

Minutes of the May Meeting of the UTSSA 19th May 2021.

Attendance:

- Aidan O'Rourke (President)
- Erin Dalton (General Secretary)
- Mehmet Musa (General Councillor)
- Ellie Woodward (Education Officer)
- Eshna Gupta (Womens' Officer)
- Camille Smith (Assistant General Secretary)
- Melodie Grafton (Cultural Diversity Officer)
- Jeylan Riza (General Councillor)
- Jared Turkington (General Councillor)
- Peter Munford (Postgraduate Officer)
- Nick Allison (General Councillor)
- Will Simmons (General Councillor)
- Zebadiah Cruickshank (Indigenous Officer)
- Abdulrahman Kandil (General Councillor)
- Sabrine Yassine (Welfare Officer)
- Cal McKinley (Queer Convenor)
- Anna Thieben (Enviro Convenor)
- Damien Nguyen (Enviro Convenor)
- Karen Ha (Observer)
- Jordan Lynch (Observer)
- Nikhil Prasad (Observer)
- Elijah Holeroo (Ethnocultural Convenor)
- Vinil Kumar (Observer)
- Holly Hayne (Observer)
- Lucia Thornton (Observer)
- Ursula Aczel (General Councillor)
- Christina Markovska (Staff)
- Saumyaa Shukla (General Councillor)

Agenda:

1. Opening of Meeting
 - 1.1. Election of Deputy Chair
 - 1.2. Acknowledgement of Country
 - 1.3. Attendance, Apologies and Proxies
 - 1.4. Declarations of Interest
2. Confirmation of Previous Minutes
 - 2.1. Executive Business
3. Matters Arising from the Minutes
4. Correspondence
5. Office Bearers' Reports
 - 5.1. President

- 5.2. General Secretary
- 5.3. Assistant General Secretary
- 5.4. Education Officer
- 5.5. Welfare Officer
- 5.6. Women's Officer
- 5.7. International Students' Officer
- 5.8. Indigenous Students' Officer
- 5.9. Postgraduate Students' Officer
- 5.10. Cultural Diversity Officer
- 5.11. Accessibility Officer
- 5.12. Queer Students' Officer
- 5.13. Environment Officer
6. Other Reports
 - 6.1. Committees
 - 6.2. Reports from Councillors, Convenors and Staff as requested or required.
7. Operational and Procedural Business, Stipends and Reimbursements.
8. Other Business Arising on Notice
 - 8.1. Suspension of the Education Officer's Honorarium
 - 8.2. Grievance Procedures
 - 8.3. Matters Relating to Grievance Committee
 - 8.3.1. Referral of the Education Officer to the Grievance Committee for investigation under Sections 5 & 6
 - 8.3.2. That the Executive is empowered to appoint members of the Grievance Committee at the next Executive Meeting.
 - 8.4. Policy Review Committee Terms of Reference
 - 8.5. Palestine Solidarity Motion
 - 8.6. Queer Collective Informal Positions
 - 8.7. Queer Collective Spending
 - 8.8. Climate Strike
9. General Business
10. Close of Meeting

1. Opening of Meeting

Meeting opened at 6:40pm

1.1 Election of Deputy Chair

Erin elected as deputy chair unopposed.

1.2 Acknowledgement of Country

Aidan delivers acknowledgement of country.

1.3 Apologies and Proxies

5 apologies, Luna, Charlie, Ruby, Lina, Nour

1.4 Declarations of Interest

None

2. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

Minutes amended to remove Melodie, clarify Camille's stuff, note security attended.

Motion: That the April SRC Minutes be tabled at the June SRC for approval once amended.

Moved: Sabine

Seconded: Camille

Motion carried unanimously.

3. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting Minutes

No matters arising.

4. Correspondence

Aidan reports on NUS correspondence and other correspondence.

Ellie: Is Swapnik's correspondence included?

Aidan: No but will be distributed.

5. Office Bearer's Reports

5.1 President

Aidan speaks to his report.

Some changes to Recognition of Prior Learning which were not canvassed in report as meeting was earlier today.

5.2 General Secretary

Taken as read.

5.3 Assistant General Secretary

Camille speaks to her report. Just about finished with putting together self-defence classes campaign, keen for people to be involved if they would like. Correspondence from Housing this week about knowing by end of month whether leases will be renewed. Q&As will be had, and press releases around that will happen. Former student from Wattle reached out saying that they left UTS because of the loss of community. Contacted by member of Jumbunna regarding racist and inappropriate content in curriculum. If anyone wants to talk to Camille about it, let her know. Possibly worth an Ed & Welfare campaign.

5.4 Education Officer

Ellie speaks to her report. Few weeks ago, town hall event about FASS cuts, security called, no attempt to enter room. Rally was today, which was good. Turnout was alright. Staff came to support. Relied heavily on USYD EAG for printing due to sanctions to USYD SRC.

5.5 Welfare Officer

Sabrina speaks to her report. Friday will be welfare day, with free stuff before exams. Otherwise, Palestine Society rally on Friday, good to have Welfare and other collectives involved. Collaborating with Luna regarding mental health workshop with BUPA.

5.6 Womens' Officer

Eshna provides a report: Next week will have a book club. Gotten in contact with Consent Matters about trivialising consent issues in posters. Considering a Zine. Good to collab with Camille on Self-Defence, also feminist classes are being cut, which would be good to discuss with Indigenous. Women's space completely set up, looking for funding, Organising picnic with Macquarie and USYD, banner paint and postering for march re SA last week.

5.7 International Officer

Luna is an apology to the meeting. Erin reads Luna's report to Council.

5.8 Indigenous Officer

Taken as read.

5.9 Postgraduate Officer

No report provided.

5.10 Cultural Diversity Officer

Melodie speaks to her report. Would like to be involved in racist curriculums thing and 6pm Thursday YCAT event is on, please go.

5.11 Accessibility Officer

Vacant

5.12 Queer Officer

Cal makes a report. Working on IDAHOBIT celebration on 28th May Cabaret Event, involving musical theatre and drag performances. Also working on supporting Palestine rally and building rallies against Mark Latham. Also planning on having some continuing social events to allow community and friendship.

5.13 Environment Officer

Damien delivers a report. Several meetings since last SRC including a cross-uni meeting. Brought up guarantee and discontinuing attendance strike. Collective delivered resounding no to that. Reminded that we are operating in solidarity with other Collectives. Didn't know if they could be in the room or not. We are speaking for the people who voted us in not for the SRC. Enviro had stalled all week for Green Week including banner paint and speaking event. Built valuable connections with various UTS groups. Shirley personally endorsed Climate Strike. Only able to inform several members of Enviro re Palestine, thanks personally everyone who attended. May 21st coming up biggest rally since 2019. Although we are not getting resources from UTSSA, strong and active. Fostering action formal or not.

Holly: Well there was a good rally on campus today against cuts including 3.2 mill cut to FASS. Obvious that there will be more cuts including FEIT, commerce. Outrageous at the moment that

UTSSA is taking resources away from Ed Officer. Shutting down activism. Will continue postering. Shameful and appalling. We all know Unity have majority and Grievance will suspend Ellie's honorarium. Labor Right and Aidan with the support of NLS is responsible. Union should be organising around ed and attacking trans kids in schools.

6. Other Reports

6.1. Committees

None.

6.2. Reports from Councillors, Convenors and Staff as requested or required.

None.

7. Operational and Procedural Business, Stipends and Reimbursements

None.

8. Other Business Arising on Notice

8.1. Suspension of the Education Officer's Honorarium

Motion: That the Education Officer's Honorarium be suspended.

Moved: Erin

Seconded Will.

Holly: Erin is scum, attack on freedom of speech. What is happening at this meeting is that you are barring students from scrutiny. Extremely right wing.

Erin: Please let me finish. Does Ellie look like she opposes me moving this?

Ellie: Anti worker and anti-student to threaten to suspend honorarium. Shocking stuff and low, incredibly anti worker and anti-student. Pretty characteristic of what is happening.

Erin: Moving the motion to note that we do not wish for the SRC to not register a position on this issue. Despite what members of Socialist Alternative are yelling at us about, NLS does not support stripping a stipend prior to the judgement of the Grievance Committee in anything but the most egregious cases. As the matter is to be referred to Grievance, we do not feel it is appropriate to enact penalties now.

9 against, remainder abstain.

8.2 Grievance Procedures

Aidan: Reads motion as attached.

Moved: Zebadiah

Seconded: Jared

Camille: Concerns nobody on council will be impartial.

Erin: While it is true that no two council members would be free of an actual or perceived conflict of interest in this matter, it won't have any impact on the result as they will both be recused from considering the matter.

Ellie: Why should staff sit on this.

Aidan: Constitutional requirement. Staff must make decision on facts, not on sanction.

Holly: Kangaroo court constructed for the point of political repression.

Eshna: Who defines fair and reasonable?

Vinil: A victory for students that Aidan has been forced to back down by student campaign.

Erin: Point of Order: Misrepresenting the facts. This change was due to NLS, not your student campaign.

Vinil: Arbitrary Kangaroo Court. Aidan and Erin do not genuinely care about rules and procedures, but if they do that's a sad life. Well done to anyone who was involved in public campaign.

Will: One thing discussed regarding procedure for reporting to Grievance, being an anonymous email managed by Executive Officer.

Aidan: Good point, see section 5.2, which would cover the set of rules and procedures for process to contact them. Would suggest Will right up in document and submit to committee.

Eshna: Can we have a quick 5-minute recess.

Aidan: Amendments have been put to council with notice.

Eshna: Would like an adjournment anyway.

Procedural Motion: That the meeting be adjourned for 2 minutes.

Moved: Will

Seconded: Camille

Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting is adjourned.

Adjournment period ends, meeting re-opened.

Elijah: Don't know much about what Grievance committee function but is there a possibility to raise it with Grievance due to April meeting resulting in attending Hospital.

Aidan: Yes

Ellie: Failure to comply with fair and reasonable directives is too vague, will be used to repress activists.

Motion: That section 6.2.b be removed.

Moved: Ellie

Seconded: Camille

Ursula abstains, 3 for, 14 against, motion fails.

Aidan: Any other discussion?

Ellie: Not opposed to deal with Grievance, but very obviously to remove Ellie. This is a student union, and the NTEU is taking a stronger stance on protection of activism than UTSSA.

Motion: That the By-Law Amendments be adopted as attached.

Dissent. 16 for, 3 against, Melodie abstains, motion carried.

8.3. Matters Relating to Grievance Committee

Motions withdrawn by mover.

8.4. Policy Review Committee Terms of Reference

Aidan: Summarises TOR for Policy Review Committee and explains what the motion entails.

Camille: After a meeting regardless of whether it gets up or down, goes to another committee for approval?

Aidan: No, it is more checking to see if policy is fit for purpose or worthwhile or successful.

Ursula: Happens after we vote on it here?

Aidan: Committee can be held whenever and will review from time to time. Committees are best suited to do job when their scope is established.

Erin: As a joking example, if Council votes that every member must wear a hat of a specific brand to a meeting, that policy would be reviewed and the Committee would recommend that it probably abolished, or the stipulation on brand would go away, then their recommendations would go back to council to be voted on. If the recommendations are adopted, the policy changes, otherwise it does not.

Aidan: Currently no structural stuff would be within the Terms of Reference.

Will: Will this include Grievance Policy?

Aidan: No.

Erin: Change March to May, amenable

Moved: Sabine

Seconded Zebadiah

Motion carried unanimously.

7:29pm Mehmet leaves, proxies to Zeb, his held proxy goes to Aidan.

8.5. Palestine Solidarity Motion

Aidan: Summarises motion, notes it was written by Nour, president of Palestinian Society and an apology to this meeting.

Motion: That the policy be adopted.

Moved: Melodie

Seconded: Camille

Camille: Completely supports this as a member of an oppressed demographic. Colonisation effects not just Indigenous Australians but also all dispossessed people. Pleased to see so much public pressure. Long time coming and hope it keeps up. Essential we support Palestinian students and people at this time.

Melodie: Rally should be 22nd not 15th, amenable to mover, so amended.

Vinil: Really excellent to see more and more unions in support of Palestine. Remember going to NUS for many years with it being an uphill battle against Labor Right and Labor Left even in 2014. Good it was unanimously supported last year at NUS. Important that growing scrutiny of Israel's actions in Palestine. Important that Palestinians have never stopped fighting. Good that international scrutiny is resulting in backing down due to international pressure.

Holly: Absolutely incredible the level of global solidarity in the continued resistance and solidarity with Palestinians. Young generation sick and tires of Two-State, UN resolutions etc. Demonstration of 250k in Detroit. Massive strikes in West Bank and Jerusalem. Agree with Vinil that the issue is a lot more mainstream ad left wing. About settler colonialism and oil. Israel key Has an amendment.

Mehmet returns 7:35pm, reclaims his vote and his held Proxy.

Motion: That the motion be amended to state that "the UTSSA supports a singular, democratic, and secular Palestine from the river to the sea."

Moved: Ellie

Seconded: Camille

Will: Before we commit to amendment, before we vote, we should consult Nour, other Palestinian students.

Aidan: Inclined to agree.

Melodie: Did Nour forget to add this part?

Sabrina: As well if this gets back to Nour, could result in issues for him. Safest to consult with Nour since it might be directly impacting.

Melodie: Nour is not here because he is packing up Eid on the Green stall. Nour's safety is the most important.

Eshna: Have a question for Hollie. What kind of impact do you think this will have? Do you think it is possibly worth putting Nour in danger of not returning to Palestine?

Vinil: The amendment that is moved is consistent with what the Palestine movement have supported and called for quite a while. Embodies right of return, right to land, right to equal rights. It is an important thing to state since as Holly mentioned since 1933 and Oslo accords. Thinks it is absolutely important to support this motion. Should be something any principled person who should support.

Eshna: Question was not answered. What as the UTSSA does this do?

Vinil: Same argument could be made against any action a union takes. Long history of this wherever we are. This does matter in the same way Vietnam War stances mattered.

Will: UTSSA's first responsibility is to UTS Students, not people who exist outside of that. While this can be supported. Believes motion should be deferred.

Holly: Thinks it is better to do now.

Camille: Although she seconded, appropriate for Nour to determine not everyone else's. Withdraws her seconding.

Seconded: Eshna

Melodie: Feel like this would be resolved if we called Nour. Should we call him?

Aidan: Better if he has notice rather than being put on the spot.

Ellie: In support of amendment but supports tabling of amendment until Nour can be consulted.

Dissent to amendment

SRC Unanimously against amendment, motion failed.

Foreshadowed Motion: That the amendment be table to the next SRC meeting.

Moved: Will

Seconded: Jared

Motion carried unanimously.

Eshna: Could we have a talk to PalSoc about this to get consensus?

Aidan: Will action this.

Mehmet: Still need to be careful since it will come back to Nour.

Motion carried unanimously.

8.6. Queer Collective Informal Positions

Aidan: Summarises motion. One amendment, to clarify that Secretary is not to have access to email list.

Motion: That the internal positions as circulated be approved by the SRC, with the proviso that the Secretary is not to have access to the email.

Moved: Erin

Seconded: Will

Motion carried unanimously.

8.7. Queer Collective Spending

Aidan: Summarises motion. One amendment, to note that no further expenditure will be approved until a written guarantee is received.

Motion: That the expenditure be approved.

Moved: Sabine

Seconded: Peter

Cal: To clarify, this will be approved but further spending must be contingent on agreement? Signing agreement is a difficult thing since it puts the Collective in jeopardy in the case that the Collective wants to oppose by-laws in that their positions may be removed. A shame we're in that tricky position, currently undertaking discussions in Collective.

Ellie: Thinks it's horrible that we have to sign away our ability to protest or participate in civil disobedience. It is blackmailing Collectives and an attack on us. Disgusting that we must sign a guarantee.

Aidan: As clarification, agreement says that OBs must conform with By-Laws and Constitution, neither of which prevent activism or protest.

Ellie: Clarify that she means protest against the By-Laws.

Mehmet: You mean breaking them?

Ellie: Yes.

16 for, 4 against, no abstentions, amendment carries.

Motion as amended carries unanimously.

8.8. Climate Strike

Motion: That the UTS SRC support the Climate Strike on May 21st

Moved: Melodie

Seconded: Camille

Motion carried unanimously.

9. General Business

No general business

10. Close of Meeting

Meeting closed 7:54pm