

# Minutes of the April Meeting of the UTSSA

## 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021.

### Attendance:

- Aidan O'Rourke (President)
- Erin Dalton (General Secretary)
- Camille Smith (Assistant General Secretary)
- Sabrina Yassine (Welfare Officer)
- Peter Munford (Postgraduate Officer)
- Mehmet Musa (General Councillor)
- Anna Thieben (Enviro Convenor)
- Damien Nguyen (Observer)
- Juneyt Cihan (University Council Representative – Undergraduate)
- Lina Min (General Councillor)
- Mariah Brown (UTSSA Executive Officer)
- Melissa Sukkarieh (Observer)
- Vanessa Lim (Observer)
- Zebadiah Cruickshank (Indigenous Officer)
- Jared Turkington (General Councillor)
- Will Simmons (General Councillor)
- Luna Manandhar (International Officer)
- Nour Al Hammouri (General Councillor)
- Eshna Gupta (Womens Officer)
- Nick Allison (General Councillor)
- Abdulrahman Kandil (General Councillor)
- Chloe Rafferty (Observer)
- Lucia Thornton (Observer)
- Holly Hayne (Observer)
- Rodger Liang (Observer)
- Joseph Chalita (Observer)

### 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.
  - 7.1. Audit Report
- 8. Other Business Arising on Notice
  - 8.1. By-Law Amendments
  - 8.2. Collective Expenditure and Compliance
  - 8.3. Enviro Collective Elections
  - 8.4. Indigenous Collective Motions
- 9. General Business
  - 9.1. Notice of Suspension of Education Officers' Stipend
  - 9.2. Meeting Between UTSSA and Collective OBs
- 10. Close of Meeting

Minutes:

## 1. Opening of Meeting

Meeting opened at 6:47pm

### *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*

Jeylan apologised and proxied to 1) Sabrine, 2) Nour, 3) Abdul. Sabrine accepts.

Hawa apologised and proxied to 1) Jared, 2) Peter, 3) Aidan. Jared accepts.

### *1.4 Declarations of Interest*

None declared.

## 2. Confirmation of Previous Minutes

Motion: That the attached minutes be approved as true and accurate records.

Moved: Mehmet.

Seconded: Peter

Motion carried unanimously.

## 2. Matters Arising from Previous Meeting Minutes

No matters arising.

## 4. Correspondence

Aidan summarises correspondence from NUS regarding EdCon. Advice is that EdCon will likely be in Melbourne. Camille requests NUS correspondence.

## 5. Office Bearers' Reports

### *5.1 President*

Procedural Motion: That the SRC take all supplied reports as read.

Moved: Mehmet

Seconded: Peter

Motion carries unanimously.

Chloe and Holly interrupt demanding to ask questions of the President immediately.

Holly has been warned by the chair.

Holly has been warned by the chair for a second time.

Chloe has been warned by the chair.

Holly has been warned by the chair for a third time and named.

Meeting suspended at 6:52pm

Security attends the meeting and asks Holly to leave. She does not comply, and Security leaves the room.

Meeting reopened at 7:00pm

*5.2 General Secretary*

Taken as read.

*5.3 Assistant General Secretary*

Camille speaks to her report.

*5.4 Education Officer*

Ellie provides a report to council.

*5.5 Welfare Officer*

Taken as read.

*5.6 Women's Officer*

Eshna provides a report to council.

*5.7 International Officer*

Luna does not issue a report.

*5.8 Indigenous Officer*

Zebadiah provides a report to council.

*5.9 Postgraduate Officer*

Chloe has been warned by the chair for the second time.

Peter does not issue a report.

*5.10 Cultural Diversity Officer*

No report submitted.

*5.11 Accessibility Officer*

Vacant

*5.12 Queer Officer*

Vacant

*5.13 Environment Officer*

Position vacant, Anna issues a report.

Chloe: Most undemocratic student space that exists in Australia today. Playing out of the Duterte playbook. Right wing and collaborating with uni. Wants to sack Ellie over blu-tac. Most people do not know the depths of depravity that has been reached. People do not want names taken. Socialist Alternative activists reported to Security. Aidan is pursuing vendetta against us. How does Aidan sleep at night?

Aidan: I will not respond to that question as it is not in good faith.

Chloe has been warned by the chair for a third time and named.

## 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

*7.1. Audit Report*

Meeting suspended at 7:11pm

Meeting resumed at 7:15pm

Motion: That the SRC approve the 2020 Audit Report.

Moved: Sabine

Seconded: Will

Motion carried unanimously.

8. Other Business Arising on Notice

*8.1. By-Law Amendments*

Motion: That the attached By-Law amendments be adopted.

Moved: Erin

Seconded: Will

Ellie: Multiple things in this I would like to speak on. First action. Would another member like to speak?

Eshna: Eshna believes that attendance should be kept confidential. Trans members risk being outed if there is a leak. Issue that Aidan isn't representing impact on marginalised communities.

Aidan: In the case that a student doesn't wish for their name to be on minutes, goes to Executive Officer to be filed. No risk of outing with the option of student ID EO won't know names.

Eshna: Why do you feel it is necessary?

Aidan: Has been raised at previous SRC and OB meeting, where minutes have been circulates. Cases of serious misconduct, WHS, OHS issues. Possible COVID outbreak etc. Likelihood of them being used is extremely low.

Camille: Since chances are so slim, seems wild that this is such a sticking point that councillors are risking their jobs.

Aidan: Does not think that it is worth risking your job over. Structures are necessary to protect students. Aidan acknowledges that making it the President was unreasonable and apologises.

Meeting suspended 7:22

Meeting resumed 7:27

Chloe: Everybody can see through the by-law process. Demonstrated perfectly why nobody wants to hand lists. Aidan's response is threatening with security at any time. We do not trust you. Doesn't matter about who the list goes to. Aidan doesn't like that there are left wing non-Labor activists on campus. People have the right to participate in activism anonymously on this campus and attend meetings. Including using blu-tac. If Labor Left have any commitment to left principles, will oppose.

Will: We are voting for the amendment.

Chloe: Get rid of the bylaws.

Will: Could you outline how these names will be leaked.

Chloe: It's a matter of principle. Don't ban people from accessing UTSSA spaces and meetings.

People have the right to participate anonymously.

Sabrine: Has been sitting here observing what has been going on. Doesn't understand what Chloe's stance is. In the case of sexual assault etc, it is important that UTSSA has accurate information.

Melissa: As a member of multiple autonomous Collectives, want to note discomfort in these motions and the amendments. Note that the amendment that OBs keep lists was presented, and OBs were described as political bodies. Not political issue but safety issue.

Sabrine: Sees the safety issue and understands the concerns. However, we are trying to do everything we can to ensure safety.

Ellie: Like to point out that amendment moved at last SRC and stance in this case be that OB has list and are democratically elected. Should not be treated with contempt.

Aidan: What is to prevent you or your successor from leaking that list, say in the case that there is a factional rift etc.

Melissa: Issue is that person isn't in autonomous groups. EO is a random member of staff, and staff won't do this leaking.

Camille: Respond to Sabine. Understand need for safety. Space should be safe. This has never been an issue in 5.5 months of my time, feels like an ever-growing encroachment on ability of Collectives to organise.

Aidan: The timing of the by-law changes and grievance committees has nothing to do with who is involved and what has been done. All of this was meant to be done last year, but wasn't done. Longstanding review on this, as can be seen in Aidan's January report, which came off the back of a benchmarking review. Codification of past standard practice. Risk was identified prior to now.

Camille: If student safety is at the forefront of what we do, why has it taken so long.

Aidan: Has been the person that has been substantively working on by-laws. It has taken a long time and collaboration has been sought.

Eshna: Wants to address what Sabine has said. We're seeing this as a political issue. As someone who is queer and a woman, thinks OBs should have the list because members trust them to know the consequences of their actions. As a queer person, I understand consequences and know Cal and Clodagh understand those consequences. Doesn't know if Executive Officer understands those concerns. Thinks this should be a matter of empathy.

Mehmet: Addressing Camille's comments about 5.5 months, fair, and haven't seen anything this year. I've been involved for 3-4 years and have seen what has happened in certain collectives. What's to stop OB at arms' length from people, sometimes cliquey and based on friend groups. People have come to me with concerns about talking.

Melissa: Outing people doesn't rely on people being in minutes.

Mehmet: The difference between an OB with a personal grudge is significant.

Anna: Wouldn't OB have list already?

Mehmet: Yes, but I don't think OBs are the be-all and end-all, Office Bearers have been hostile to members of the Collective. What makes a Collective more democratic when it's a bunch of people who know each other but someone is ostracised? The Executive Officer is impartial, while Collectives have excluded people with different politics. In the case of an incident where an OB's friend is bullying someone, how is it guaranteed that the OB won't protect their friend.

Melissa: If you're talking about a security context, it's up to people's discretion if they want to break the law. If I wanted to be physically violent, that's less extreme.

Erin: Past instance of members of Collective abusing process and position to ostracise members of Collective with involvement of OB.

Motion: That the motion be put.

Moved: Aidan

Seconded: Sabine

Dissent, motion carried.

Motion: That the by-laws be amended as provided.

Dissent, 15 for, 3 against, motion carries.

### *8.2. Collective Expenditure and Compliance*

Moved: Luna

Seconded: Juneyt

Ellie: Collectives listed are running important campaigns. The OBs and convenors have acted as activists do, whether or not it is against the rules. As a result, you are crippling our campaigns and hurting the people involved.

Aidan: this isn't something I want to do. It is something that needs to be done in response to breaches of our bylaws. If you wish to put your collective in peril, that's your decision.

Eshna: What this shows is that you care more about political positions than activism. This will block events and activism. We need funding for posters and banner paint, but we will get them printed anyway. Aidan thinks this is more important than real people.

Aidan: The reason compliance with our bylaws is important is that funding is contingent on the University and if people don't follow our rules, uni won't fund us.

Eshna: You keep holding this over our head when we're not going to be happy with this. How do we not know that you're not making this up.

Aidan: Can arrange a meeting to demonstrate.

Damien: This move is coming from members not Convenors/OBs.

Holly: Pathetic that Aidan is offloading blame to uni management. Of course management doesn't want us to do this. There's a reason that on other campuses there is an established precedent for poster and disobedience as pushing the envelope. No other campus in the country where the

Exec and President quash activism. The only option is resisting uni oppression. Whenever security try to shut down a stall, everyone sets up stalls in protest and everyone defends each other. We need to do this here at UTS. Your response will be the death of the student union.

Aidan: The uni has not given us any direction on campaigns and activism. All they ask is that we follow our own rules.

Chloe: Delivers tirade against NLS and Aidan. Uses the word fuck like 5 times.

Camille: Wishes to move an amendment to remove Melissa as she isn't in a position recognised by the UTSSA.

Eshna leaves 8:01, proxies vote to Ellie.

Melissa: What have I broken?

Aidan: Broken schedule 1. Allegations.

Motion: That Melissa's name be removed from the motion.

Moved: Erin

Seconded: Camille.

No dissent, amendment passes.

Motion: That action point 1 be removed from the motion.

Moved: Ellie

Seconded: Camille

Dissent, 3 for, 15 against, motion fails.

Motion: That Anna's name be removed from the motion.

Moved: Ellie

Seconded: Camille.

Dissent, 3 for, 15 against, motion fails.

Motion: That Clodagh's name be removed from the motion.

Moved: Camille

Seconded: Ellie

Dissent, 3 for, 15 against, motion fails.

Melissa: Wants to move a motion to add Jared to the list.

Procedural Motion: That the motion be put.

Moved: Mehmet

Seconded Peter

Dissent, 15 for, 3 against, motion carried.



Motion: That the motion be adopted.

Dissent, 15 for, 3 against, motion carried.

### *8.3. Enviro Collective Elections*

Moved: Zeb

Seconded: Sabine

Camille: Presumably, motion is to remove Damien and Melissa. Melissa's election did not have minutes, but Damien did.

Erin: Asks to see minutes.

Anna: Enviro is not in the habit of approving minutes as true and accurate records.

Camille: Does this mean all Collective meetings are voided since we have not been approving minutes as true and accurate record.

Motion: That the motion be amended to remove Damien from the motion.

Moved: Camille

Seconded: Ellie

Motion carries unanimously.

Chloe: This is a farce. Melissa isn't a scum dog member of the Labor party. Most Collectives have basic grassroots approaches to elections. This has nothing to do with this. This is a Duterte style consolidation of Aidan's position. Aidan hasn't done a single thing to contribute to left wing action. We live in one of the most obscenely fossil fuel involved countries in the world. Labor party came out to oppose 2050 target, love coal. Not surprised by that, as you're a member of a political party. Erin can't even look at us.

Erin: Busy typing minutes sorry.

Procedural Motion: That the motion be put.

Moved: Aidan

Seconded: Jared

Dissent, 15 for, 3 against, motion carried.

Motion: That the motion be adopted as amended.

Dissent, 15 for, 3 against, motion carried.

### *8.4 Grievance Procedures*

Mehmet leaves 8:21, proxies to Abdul.

Moved: Sabine

Seconded: Jared

Camille: proposes a requirement that at least one member of Grievance be non-white. Accepted as consensus.

Chloe: Does not care how intersectional and diverse how many axes of oppression members have. The elephant in the room is that it is about persecuting OBs. Trying to cover Aidan's arse by punishing Ellie rather than punishing OBs who have done nothing. Throwing UTSSA money at lawyers to shore up your ability to sack people.

Will: Voting on the draft not anything else.

Camille: Wants to clarify contrary to what was said in amendment, am still opposed to a grievance committee with this level of power. Thinks this expenditure is ludicrous.

Ellie: Doesn't disagree with need for committee but this draft is clearly going to be used to repress her.

Melissa: Ellie doesn't need to apologise as per by-laws or constitution.

Aidan: Could be a little harsher.

Camille: What does that mean.

Aidan: Could just go ahead and refer her.

Nour: The purpose of having a grievance procedure is to ensure that a proper process is in place.

Camille: I'm confused as to why Unity members don't recognise the irony of wanting this committee so that their own president can't behave in self-identified deplorable behaviour.

Aidan: Thinks procedure is important. Gives structure for resolution of disputes etc.

Camille: this seems arbitrary and punitive.

Ellie: Repeats Camille's points.

Camille: This has been in the works for a long time. Nobody knows that this stuff wasn't put in this week punitively.

Mehmet: By-laws have been in the pipeline for a long time. It is untenable to keep breaking bylaws.

Holly: Says bylaws are bad and that nobody should follow them.

Camille: Mehmet said before that procedures started without this in mind. Given that statement that this is a recent addition.

Mehmet: I'm disagreeing with the imputation that this is a recent addition. This is something you definitely want to get right, which means it takes time. There has to be an appropriate balance. At the end of the day, bylaws are being broken and procedure must be in place.

Lina leaves 8:35, proxies to Nour

Melissa: By-laws were written without consultation with Collectives, they proposed amendments but amendments didn't get up. They were told to get the rules changed. Do we have an opportunity to be consulted?

Aidan: What's happening now is the consultation process. I had an open-door policy today for everyone to talk to me if they had concerns, nobody did.

Jared leaves 8:39pm

Procedural Motion: That the motion be put.

Moved: Peter

Seconded: Nour

Motion carried.

Motion: That the policy be accepted.

Motion carried unanimously.

#### *8.5. Indigenous Collective Motions*

Zebadiah: Reads his motions.

Motion: That the motions be accepted.

Moved: Zebadiah

Seconded: Mehmet

Motion carried unanimously.

### 9. General Business

#### *9.1. Notice of Suspension of Education Officers' Stipend*

Aidan: This was in notice issued for meeting on the 19<sup>th</sup> of May.

Ellie: Does not think stipend should be suspended.

#### *9.2. Meeting Between UTSSA and Collective OBs*

Aidan: Minutes were circulated. Any discussion?

Camille: Was in meeting via Zoom. Was horrendous that everyone was spoken over. Melissa was interrupted a number of times by Aidan.

Melissa: Minutes were disheartening because there were interruptions every time. Erin became aggressive.

Erin: I do not believe that description was appropriate or accurate in describing the meeting.

Melissa: Declines to withdraw or amend statements. Aidan stormed out during meeting while Ellie and Melissa were talking.

Junejt and Abdul leave 8:44pm, they do not leave proxies, and the proxies they hold lapse.

Camille: The hostility in the environment was palpable. A student experienced something in that space was unacceptable.

Aidan: I have apologised for that.

Nick: Update on graduations?

Peter: Graduations will resume within next 2 months. Variety of options for graduation, and uni didn't want to move to online graduations as default. Large backlog will take a year to get through.

Ellie: Motion was late but regarding Tamil Refugees.

Motion: That the SRC discuss the motion regarding Tamil Refugees

Moved: Ellie

Seconded: Mehmet

Motion carried unanimously.

Motion: That the policy be adopted.

Moved: Ellie

Seconded: Mehmet

Motion carries unanimously.

10. Close of Meeting

Meeting closed 8:53pm