's attacks on students and note the productive correspondence amongst the exec on that issue. I also note that there is a motion condemning these attacks this meeting.

Lastly, I have been invited to participate in a conversation with the university regarding the use of smart technology and the use of smart technology to make campus life easier for students. I encourage members to reach out and offer their thoughts on how the university could better use technology appropriately and consistently with students' needs.

Thank you.

Wom*n's Office Bearer Report

Welfare Office Bearer Report

After Clubs Day we have seen a great turn out in our Welfare Collective meetings. Students have made great contributions to our forum and have expressed their experiences on student welfare.

We have discussed the shortcomings and underfunding of the UTS counselling service. Some students have expressed concern regarding the lack of experience of student counsellors. Additionally, students have conveyed the difficulty seeing different counsellors and telling their painful stories repeatedly, with no tangible solution or outcomes to problems with their mental health.

Regretfully, we concluded that it will be difficult and near impossible to effectively run a campaign on the understaffing and underfunding of these services. We have found the issues students face are systemic problems far beyond the capabilities of our ever-growing collective, and would need to be run on a national scale. We decided to focus on raising awareness of the alternative avenues students can take to receive stable treatment for mental health. For example, the Welfare Collective could hold an event on the 10 free visits provided through Medicare.

Our Collective is also dedicated to fight for the raise the rate campaign. We are investigating the feasibility of running an online forum, possibly an anonymous confessions style forum, for UTS students struggling with welfare payments. The Collective could send responses to a responsible minister or a member of parliament to demand change. As we know the government is planning its snap back on Centrelink payments next month, and \$40 a day is an unliveable option for many people.

Moreover, our collective has expressed interest in contribution to the Bluebird Brekkie campaign by volunteering or carpooling to deliver brekkie bags.

In summary, I am very optimistic for the future of our collective as a forum for UTS students to engage in very important student issues.

I want to take this opportunity to express my deepest regret that the temporary prayer spaces intended for Muslims to utilise under the current campus learning arrangements were shut down until further notice. This means that Muslims will need to pray in whatever empty space they can find around campus, some which are very unhygienic, until University management finds an alternative prayer space. It is simply unacceptable that a person must place their heads on a dirty floor where other people have stepped, especially during a time where hygiene is of utmost importance. We are prepared to address this in the article which we are currently writing. The Collective will distribute our article to stakeholder clubs for endorsement. But in the meantime I would like the UTSSA to act swiftly because students of faith are currently being left in limbo.

Agenda item 7. Elections Returning Officer Pay

To hire Philip Binns as Returning Officer for the elections held in 2020 and to pay him an upper spend limit \$10,000 for his services.

Agenda item 8. Election Regulations

Motion to pass a new set of election regulations to be applicable for the elections taking place in 2020.

Agenda item 9. End of current terms motion

In accordance with the constitution passed in 2019, the current Executive and SRC and Vertigo teams terms expire on the 16th of November with stipends to be paid in accordance to the by-laws passed in 2015, and, the new Executive and SRC and Vertigo terms will commence on the 16th of November.

Agenda Item 10. By-laws motion

To pass by-laws as attached to take effect for the start of the term of office of the Executive and SRC.

Agenda item 11. International Collective social media budget motion

Motion to pass an upper spend limit of ~~\$450~~ for Facebook page promotion for ~~180~~ days for the International Collective

Agenda item 12. Enviro Seed Planting Reimbursement

Motion to approve a reimbursement of \$61.40 to Anna Thieben for the purchase of seeds to distribute to students to promote sustainable practices in line with the Enviro Collective's seed planting initiative. This was below the upper spending limit of \$150 originally allocated.

13. Fossil Fuel Divestment Motion

Preamble

UTS prides itself on its sustainable buildings and initiatives and in September last year became the first Australian university to declare a climate emergency. However, UTS still invests millions of dollars with TCorp. Even though the UTS Sustainability Steering Committee have been asking for clarity from TCorp about UTS' contribution to the fossil fuel industry. We are still not getting answers. Time is running out and UTS must actively remove its support from the companies that are constantly destroying sacred Indigenous sites; murdering fragile species; and poisoning water, air and soil. By the next Sustainability Steering Committee meeting, the UTSSA must show we stand together with staff and that we strongly condemn the idea that UTS may still continue to fund environmental degradation.

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Platform

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1. That the SRC empower the secretary to write a letter to the Vice Chancellor demanding that UTS reinvest all funds currently invested in fossil fuels to more ethical sources.
2. That the UTSSA will consistently work towards holding UTS accountable if they ignore the demand of this letter.

14. Sustainable Bluebird Brekkie and Night Owl Noodles

Preamble:

The Bluebird Brekkie and Night Owl Noodle initiative is a fantastic welfare initiative for students. While sustainable options are available for students to choose, the UTSSA should consistently support having ethical and sustainable food available in order to not support environmental degradation. The contribution of livestock to the global warming effect is greater than that of the worldwide transport sector. Plant-based foods have lower green-house gas emissions than animal-based foods and therefore decreasing our intake of animal products is necessary to decrease our carbon footprint.

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- That the SRC empower the secretary to work with the executive officer (and anyone else appropriate) to transition the UTSSA's brekkie and noodles to have consistently sustainable products/meals

Proposed general business motion

Motion: Opposition to punitive removal of governmental support for students

Preamble:

Adding further to the attacks that have already been levied against the tertiary education sector, and students more broadly, last week, the Education Minister, Dan Tehan, announced that students who fail at least half of their first subjects at the end of their first year or after will have their government support withdrawn. This includes the freezing of their ability to defer fees through HECS or HELP loans and the removal of their Commonwealth Supported Place, as well as eligibility for study-related Centrelink payments. Students and young people are already at a huge disadvantage in terms of job prospects, mental health outcomes, financial stability, support for disabilities, and so much more. Cutting students out of study if they are struggling, rather than extending additional support, is draconian, and clearly shows that the government does not care about us.

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1. The UTSSA will share the NUS post regarding this change from our social media channels.
2. The UTSSA will call on students to attend the National Day of Action planned for the 28th of August, in whatever capacity they can.
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