

## SRC MEETING

12<sup>th</sup> May 2020

### AGENDA

1. Opening of the Meeting
2. Acknowledgement of Country
3. Apologies and Proxies
4. Declarations of Interest
5. Accept April Minutes
6. Office Bearer Reports
7. Peer Tutoring Online Forms Quote
8. CISA Membership Renewal
9. Multifaith online campaign expense
10. Online exam invigilation concerns
11. Enviro Collective Reimbursements
12. Queer Education Week expenses
13. COVID-19 Survey Analysis
14. Peer Tutoring Vouchers
15. Data subsidies
16. COVID-19 Discussion
17. General Business

### ATTENDANCE

|     | NAME                              | POSITION                 |
|-----|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1.  | Ahmed Ferkh                       | Welfare Officer          |
| 2.  | Aidan O'Rourke                    | Assistant Secretary      |
| 3.  | Biljana O'Connor                  | Marketing Manager        |
| 4.  | Christina Markovska               | Caseworker               |
| 5.  | Erin Dalton                       | Education Vice-President |
| 6.  | Frances Dougenis                  | SA Reception             |
| 7.  | Harrison White                    | General Councillor       |
| 8.  | Jessica Hill                      | SA Reception             |
| 9.  | Jeylan Riza                       | General Councillor       |
| 10. | Josh Hernandez                    | Enviro Officer           |
| 11. | Lisa Windon                       | Caseworker               |
| 12. | Mansingh Jatav                    | Overseas Officer         |
| 13. | Mariah Brown                      | Executive Officer        |
| 14. | Mehmet Musa                       | Observer                 |
| 15. | Melissa Sukkarieh (leaves 5:28pm) | Queer Officer/Councillor |
| 16. | Melodie Grafton                   | General Councillor       |
| 17. | Miles Carter                      | General Councillor       |
| 18. | Miranda Crossley                  | Secretary                |
| 19. | Sam Silcock                       | President                |
| 20. | Shlok Kumar                       | Postgraduate Officer     |
| 21. | Tallulah Watson Moyle             | Treasurer                |

## **12-05-2020 MINUTES**

### *1. Opening of the meeting*

Meeting opened at 5:05pm on the 12<sup>th</sup> May 2020 via Zoom

### *2. Acknowledgement of Country*

President delivers Acknowledgement of Country

### *3. Apologies and Proxies*

**Aiden Moore** proxies to 1. Harrison White and 2. Bella Forti

Harrison accepts

**Priyanshu Bhardwaj** proxies to 1. Shlok Kumar

Shlok accepts

**Juneyt Cihan** proxies to 1. Jeylan Riza

Jeylan accepts

**Josh Logue** proxies to 1. Tallulah Watson-Moyle and 2. Juneyt Cihan

Tallulah accepts

**Ahmad Mohammad** proxies to 1. Aidan O'Rourke and 2. Juneyt Cihan

Aidan accepts

### *4. Declarations of Interest*

None

### *5. Approval of April Minutes*

**Motion to accept the April Minutes as a true and accurate record**

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Tallulah Watson Moyle

Motion carried unanimously

### *6. Office Bearer Reports*

President delivers office bearer report (encl.)

Education Vice President delivers office bearer report (encl.)

Secretary delivers office bearer report (encl.)

Treasurer delivers office bearer report (encl.)

Assistant Secretary delivers office bearer report (encl.)

Welfare Officer delivers officer bearer report (encl.)

**Motion to accept Women's Officer bearer report as read (encl.)**

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Tallulah Watson Moyle

Motion carried unanimously

Overseas Officer delivers officer bearer report (encl.)

**Motion to accept all Officer Bearer reports**

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Tallulah Watson Moyle

Motion carried unanimously

*7. Peer Tutoring Online Forms Quote (encl.)*

**To approve BigFish quote of \$2,050 ex gst for the development work required to make Peer Tutoring forms online.**

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Miranda Crossley

Motion carried unanimously

*8. CISA Membership Renewal (encl.)*

**Motion to approve the affiliation fee of \$484 to renew the Council of International Students Australia membership**

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Tallulah Watson Moyle

Motion carried unanimously

*9. Multifaith online campaign expense (encl.)*

**Motion to move for the approval of an upper spend limit of \$60.00 for the promotion of the Multifaith Rooms campaign online.**

Moved by: Aidan O'Rourke

Seconded by: Erin Dalton

Motion carried unanimously

*Melissa Sukkarieh leaves at 5:28pm*

*10. Online exam invigilation concerns (encl.)*

**Motion to discuss the Student Privacy motion in this Agenda item**

Moved by: Aidan O'Rourke

Seconded by: Tallulah Watson Moyle

Motion carried unanimously and can therefore be discussed

**Student Privacy**

**Preamble:**

Proctor U and other comparable online invigilation programs can expose many students to privacy risks due to the invasive nature of its software. Such programs can capture and store biometric data, view the participant and their environment, and automatically make determinations as to whether a student is cheating. This data may also be onsold to third parties in limited circumstances. This data is personal and is taken from participants without fair warning or any ability to opt-out.

Additionally, had students known about the mandated use of this software in conducting their exams, many would have made alternative arrangements through their study schedules, or dropped out of subjects if they had concerns. The fact that this is being rushed through under the cover of secrecy means that these students will have less than four weeks to lodge any complaints or voice their concerns. Student privacy is a right that all students at UTS are entitled to, and online invigilation programs invade our privacy. The removal of choice from students and the lack of broad consultation, as well as the last-minute announcements of these changes serve only to exacerbate the severity of these impacts.

Moreover, such programs may unfairly punish students during an exam by limiting their movement and unnecessarily expose students to academic misconduct warnings, where automated reports will mean the prospect of successful advocacy on behalf of students by caseworkers will be severely limited.

**Platform:**

- The SRC raises concerns about the potential invasion of students' privacy by online invigilation programs.
- The SRC is concerned that some students may find it difficult to connect to live exams due to connectivity and network issues, as well as hardware incompatibility and shortages.
- The SRC understand the impact of privacy concerns of students, and questions why the proposed use of these programs was not brought to the attention of all students at an earlier point in time.

**Action:**

**The President and Education Vice-President raise these concerns with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Education and Students) and other relevant management staff.**

Discussion

- Clarification and discussion around how many exams are being affected

Moved by: Aidan O'Rourke

Seconded by: Tallulah Watson Moyle

Motion carried unanimously

### *11. Enviro Collective Reimbursements*

11.1 To pass an upper spending limit of \$200 for the collective's O'Day preparations of which \$12.01 was used by Melissa Sukkarieh

Motion doesn't need to be passed as it has previously been passed.

**11.2 To reimburse Josh Hernandez \$4.99 for the rental of "2040" during the Collective's Movie Night of Thu 30 April.**

Moved by: Miranda Crossley

Seconded by: Erin Dalton

Motion carried unanimously

### *12. Queer Education Week expenses*

Preamble: The queer collective is currently organising a queer education week to be held online. The education week involves bringing in speakers to run workshops and seminars over zoom, topics to be discussed including decolonising queer spaces, queer legal rights/ services, and queer identity. The money passed will go into paying three speakers.

**Motion: To pass upwards spending limit of \$600 to run an online queer education week**

- **Secretay gives background at request of Queer Officers (unable to attend)**
- **Melodie Grafton gives further details to the running of the event**

Moved by: Melodie Grafton

Seconded by: Miles Carter

Motion carried unanimously

### *13. COVID-19 Survey Analysis*

- Secretary indicates that full detailed analysis will be available soon as there have been difficulties in arranging times for exec members to work through the extensive qualitative responses.
- Secretary highlights some of the key findings which include:
  - Significant impact on first and final year students
  - Significant impact and serious recurring complaints from International Students
  - Overall varied response, but common impacts are the effect on mental health and ability to stay focused
  - Dissatisfaction with online learning

*14. Peer Tutoring Vouchers*

**Motion for \$3000 to purchase up to one hundred and fifty (150) \$20 Woolworths eGift vouchers to continue the UTSSA Peer Tutor Program promotion. The promotion closes on the 15th of June 2020 and offers currently enrolled UTS students a \$20 Woolworths eGift voucher sent to their UTS student email account if they either:**

- sign up to become a tutor via the required method
- request a tutor via the required method

Moved by: Erin Dalton

Seconded by: Tallulah Watson Moyle

Motion carried unanimously

*15. Data subsidies*

**Motion to discuss the Data Subsidies motion**

Moved by: Aidan O'Rourke

Seconded by: Erin Dalton

Motion carried unanimously, can now address this point

**Data Subsidies**

**Preamble:** In response to survey data the executive has developed a scheme in regards to providing more accessibility to online resources for students by ensuring we can provide workable solutions to improving internet for students. In order to do this we decided that the best strategy would be to compensate data plans through visa vouchers. I have been in discussions today about ensuring this is provided to people that have accessed the hardship fund and Brett Smout is conferring with his team about how to do this without using too much labour and without breaching confidentiality. The main benefit to us through using this system is that it would cater to students who specifically need financial support and cater to people no matter who their data provider is. It also stops us from needing to spend excess money on technology which would be obsolescent within a month or two.

**Motion:** To provide an upper spending limit to the data subsidies program of \$20,000 to be spent on \$25 Visa card vouchers to be distributed to students referred to us by UTS Financial

Moved by: Aidan O'Rourke

Seconded by: Miranda Crossley

Motion carried unanimously

*16. COVID-19 Discussion*

- Discussion on Vertigo and concerns about lack of online content despite reminders
  - Past president recommends to cut budget if there is still little progress
- Breakfast bags: good engagement,

- Staff clarify that students must book first to get a bag (by sending an email)

**13. *General Business***

*No general business*

Meeting closed at 6:07pm 12<sup>th</sup> of May 2020

## **President's Report**

Since the last SRC meeting we've been working on expanding the ideas that were discussed in the last SRC. Our survey has come back a success with many answers which the Exec have been thoroughly examining to ensure we are listening to the concerns of the student population as best possible. In response to the survey we have started up or converted several services – we have created the bluebird brekkie bags as a highly demanded food service for us to provide for students. I believe that offering free food is a great tangible benefit and is one of the most successful programs that we ever provide so being able to persist in doing so during a global pandemic. We are also working with UTS Financial to provide subsidies for students' mobile data plans – this isn't a completed plan yet and am still in communication with the University in creating an eligibility scheme for the service – hopefully I have had some progress between writing this and the meeting. Additionally, we have transitioned our caseworker service to also provide advice about hardship funds and Centrelink payments – this should allow students to have a much greater ability to understand the processes that can provide financial assistance to them during the pandemic.

I have also been in many discussions with the University about certain issues. One of the most notable achievements from those discussions was that there after me arguing that it is abundantly necessary for there to be an extension to the closure of TCM due to many TCM classes being cancelled for this semester. There has been a 6 month extension implemented so far and there will possibly be an additional 6 months.

Other issues discussed include various methods of how the process of invigilated exams are to occur this year, how the staged return plan to University will work, the processes surrounding Summer 2020 and making it as accessible as possible to detract from any missed opportunities for study from this pandemic, Higher Degree Research students extensions for time to study, and, changing of plans in regards to passes and fails. I encourage members of council to attend our regular Tuesday executive meetings in which I frequently discuss these issues in far greater depth.

I was asked to report back to the council in regards to my questioning about a 10% fee reduction for international students which had rather bad reception when it was brought up by Mansingh to the DVC and the provost and when I brought it up to the DVC. The main takeaway being that the official answer is no to fee reductions and that there is a significant hardship fund for students to access in case they are suffering financial difficulty. It was also noted that there would never be a case where international students would be prioritised for fee reductions before domestic students regardless.

Please contact me at [president@utsstudentsassociation.org](mailto:president@utsstudentsassociation.org) if you require any more information about our advocacy, services, or, wish to present to me issues to advocate on.



## **Education Vice President's Report**

In the past month, I have been working with the other members of the Executive across a wide range of areas. I have attended a meeting with University Management about their proposed rollout of online invigilation software to be used during the current exam period, and am anticipating a further meeting with them once they have confirmed which particular system they will be using, in order to bring our concerns to them and seek to address the potential for serious privacy impacts. We have been conducting weekly Executive meetings, which have helped us stay connected and coordinated in this difficult time, and I am also pleased to say that we have brought forward a number of new student support initiatives.

I have also been continuing to advocate for students around changes to grading and assessments for this semester, but University management are unwilling to address these concerns. I have drafted a number of open letters, which will be distributed across a number of channels and addressed to the faculties, with the intent of getting them onboard with these essential changes.

We have also finished a large part of our analysis of the results of our survey, and will be making use of the valuable data we've obtained to inform our decision-making about services and support, as well as to argue our case to the University about why more supports are urgently needed by students. 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.au](mailto:education@utsstudentsassociation.org.au)

Thank you,

Erin Dalton

Education Vice-President

## **Secretary's report**

It seems not too long since my last report and since last SRC I have largely been focusing on the survey results. Its imperative that we compile these results and act upon the findings as soon as possible.

Collating the responses from the qualitative survey questions has been hugely informative. It was grounding and often heartbreaking to read how so many students are in need of desperate support, mentally and financially. It was very reassuring to learn that we are on the right track in the support we are currently and aiming to give students. But there are still gaps and more things we should be working towards. Particularly with regards to International students. I appreciate the help of the executive committee and the welfare officer in reading through and sorting these responses. It is so important that every student is heard.

With more frequent executive meetings I am happy with the initiative we are working towards with subsidising data plans for students with poor internet connection. The responses in the survey has reaffirmed that this is important.

I am looking forward to the various updates in today's meeting and what will come from the motions we hopefully pass. I am impressed how proactive the collectives have been despite the current circumstances being so difficult to stay motivated.

Once again, please feel free to get in touch with me if you have any concerns.

## **Treasurer's report**

I am very proud of the strides we have made this month. We have begun the Bluebird Brekkie bags for students who are struggling financially as we believe food is, of course, an absolute essential. I hope to see this continue for the duration of this nation-wide lockdown because I know from personal experience, that when faced with almost insurmountable stress, eating enough in a day can too often lose priority. And this is obviously compounded when money is tight.

I am also super proud of the effort the team has put into painstakingly analysing the survey data. It has taken a lot, but I believe it was worth it and I hope that this can help us in tailoring our services to students' current experiences. Through this analysis process, I have been incredibly encouraged by the resilience that UTS students are showing in this crisis. So many are doing it tough right now, but they remain committed to their university careers and I admire that immensely. It has made me proud to be a UTS student, myself.

The government is moving towards opening the nation back up again and this has given us a little light at the end of the tunnel, but we have to remember that it may not be over yet. Throughout the rest of this year, we as an association will have to monitor and adapt the way we respond as the world changes.

## **Assistant Secretary's Report**

As with other members of the executive, my focus coming into May is to hold the actions of the university accountable while looking ahead to the post COVID life.

The key concerns that I, and the other members of the executive, share includes, ensuring that the university delivers the various loan schemes and grants to eligible students in a timely way and that the process is not excessively rigid and cumbersome and the use of invigilation software that poses a threat to student privacy and the underlying risks to students of studying online.

In this last month, I have heard these concerns repeated in collective meetings, executive meetings, and amongst fellow councillors and students. Accordingly, I have entered discussions with the groups as mentioned earlier to consider a response. This includes a motion which I'll move at this council meeting to voice my concern about the potential invasion of student privacy.

In conjunction with my regular duties, I have assisted the Secretary and the Executive with sorting survey responses when available. The survey revealed has been particularly telling in the trends and emotions which student share at this time and has assisted the team in raising several questions that the university should answer. I believe that the Secretary has led a fantastic effort in collecting and collating qualitative responses which bolster what we already know about this ongoing crisis.

Moreover, moving through the responses makes you realise we are in it together and share the same concerns and anxiety in these times. Stay safe.

## **Wom\*n's Office Bearer Report**

This past month Dana has taken the reigns for the past two meetings as I was unable to facilitate them. However, turnout has been great, and Dana's educational activities have been well received.

We have been maintaining quite active social media and online spaces in order to keep members engaged, many members interact with our social media and as such it functions as a kind of safe space.

Over the next month we hope to continue weekly meetings and maintain a safe online space for our students.

## **Welfare Office Bearer Report**

In my last meeting I stated I wanted there to be a culture in the UTSSA for officers to acknowledge areas of improvement. I think this is the time of the semester where its most relevant since everyone is working hard to balance both their studies and the Associations' work. With assessments in the past week and assessments coming up, things have been moving quite slowly in my collective.

But on a more positive note, my collective has started planning its mental health strategy. We will be releasing a document with information of Mental Health services inside the university and hotlines students can contact to assist them during these mentally challenging times. We will also act to push our petition on prayer spaces by pay promoting our petition and getting religious societies to share that petition around.

Also, my collective members have expressed concerns about privacy and connectivity issues, regarding online exams and invigilating software. We will express it by way of motion today. I acknowledge that Erin as Education Vice President is working closely on that, and my collective be in contact in the future of how we can assist.

The executive and I have worked together to extrapolate the survey results, under the supervision of Miranda. Although I am not a member of the executive, I, and I am pretty sure my collective, are committed to work to stand up for students during these unprecedented times.

## **Overseas officer report**

As everyone know the current situation COVID-19 because of that everyone is struggling coping up with this situation. International students who recently came as well as have been studying they are also facing difficulties such as financial assistance, arranging food, academics, and mental stress to.

As university is assisting international students as International Students hardship Fund, and we promoted this plan via Facebook pages, personally, Whatsup, and emailing to International students. We are also guiding Students by Phone calls and emails if they are struggling with it. Moreover, Meetings with CISA, NUS and other local agencies are also being attended for current updates because these agencies working for International support as.

For arranging food, we contacted to GURU Nanak free Kitchnette, they provide free prepared food as well groceries for international students. Many other chariety workers also conncted with us who are ready to help International students in finance, providing food and rooms for living. Meanwhile, UTS student's association has also arranged Free food bags and information has been circulated via social media.

In terms of Academics, International collectives working for assisting international students by helping them if they have academic issues like where to find study materials, how to find, and how to use Endnote software via zoom meeting, Messenger and WhatsApp video callings. Even emailing assistance also continue.

Lastly, for reducing mental stress, we are encouraging students to use University medical and mental health services.

**Agenda item 7. Peer Tutoring Online Forms Quote**

To approve BigFish quote of \$2,050 ex gst for the development work required to make Peer Tutoring forms online.



**Agenda item 8. CISA Membership Renewal**

Motion to approve the affiliation fee of \$484 to renew the Council of International Students Australia membership

**Agenda item 9. Multifaith online campaign expense**

Motion to move for the approval of an upper spend limit of \$60.00 for the promotion of the Multifaith Rooms campaign online.

**Agenda item 10. Online exam invigilation concerns**

*Motion to move that the UTS Welfare Collective has concerns regarding the potential invasion of students' privacy by the university, as well as the potential difficulty for students to connect to live exams due to network and connection issues.*

*(Motion retracted by mover prior to SRC meeting)*

**Student Privacy**

**Preamble:**

Proctor U and other comparable online invigilation programs can expose many students to privacy risks due to the invasive nature of its software. Such programs can capture and store biometric data, view the participant and their environment, and automatically make determinations as to whether a student is cheating. This data may also be onsold to third parties in limited circumstances. This data is personal and is taken from participants without fair warning or any ability to opt-out.

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**Action:**

**The President and Education Vice-President raise these concerns with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and Vice-President (Education and Students) and other relevant management staff.**

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11.2 To reimburse Josh Hernandez \$4.99 for the rental of "2040" during the Collective's Movie Night of Thu 30 April.

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**Preamble:** The queer collective is currently organising a queer education week to be held online. The education week involves bringing in speakers to run workshops and seminars over zoom, topics to be discussed including decolonising queer spaces, queer legal rights/ services, and queer identity. The money passed will go into paying three speakers.

**Motion:** To pass upwards spending limit of \$600 to run an online queer education week

**Agenda item 14. Peer Tutoring Vouchers**

Motion for \$3000 to purchase up to one hundred and fifty (150) \$20 Woolworths eGift vouchers to continue the UTSSA Peer Tutor Program promotion. The promotion closes on the 15th of June 2020 and offers currently enrolled UTS students a \$20 Woolworths eGift voucher sent to their UTS student email account if they either:

- sign up to become a tutor via the required method
- request a tutor via the required method

**General Business/ Agenda item 15.**

**Data Subsidies**

**Preamble:** In response to survey data the executive has developed a scheme in regards to providing more accessibility to online resources for students by ensuring we can provide workable solutions to improving internet for students. In order to do this we decided that the best strategy would be to compensate data plans through visa vouchers. I have been in discussions today about ensuring this is provided to people that have accessed the hardship fund and Brett Smout is conferring with his team about how to do this without using too much labour and without breaching confidentiality. The main benefit to us through using this system is that it would cater to students who specifically need financial support and cater to people no matter who their data provider is. It also stops us from needing to spend excess money on technology which would be obsolescent within a month or two.

**Motion:** To provide an upper spending limit to the data subsidies program of \$20,000 to be spent on \$25 Visa card vouchers to be distributed to students referred to us by UTS Financial