

# Minutes of the November Meeting of the UTSSA 30<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

## Attendance:

- Aidan O'Rourke (President)
- Erin Dalton (General Secretary)
- Camille Smith (Assistant General Secretary)
- Sabrine Yassine (Welfare Officer)
- Ellie Woodward (Education Officer)
- Peter Munford (Postgraduate Officer)
- Nour Al-Hammouri (Welfare Convenor)
- Melodie Grafton (Ethnocultural Officer)
- Anna Thieben (Enviro Convenor)
- Mehmet Musa (General Councillor)
- Jared Turkington (General Councillor)
- Abdulrahman Kandil (General Councillor)
- Clodagh Maclean (Queer Convenor)
- Christina Markovska (UTSSA Staff)

## 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. Motion of Dismissal
  - 8.2. Constitutional Amendments
  - 8.3. By-Law Amendments
  - 8.4. Election Regulations Amendments
  - 8.5. Events Policy Amendments
  - 8.6. Communication and Meeting Policy Amendments
  - 8.7. Vertigo Fridge Expenditure
  - 8.8. Final Grievance Committee Expenditure
9. General Business
10. Close of Meeting

Minutes:

## 1. Opening of Meeting

Meeting opened at 6:05pm

### *1.1 Acknowledgement of Country*

Aidan delivers acknowledgement of country

### *1.2 Election of Deputy Chair*

Holly Hayne will nominate for deputy chair

Erin also nominates.

Holly wishes to speak on her nomination. Would like to speak not on nomination to Deputy Chair. What's happening in this meeting is clear. Labor is attempting to move undemocratic and authoritarian amendments to constitution. Allow them to sack OBs elected by students. Gives total power to future SRCs dominated by Labor. Allows them sack whoever opposes them. Ellie will be sacked from her position. In reality Ellie has been doing her job as Ed Officer really well, not breaking by-laws. Have organised protests. Pretty clear that what's going on is Labor preventing the left opposing these attacks. Lots of important issues to campaign on and Labor aren't going to do it. Not a coincidence that Labor has 50%+1 majority. Event approval policy is also outrageous. Denies activist collectives' ability to organise events without approval. Called security on me and others, refused to fund EAG, pretty clear what's going on. Anyone who supports these policies is lining up with the Right. Supporting anti-democratic attack on student democracy and activism. Role of student unions is to fight against attacks from government and management. Can be pretty clear what the entire premise is. Clear nobody

Erin: Nominating for Deputy Chair. Will not bore anyone by making a long speech on this and contributing to this inane delaying tactic.

Aidan calls vote for Erin.

Vinil: Standing order 12.7G stipulates that a vote cannot be taken until all members have spoken.

Erin: How many nominees do you plan to put up?

Aidan: Moves procedural motion to suspend standing orders.

Motion: That Standing Orders be suspended to move to a vote on Deputy Chair.

Moved: Aidan

Seconded: Erin

12 in favour, 3 against, motion carried

Motion: That Erin be elected as Deputy Chair

Moved: Aidan

Seconded: Erin

12 in favour, 3 against, motion carried

### *1.3 Apologies and Proxies*

FNORD

### *1.4 Declarations of Interest*

None

## 2. Confirmation of Previous Meeting Minutes

Motion: That the minutes are accepted as true and accurate records.

Moved: Erin

Seconded: Sabine

Motion carried unanimously.

## 3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

None

## 4. Correspondence

Aidan: Correspondence from NUS which has been shared with SRC. NUS NATCON fees will be dealt with in General Business on urgency.

## 5. Office-Bearers' Reports

### *5.1 President*

Aidan: Was late. Reads his report to the SRC. Any Questions?

Chloe: You said in your report that the incoming VC is going to continue on his trajectory so far. What his trajectory is is unprecedented historic attacks on staff. Up to 400 staff have been sacked in past 2 years. Didn't note any opposition to this trajectory? If you do oppose this, why are you sacking the most outspoken opponent of these cuts. Motion to sack Ellie Woodward. One of key aspects of grievance against her is that she has organised against cuts. Are you actually against cuts? If so, how can you support sacking Ellie?

Aidan: Will answer questions on Ellie when that comes up. No, I don't support cuts. Yes, I've raised it in meetings.

Holly: Want to hear if you actually oppose job cuts. You haven't said you oppose cuts. Hope UTS staff go on strike next year. Want to know whether Aidan opposes the cuts and how you can justify that while sacking Ellie. Ellie has been doing great work this year. Instead of answering later why not answer now. Don't know what you could say to defend yourself. Intended to stop the left organising.

Aidan: You can wait until the motion. I don't support the Job Cuts

Vinil: If you oppose the cuts, what have you done this year to oppose the cuts? By my accounting, you've done more to sack Ellie than actually fight these changes.

Aidan: Based in a delusion or illusion rather as to what has happened this year. Aidan wanted to support Ellie and has tried to support her. Despite that, Ellie has decided to oppose and go against directions of SRC. None of those would affect her ability to campaign. What we're seeing is a framing of this through politically motivated rose-tinted glasses. As such, the question isn't able to be answered as it has been asked.

Vinil: Appalling as far as accountability is concerned

## *5.2 General Secretary*

Erin: Summarises report to SRC.

Chloe has been warned for the first time

## *5.3 Assistant General Secretary*

Camille: Hasn't provided a report, hasn't done anything in a month

## *5.4 Education Officer*

Ellie: What a year it has been. Despite the incredible effort by Labor students this year to shut down EAG, have run really successful campaign. Would like to congratulate Aidan and everyone for being able to chuck me out of this role 5 days before the term ends. Wants to reiterate what Chloe and Holly have said. Further wearing down of democracy in SRC. Just making it very clear that this is what this meeting is about.

Chloe: Wants to ask questions of the Ed Officer. Thanks for the report, Ellie. One of only people in this SRC who has fought against ed changes and staff sackings. Given lockdown plus incredibly repressive attitude of SRC, impressive that Ellie and EAG have spearheaded this campaign. Talked to left-wing staff. Great that the Right lost the election, and the left can run things. Shameful that Unity is doing this to cling to power and sack people. What do we need to do for fighting job cuts?

Ellie: What we need to do is support Cat, have fighting strong campaign. Support NTEU and staff, not suppress activism that

Melodie: I'm actually really offended Ellie that you'd work alongside somebody for an entire year, knowing their work and diligence, and throw them and all their passion under the bus - just my thoughts personally

## *5.5 Welfare Officer*

Sabrina: Summarises report. Gives a special thanks to everyone supporting the Welfare collective. Special thanks to Nour for his hard work this year. Also, other members of the Collective. Thanks to staff, especially Biljana, Lisa, and Christina. Knows Nour will do amazing things

## *5.6 Womens'*

Not present, no report was submitted.

## *5.7 International*

Not present, no report was submitted.

## *5.8 Indigenous*

No report was submitted. None given to meeting.

## *5.9 Postgrad*

No report was submitted. None given to meeting.

## *5.10 Ethno*

Mel: Didn't submit report but will say it out loud. Insert report here. Also throwing in that I have been elected to the Academic Board as FASS Rep and FASS Board as Comms rep. Main goal is to actively oppose the university's job and subject cuts, as well as continue my anti-racist efforts from the past few years.

## *5.11 Accessibility*

Vacant

## 5.12 Queer

Cal: Updates since Last SRC, Pride Week. After that had panel held by people doing work in anti-racism in queer spaces. Also panel for trans people about gender. Done lots of events, weekly meetings for whole year. Built up activism and campaigns. Bringing community together. Proud of what I have achieved this year. Looking forward to see how Collective will grow into a better space. One last thing is with changes to Constitution Queer Officer hasn't had QO on council. Discussion in Collective for the people to preselect. QC want the candidaes to be subjecy yo an opinion vote within QC before SRC election. I myself will pledge that no matter who the Collective votes for, I'll vote for that person.

Holly: I want to ask a question. I think that this brings into relevance the Consti changes. One of the biggest things for LGBTI rights is religious discrimination. Currently legal to sack staff for being gay or trans. Would open the door for people to sack anyone. Notable that the Labor party aren't refusing to oppose bill. Event Approval Policy means endorsing or organising a protest would have to be approved by President. Thinks these amendments are attack on Left wing stufends and the democratic autonomy of Collectives. Hope everyone is coming to rally. My question to Cal is, I assume you've been following this bill. Can collectives share FB event?

Cal: To answer the question, totally on board with rally and protests. In terms of event policy, it can make things difficult at times to make things happen, which can be a little difficult to manage. Can't really speak for how the changes will effect people. Tricky when bureacracy gets in the way of Activism.

## 5.13 Enviro

No report provided.

## 6. Other Reports

### 6.1 Reports from Committees

Christina: Committee met on a couple of occasions. Difficult since we haven't gone through this before. In future we'll need to change some processes around notices, communication etc. Very good to have Lawyer on hand. Followed within limits of what we've been able to do. All outcomes were that we would receive apologies and undertakings. Sent to all students involved. Didn't receive a response from one student. For the student who didn't respond, according to the By-Laws, will lose stipend immediately, have recommendation of being sacked.

Vinil: On determinations made by Committee. Whole process raises genuine concerns about Student Democracy. Someone being removed, banned from running. Is the cessation of someone's democratic right to run not a heavy-handed response to this?

Christina: Clarifying something here. Not going to answer the question. Don't have an option on this front. The SRC's By-Laws do bind us.

Chloe has been warned for a second time

Vinil has been warned for the first time

## 7. Operational and Procedural Business, Stipends, and Reimbursements

None

## 8. Business Arising on Notice

### 8.1 Motion of Dismissal

Aidan: Reads the motion to the SRC.

Moved: Erin

Seconded: Mehmet

Ellie: This is obviously an ongoing thing. While the Labor students have been trying to paint this not as an issue of activism, this is absolutely an issue of democracy and activism. What I am being sacked over is the fact that I have put up posters and have posted a statement and a few other things. Always I have been acting under the democratic decision making of the EAG. I have stood with the EAG against the unprecedented job cuts. Completely undemocratic. Blatantly undemocratic that I will be banned for elections. Really really shameful for people who claim to be Left wing. General outrage in Universities around Sydney that this has been so undemocratic. The UTSSA Collectives have done amazing work, but Labor students have been incredibly shameful.

Chloe: What's happening here is that Labor Left is supporting this and curtailing Ellie's rights to campaign. Total standard norm on so many campuses. UTSSA shouldn't squirm away from supporting activists. Think of the staff losing their jobs. Really implores anyone who considers themselves as part of the Left to vote against this. Rules written by Labor to block people from fighting cuts. Appalling to set the precedent that anyone can be sacked by Kangaroo Court. If staff choose to take a strike next year, Uni will not like it if we stand with staff. The current UTSSA leadership sucks. Regardless of whether this motion wins or loses, it'll

Erin: It's blatantly hypocritical of Ellie and Salt to play the victim card here when they've been the ones making these issues. Them demanding NLS support them unconditionally or be deemed right wing is absurd. You don't have a monopoly on being left-wing, and your behaviour towards NLS is absolutely childish. Show us the basic respect and we can work together, but why would we when this is all you do?

Ellie: It is absolutely right that I am sacked now so that Labor can do that next year. Disgusting to set this precedent. Proves Labor both NLS and Unity have the means and intent to do that. Want to clarify that despite the characterisation that I'm not doing things because I don't like them, that's true because I don't like following rules I don't like. I disagree with them, so I won't follow the directions and by-laws.

Holly: Rejects points Erin made, NLS can decide if they're left wing or not. What you do in practice and the rules you choose to enforce determine if we respect you. They are fundamentally undemocratic by-laws. Management wants a UTSSA that rolls over at the slightest opposition. Do you or do you not support the actions of EAG activists in fighting cuts? By-Laws are anti-democratic and shouldn't exist.

Erin: Holly, do you disagree with the By-Laws? Do you plan to break the By-Laws?

Holly: Trying to trick me. Wouldn't be a break from what you've been doing all year. I support the rights of Activists to resist the undemocratic By-Laws. We live in an unjust society, and sometimes this means fighting against by-laws.

Camille: Wants to throw voice behind Ellie, Holly, and Chloe. I question what the point of any of you being was on council if this is the legacy you'll leave for your term. Absolutely embarrassing. The listing of the agenda putting Ellie before constitutional change is so backhanded and sneaky and

really really disgusting. Don't understand how that can be your legacy. What was the point of you being on SRC? This whole thing hasn't benefitted students. It is ridiculous.

Vinil: I agree that this is pretty unprecedented. In 2019 Libs held USyd SRC, even they didn't support something like this. The supposed Labor Left are hollow claiming being left wing by supporting this. Absolute affront to democracy. If anything, this UTSSA has spent more time fighting activists than fighting management. If you're confident to stand behind this, ask for your name to be noted in minutes so it can be clear which side you stood on when this treacherous and appalling motion went down.

Chloe: It's a really significant thing. Heard some pretty cooked stuff that Liberals have done over the years, but this is ridiculous. Blutackgate was a joke at the start of the year. Want to work with NLS on issues. Will and Bailey have come to EAG and oppose staff cuts. Want to hear you speak on this motion. Justify how you can look Ellie in the eye and vote her out.

Motion: That Ellie be sacked from the position of Education Officer.

Motion carried 9 to 3 of those present and voting, Camille, Melodie and Ellie dissented

## *8.2 Constitutional Amendments*

Aidan: Summarises amendments to constitution

Motion: That the Constitutional Amendments be adopted.

Moved: Erin

Seconded: Mehmet

Ellie: As people have mentioned already, it is really clear that the requirement to chuck people out is from 2/3 to simple, which is exactly what Labor students have next year. Blatant attempt by Labor to chuck people out. Shameful and dangerous. We know that that is what they want to do. Really really shocking and undemocratic and shameful.

Vinil: Would like to hear what Erin has to say to justify this. It's pretty telling that this motion is about Erin getting a backdoor to the Presidency. On a bunch of things, Grievances can be filed for the most basic forms of Activism. Creates grounds for dismissing her over nothing to get Erin in.

Erin: This isn't an attempt to get me a back door to the Presidency at all. Frankly I have better things to be doing with my life than trying to somehow manoeuvre my way into the role. My mental health has suffered greatly over the past year, and I'm considering taking time off study to focus on it. If Anna breaches the by-laws or the undertaking she has provided and is removed, I may not even be eligible. That's also her doing not mine.

Vinil: Notes Constitution allows for Erin to fill vacancy if it happens a long time before next RepsElect.

Erin: Notes succession provisions are detailed in By-Laws as well.

Vinil: Just clarifying that this would result that Anna's opponents being put in place.

Aidan: That would be the case regardless.

Chloe: This is about making people easier to sack.



Holly: Concerning since Labor been trying to remove political opponents and trying to ensure total control over UTSSA. Total bypassing of democratic principles to be able to remove position from people. Zebadiah is saying that Anna will be sacked, and it is shameless. We're in a much stronger position next year than this year. We're not going to stop fighting the UTSSA and education cuts.

Camille: Wanted to echo what Ellie, Vinil, Holly, Chloe have said. It's insanely fucked. Wild you've decided that you're doing this now when a lot of you are departing the SRC this year. So crazy to me that you'd push through these policies, so you'd keep hold of these majority on SRC rather than supporting students. More important to feel like this great big person on the SRC or I left the people I like in charge. So sickened, can't get my head around how fucked this is.

Chloe: Erin tried to be like you've tried to spin this as struggle against oppressors. Zeb has gone and fucked it. Disappointing that grievance process was undemocratic farce etc, by-law changes bureaucratic farce used to suppress activism. We were right that this was about fighting against fairness. We've already seen a grievance against Anna. A whole bunch of people can be sacked. Sack us all. What we're trying to point out here is this isn't about individuals. Student unions shouldn't be fighting internecine conflicts. Hope NLS joins with broad left and doesn't support this.

Erin: Planning taking time off study next year for mental health, not planning on dropping myself back into the cesspool that you make student politics.

Motion carried 11 to 3

Lina leaves at 7:35, proxies to Peter, they accept.

### *8.3 By-Law Amendments*

Aidan: Summarises changes to By-Laws. Changes were indicated in red; variation table has been introduced to track changes.

Motion: That the By-Laws be accepted as amended

Moved: Erin

Seconded: Peter

Vinil: Going to schedule 3, section 6.7. Definitions, noting that failure to address or rectify harm, will be regarded as more serious. This process is more and more making it easier to punish activism. Wanted to draw attention to another change. 11.4 notes that Aidan would get observer status at all meetings. Pretty transparent that this is what is motivating this change.

Aidan: Glad you raised that point. 11.4 is being amended in the latest draft. Only an observer role anyway, has approval of Anna. Helpful for the transitional period and for understanding reasons for decisions made previously. I'm sure Anna looks forward to her chance to do the same.

Vinil: Don't you trust incoming Unity OBs?

Aidan: Most of them don't have experience on Executive or OB roles, so experience is valuable for supporting that.

Motion carried 13 to 2.

Jared entered 7:42, reclaimed vote from Sabrine.

#### *8.4 Election Regulations Amendments*

Aidan: Old changes that we misplaced. Was sent from RO. Technical provisions changing in Schedule 2 and additional provision.

Chloe: Procedurally, this is illegitimate. You need to give notice for the changes. This isn't permitted.

Aidan: Will move an urgency motion. There's nothing preventing amendment. There is no specific notice requirement, and a 2/3rds vote of SRC.

Motion: That the amendments as circulated be discussed as a matter of urgency

Moved: Erin

Seconded: Aidan

Motion carried 13-0 with 2 abstentions

Motion: That the election regulations be accepted as amended.

Aidan: Summarises changes to regulations and historical reasons for that.

Erin: Notes the amount of democracy is increasing with this change. Should be uncontroversial.

Moved: Erin

Seconded: Peter

10 for, 2 abstentions

Vinil: Would like it noted that he is uncomfortable with timeframe for amendments.

Camille: I'd like it noted that the only reason I'm abstaining and not against is given the miniscule timeframe in which I had to read it, I was on placement and wasn't given proper opportunity to read them.

#### *8.5 Events Policy Amendments*

Aidan: Changing an existing policy, relaxing current rules. Spoke to Anna about it too. Summarises changes.

Moved: Peter

Seconded: Mehmet

Vinil: Notes he went to Supreme Court; all protests are lawful until proven otherwise.

Aidan: Even better, means they'll be approved unless proven otherwise.

Vinil: What this shows is that activists have to jump through heaps of hoops to organise things. Some attack on LGBTI rights, maybe QC wants to make snap action. In theory a complaint could be made against people for this for failing to seek approval for events. If there is disagreement of Collectives, they can discuss amongst themselves. Number of protests called this year at short notice that wouldn't have happened if they needed President's approval.

Aidan: Clarifies that this is fine and that the changes free people up to go to protests aligned to UTSSA objectives.

Anna: I agree, this is a relaxation which is a good start but going forward we should be pushing for Collectives to have more autonomy. Within jurisdiction of Collectives to decide what to do and run with it. It's a good start

Camille: Not sure if it's already in current policy but would think it'd be appropriate to include an amendment to note that not just that the President, Exec or SRC can disallow an event not just based on whether it goes against current policy but also can't overturn approval of a Collective attending an event if that goes against political leanings of majority. Example of protest against a Labor person and Unity blocking that.

Aidan: When it comes to Exec and SRC, they should have the authority to decide what happens with UTSSA. If it's against something but aligned with policy, it goes ahead. Doesn't think it's appropriate that any mechanism be baked into policy that denies majority of SRC ability to choose direction of UTSSA.

Camille: thinks the current wording is too vague. Will draft an amendment.

Chloe: If this is a watering down of the powers of President, then it's appalling that they had this power. People might organise protests in solidarity with Palestine that might not have majority support. Given all we've sat through and Labor moving powers to sack people with council majority. Someone could be kicked out for not following the decision of council. UTSSA can decide to give or not give funds. Collectives should have rights to just do things. Reduce power on centralised Executive.

Aidan: Notes that wording notes that President may only veto if it will bring into disrepute or interfere with operations of Association. Thinks this is a happy medium.

Biljana: Just to give perspective, from an events perspective, policy was developed for Collectives to get higher visibility. What was happening previously was that Collectives were running events without any linkage to other Collectives. In the last 3 years there's maybe been 1 event that has been declined.

Camille: Has amendment. That the President, Executive or SRC cannot overrule the decision of a Collective to plan a contingent to or attend an event purely because the political affiliation of the event does not reflect the political affiliation of the majority of council, unless the political affiliation of the event in question is harmful, dangerous, or violent, or the intent of Collective attendees is to be harmful, dangerous, or violent.

Motion: That the amendment be adopted

Moved: Camille

Seconded: Erin

3 for, 8 against, amendment isn't carried

Aidan: Any discussion on motion?

Motion carried unanimously.

#### *8.6 Communication and Social Media Policy Amendments*

Aidan: Noting that this is amending a policy moved by Camille to make it more applicable for future terms and removing contemporaneous wording.

Moved: Camille

Seconded: Erin

Motion carried unanimously

#### *8.7 Vertigo Fridge Expenditure*

Joseph: Just quickly, we want a fridge. A previous fridge became mouldy and was thrown out.

Motion: That an upper spending limit of \$180 be approved for a fridge for the Vertigo offices.

Moved: Erin

Seconded: Camille

Motion carried unanimously

#### *8.8 Final Grievance Committee Expenditure*

Motion: That a further \$3440 be paid under the previously approved expenditure for Grievance Committee.

Moved: Erin

Seconded: Sabrina

Motion carried 11 to 0, 2 abstentions.

### 9. General Business

Aidan: 2 Items on Urgency. First is Ethno Safe Space Campaign, second is NUS NATCON. Will be moved to be discussed en bloc.

Motion: That the items be discussed on urgency

Moved: Aidan

Seconded: Erin

Motion carried unanimously

Melodie: This is a great campaign, please pass it.

Aidan: This is a no-brainer

Motion: That policy be adopted

Moved: Melodie

Seconded: Erin

Motion carried unanimously

Aidan: NUS motion for attendance.

Motion: That the policy be adopted

Moved: Erin

Seconded: Sabrina

Chloe: Is that charge only delegates and observers? Or is it for literally any UTS students to attend? If that is only including the people who are elected that are entitled to go, would like more money to be spent to allow for more to attend.

Aidan: It is believed that it's a flat rate and allows anyone to attend.

Vinil: Clarifying that unofficial observers are usually cheaper; we should pass more money.

Erin: As far as we know, this is for everyone at a flat fee.

Mehmet: Can we have a general discussion? If so, goodbye to everyone. The election didn't go how I'd hoped and thinks that next year's team is balanced. While I believe that Phil misled fire up but would like to congratulate Anna. Want to thank Erin, Will, and Melodie, who were unsuccessful. I believe a new relationship is needed between Collectives and SA. In saying that, I believe that people have maliciously and fraudulently pitted Collectives against us and causing division for the sake of division is terrible. Would like to implore people to grow up, leave the cult that is Salt, get a life, stop being terrible people, etc.

Erin: I'll say a less controversial valedictory. I'd like to thank everyone who has worked with me, and I hope that the changes I have fought for and won for trans and disabled students will be remembered.

10. Close of Meeting

Meeting closed at 8:31pm