



**MINUTES FOR A MEETING OF COUNCIL
EDUCATION SEMINAR ROOM 452
6:00 PM ON 10TH FEBRUARY, 2015**

Chair: Timothy Scriven

Minutes: Guien Miao & Douglas King

Attendance: Douglas King, Ensiyeh Kazerouni, Brigitte McFadden, Armen Aghazarian, Zachary Thompson, Michael Butler, Joseph Callingham (*departed 7:32 p.m.*), Paul Stewart, Philip Roberts, Kane Hardy, Kylee Hartman-Warren, Gareth Charles (*departed at 7:25 p.m.*), Brendan McMonigal, Vanessa Wells (*arrived 6:09 p.m.*), Celeste Ellis (*arrived 6:18 p.m.*), Nayeem Faisal Shaikh (*arrived 6:25 p.m.*), Alex Dore (*arrived 6:28 p.m.*)

Guests: John Fell, Francine Seeto, Thomas Greenwell, Carlos Monteverde Salvatierra, Beatriz Lopez Portillo

★ **1. Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome**

The Chair opened the meeting with an Acknowledgement of Country at 6:06 p.m.

★ **2. Governance**

2.1. Apologies

Kaitlin Tagg

Kieran Latty

Xiaoyi Sun

Joanne Gad

Brendan McMonigal

2.2. Proxies

Kaitlin Tagg to Joseph Callingham

Xiaoyi Sun to Guien Miao

Joanne Gad to Guien Miao (2nd pref: Ensiyeh Kazerouni; 3rd pref: Gareth Charles)

Brendan McMonigal to Joseph Callingham

Kieran Latty to Brigitte McFadden (2nd pref: Timothy Scriven; 3rd pref: Philip Roberts)

2.3. Leaves of Absence

Helen Chen will be away for the duration of the month, returning in March.

Motion [FEB11-01]: *That SUPRA Council grants the requested leave of absence.*

Moved: Guien Miao **Seconded:** Philip Roberts

Carried.

2.4. Resignations

Joanne Gad has resigned from the position of Secretary.

Grace Sharkey has resigned from the position of Queer Officer.

Procedural motion to move Item 7 before Item 3. Failed.

Vanessa Wells entered at 6:09 p.m. (via Skype)

2.5. Starring of Items

The Council is invited to identify any items not currently scheduled for discussion

3. Minutes and Reports of Meetings

3.1. Minutes of the previous month's meetings

3.1.1. COUNCIL MEETING, 12TH JANUARY 2015

Attached documentation: Minutes of the abovementioned meetings.

★ 3.2. Business Arising from Minutes

4. Officer Reports

★ 4.1. President

Timothy Scriven

The President noted that he had circulated his report on the day that the Secretary had requested. The acting Secretary noted that it had been submitted late, after the deadline of 12 p.m., so had not been included in the Council Pack.

Motion [FEB11-02]: *That SUPRA Council approves the President's report.*

Moved: Brigitte McFadden **Seconded:** Douglas King

Carried.

★ **4.2. Vice-President**

Kylee Hartman-Warren

The Vice-President noted that she would be resigning from the position and is currently looking for a co-Vice President, with the intent that there will be a period of handover before her resignation. She added that the biggest events coming up are O-Week and the AGM.

Motion [FEB11-03]: *That SUPRA Council approves the Vice-President's report.*

Moved: Philip Roberts **Seconded:** Brendan McMonigal

Carried.

★ **4.3. Education Officer**

Brigitte McFadden

The Education Officer noted that there would be an action this Friday against Christopher Pyne, that there will be a sign up sheet for PEAC and that she will run drinks/social event for the week after O-Week. She added that we need to grow PEAC and make it more social and invited Councillors to attend on March 12th. She added that the Treasurer would be taking on some of the upcoming PEAC meetings and that she has an upcoming meeting with the SRC President and will be contacting USU with regards to a cross-student organisation event. She also noted that the roster for the O-Week stall will be passed around during the meeting and that there would be a craft event next Friday to prepare for O-Week, during which things for the stall will be made and bags will be filled. She added that she had ordered backs for badges and that she would make a video-making callout on social media and that activist workshops would be running this Sunday.

Motion [FEB11-04]: *That SUPRA Council approves the Education Officer's report.*

Moved: Philip Roberts **Seconded:** Guien Miao

Carried.

4.4. Treasurer

Douglas King

4.5. Secretary

Joanne Gad & Guien Miao (acting)

4.6. Director of Student Publications

Joanne Gad

4.7. Equity Officers

★ **4.7.1. ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER OFFICER**

Michael Butler

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer noted that he had been talking to an elder called Lynette Riley regarding a three hour workshop, introducing the interactions between traditional and modern. He added that he would bring it to Council when it's organised. He

has also been working on strengthening relationships between SUPRA and the local indigenous community and had been talking to a University of Sydney alumnus at Blacktown, who had pointed out that the greatest Australian WWI contribution was horses and that they are trying to recreate a Gallipoli charge at Alice Springs.

Celeste Ellis entered at 6:18 p.m.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer added that he had attended an indigenous masterclass series, had met up with a number of indigenous PhD students and is continuing to get SUPRA out there. Furthermore, he is looking to hold a collaborative event between the indigenous research portfolio & SUPRA. He added that the Redfern Anzac Day March is upcoming.

Motion [FEB11-05]: *That SUPRA Council approves the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer's report.*

Moved: Guien Miao **Seconded:** Kylee Hartman-Warren

Carried (1 abstention - Vanessa).

The Education Officer noted that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer would be leaving early and suggested moving to Item 11 before his departure.

Procedural motion to move to Item 11. Carried.

★ 4.7.2. INTERNATIONAL OFFICER

Nayeem Faisal Shaikh

The International Officer noted that he has not claimed any hours.

4.7.3. DISABILITIES OFFICER

Position currently vacant

★ 4.7.4. QUEER OFFICER

Grace Sharkey

The President noted that the Queer Officer has not claimed any hours.

4.7.5. WOMEN'S OFFICER

Ensiyeh Ghanizadeh Kazerouni

4.7.6. RURAL AND REGIONAL OFFICER

Position currently vacant

Attached documentation: Reports of Officers.

★ 4.8. **Business Arising from Reports**

★ 5. **Workplace Health & Safety**

The Treasurer noted that there were no WHS matters raised with him.

★ 6. Verbal Report from a Member of Staff

Francine Seeto noted that admin had been working on: supporting the completion of PGSM; organisation for Faculty inductions; planning to move to the new premises; helped with the Council planning day and staff planning; worked on the SSAF submission; provided assistance to the SSAOs; had been working towards a new website; and had worked on eGrad.

Carlos Monteverde Salvatierra departed at 6:44 p.m.

Francine Seeto also noted that the SSAOs have been: pushing to get data updated and archived; developing new factsheets; organising a planning day coming up on 16th February; briefing the President; and working on a workshop for the satellite campuses.

Philip Roberts departed at 6:46 p.m.

She added that SSAOs have been developing a new project, "supervisor of the year", to reward good supervisors and have opened 65-68 new cases in January alone. She further noted that there were approximately 70 cases for SUPRA's lawyer. Francine Seeto added that Faculty inductions have begun and encouraged Councillors to show up and talk about the benefits of getting involved in a student organisation, noting that students need to hear the perspective of other students to become interested.

Carlos Monteverde Salvatierra entered at 6:47 p.m.

The Vice-President noted that there is a sign-up form for Inductions going around.

Francine Seeto added that she would like to thank Joanne Gad and Kylee Hartman-Warren for their service and commitment to SUPRA over the years and that staff are very grateful for their time and effort and wish them all the best for the future.

A councillor asked about how the website designers have been sourced and about the competitiveness of the quotes. Francine Seeto replied that various quotes have come in and that there had been contractual issues with the previously approved designer. She pointed out that it would be best to contact Prunella Wirth for further details. The councillor asked how the 65-68 new cases were spread across the caseworkers. Francine Seeto noted that there would have been around three SSAOs working, as many were taking leave during January and reminded the councillor that the number is an underreport.

Philip Roberts entered at 6:50 p.m.

The President added that, in regards to the website, we had found someone we had liked, but Ingrid van Tongeren had advised against us agreeing to a contract with that company. He added that we have approached three different companies to provide quotes and reiterated that Prunella Wirth would have more details.

Motion [FEB11-08]: *That SUPRA Council thanks Francine Seeto for her report.*

Moved: Guien Miao **Seconded:** Brigitte McFadden

Carried.

Motion [FEB11-09]: *That SUPRA Council thanks Joanne Gad for her service to SUPRA.*

Moved: Guien Miao **Seconded:** Philip Roberts

Carried.

★ 7. Elections

7.1. Elections to Casual Vacancies

Attached documentation: Nominations to casual vacancies

There are currently 3 casual vacancies on Council. In order to fulfil equity requirements set out in the SUPRA Constitution, one of these positions must be filled by a woman.

Nominations have been received from:

- Thomas Greenwell
- Vaivi Mase
- Beatriz Lopez
- Carlos Salvatierra
- Zachary Thompson

7.2. Elections to Office-Bearing Positions

- co-Vice President
- Secretary

A councillor made a complaint regarding this item, noting that his removal was in violation of the SUPRA Constitution and that the clause by which he and other councillors had been removed does not apply to the affected councillors. He added that the clause (regarding an automatic removal of councillors) is incompatible with protections in policy of SUPRA and that there was a lack of procedural fairness as well as being in breach of the SUPRA Code of Conduct. He furthermore noted that Council is not allowed to appoint people to Council and that it must be sent to our constituents. He added that if this was not resolved, then he would take the matter to the Vice-Chancellor.

The Vice-President noted that she is not sure how Clause 5.07 2) is applied. The councillor pointed out that written evidence must be provided and that decisions must be made without bias. He also pointed out that the President had sent the removal notice as simply a postscript to another email and that records were not available on the website.

The acting Secretary noted that the President had all of the past minutes for the current term on the USB given to him at the start of the meeting. The President had difficulties navigating through the folders on the USB and asked for help from the acting Secretary. The acting Secretary pointed out that the folders are not difficult to navigate as the same file structure is used for every Council Meeting. The President nevertheless continued to ask the acting Secretary to navigate through the files in his stead. The acting Secretary asked the Treasurer to take up the minute-taking in the interim. The acting Secretary also noted that the Council minutes had duly been circulated to staff by the previous Secretary and, once circulated, are no longer the responsibility of the Secretary.

The councillor noted that he had been at the last meeting and that shows his contribution to Council, reiterating the unfairness of the application of the Clause. The Education Officer noted that there was a precedent for elections for casual vacancies during Council meetings and made a request for the relevant minutes to be shown. The acting Secretary showed the relevant minutes which showed that no apologies had been received from the councillor for three consecutive meetings.

The councillor refuted the minutes, noting that he had sent in his apologies. The acting Secretary queried why the councillor had not read the Council minutes and requested corrections.

Another councillor asked which councillors had allowed their position to lapse; the acting Secretary replied: Ella Factor, Zachary Thompson and Jessica Bloom.

The Vice-President gave some historical background to this provision in the Constitution and requested the emails which provided proof as to his apologies. She added that, on a governing body, it is not fair to remain on Council and not participate when there are others who are keen to join Council and participate.

The President summarised that the issues were that it is improper for Council to elect councillors via casual vacancies and that there are inconsistencies within the Constitution. He noted that the casual vacancy elections are dictated by the Constitution and that the Constitution is ratified by the University. He added that he was appalled that the main contributions of the councillor are these matters. The councillor objected to the personal attacks by the President.

The Education Officer requested that Council move on from this discussion due to a lack of productivity. The Vice-President reiterated her request for time-stamped emails. The Education Officer noted that, if the councillor had not checked his Council pack and the email had not been received, the onus would be on the councillor to engage, not the Secretary to pick up on errors. Another councillor added that the Constitution is clear in that the position falls vacant automatically and that it is not any councillor's decision. The Education Officer requested a speaking list be formulated.

Another councillor questioned that it seemed coincidental that serious allegations were made against the President last meeting and that the councillor had then been removed. Yet another councillor suggested that the criticism regarding not reading the Council pack applies also to the Executive for not noticing the perceived error earlier. He added that, if there is evidence, we can investigate the matter regarding the apology by email and that the blame does not fall on the Secretary, but rather, we as Council can re-check. The Vice-President noted that there may be a mistake in the case of the present councillor; however, neither of the other two would qualify. The acting Secretary noted that the removal should have been indicated at the previous meeting.

Another councillor noted that the minutes are the official record of the meeting and that, furthermore, it is the responsibility of councillors to check minutes and that minutes had been passed at the last three meetings without any issues. The acting Secretary then pointed out that as the minutes had not yet been ratified at the last meeting, it would make sense that the announcement could not be made at the previous meeting.

The councillor then raised the issue of the President's report. There was a heated argument between the President and the councillor regarding this.

The councillor brought up the \$1.2 million budget and questioned how SUPRA would be run if we can't even keep adequate records of attendance. He brought up issues with transparency on the part of the Executive.

The President noted that we need to clarify whether or not said councillor is still on Council. Another councillor suggested deferring the matter to the next meeting. The councillor brought up an email with an apology and suggested that there had been an error on the part of the Secretary.

The acting Secretary noted that there were also clauses regarding subcommittee attendance and noted that, in the last term, it had been made clear that every councillor was considered a member of Management Committee. Another councillor noted that, if that clause were applied, most councillors would no longer be on Council.

There was then broad discussion on a number of consequences, including who remains on Council, whether or not we are quorate, whether or not past motions are still valid.

Gareth Charles departed at 7:25 p.m., passing his proxy to Douglas King.

The Education Officer asked that the previous Secretary be consulted for details to establish the facts. The President noted that we could cancel the meeting to take time to establish the facts. A councillor noted that it would be better spend time to establish who is on Council. The President noted that we cannot recall Council; the Vice-President corrected him, pointing out that we can if it is within 7 days.

Joseph Callingham departed at 7:32 p.m., passing his proxy to Alex Dore.

The Education Officer added a recommendation to investigate the domination of Council meetings by men as well as to formulate a strategy to fix this issue. The Women's Officer agreed with the Education Officer, noting that respect is needed between councillors and that we are here to make decisions for our constituents, not to engage in in-fighting. The Vice-President asked that councillors refrain from the gender issue and noted that, while there is certainly an issue, it is not necessarily gendered.

It was generally agreed that the meeting be dissolved and recalled after further investigation.

Quorum lapsed at 7:36 p.m.

★ 8. **Draft Interim Budget**

The Treasurer will present the draft interim budget for discussion.

★ 9. **CAPA 2015 Affiliation**

Attached documentation:

- Letter to Affiliates
- SUPRA Affiliation Invoice
- Fee Discount Form

★ 10. **O-Week Stall**

★ 11. **Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy**

The Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy was established in May 2014, in opposition to Aboriginal Housing Company plans to develop the Block not for Aboriginal housing, but for office blocks and university student accommodation (the land was gifted to Aboriginal people in 1973 specifically for the provision of housing for some of the state's most disadvantaged residents).

This proposed development and housing is going towards university accommodation for students at Sydney University. It is important that SUPRA make clear that we won't accept the use of this land. It is in close proximity of our university campus, and the development has forced elderly people and traditional owners of the land to leave their homes.

The Tent Embassy runs off donations of food, money, firewood and labour. The only way that the embassy can continue to run and fight this development, is if it receives support from the surrounding and wider community.

Recommendation: *That SUPRA Council stands in solidarity with the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy and supports their struggle against the Aboriginal Housing Company's plans to redevelop the area.*

Moved: Brigitte McFadden **Seconded:** Michael Butler

Recommendation: *That SUPRA Council donates \$350 to the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy for general running costs of the embassy.*

Moved: Brigitte McFadden **Seconded:** Michael Butler

The Education Officer noted that the Tent Embassy had been established as a gift for indigenous housing and that the land is now being taken for student housing. She added that the University is, in effect, in opposition to the Tent Embassy, while the SRC have already stood in solidarity with them. She noted that all student organisations should get on board, as it is not acceptable to be pitting students against the indigenous population and added that they get donations from community groups and people in the area, so, as we are part of their community, we should help out.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer noted that there is a dispute between Aboriginal leaders and agreed with the Education Officer, that a previous government had preserved that piece of land for Aboriginal affordable housing and that the block should remain in their hands. A councillor asked whether the University is claiming title to the land. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer noted that the Aboriginal Housing Trust want to develop the land for student accommodation and then use the money for Aboriginal housing.

Nayeem Faisal Shaikh entered at 6:25 p.m.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer pointed out that the principle should be that it remains as it is as it is the closest thing to Aboriginal sacred land within Sydney, adding that they are not going to create a harmonious community by placing students there instead of the Tent Embassy.

A councillor noted that it would be a net positive for Aboriginal housing, with the worth of the land and student accommodation being of benefit to Aboriginal people. He noted that the surrounding housing needs to be updated and that it would be good for students as it would push pricing down for students. He added that the role of SUPRA is not to deal with cultural conflicts, but advocate for the benefit of postgraduate students. He noted that the debate is too emotionally-charged.

Alex Dore entered at 6:28 p.m.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer noted that it would work if everything got followed up and did not agree with putting a value on cultural heritage. He noted that, while he agrees with the councillor, there is plenty of room around the University for student accommodation and that this is not the only vacant plot of land. He added that this will cause issues in the future and suggested that in the long term, it could damage relations between the Aboriginal community and the student community.

The President suggested councillors visit the block, noting that they need security at the Tent Embassy due to a group of thugs wanting them gone. He added that this is not outside of SUPRA's remit, as anything related to a site for postgraduate student accommodation lies within our remit.

A councillor expressed concern as the development is not for Aboriginal housing, but rather office-blocks and student accommodation and it was originally set aside for the Aboriginal community. Another councillor noted that the economic logic makes sense; however, it would be supporting gentrification of the area.

Kylee Hartman-Warren departed at 6:34 p.m., passing her proxy to Douglas King.

The Education Officer noted that they would be selling the land and not getting rent.

The Women's Officer asked why they were requesting the \$350. The Education Officer noted that there are people living there 24 hours a day and there needs to be food for them and wood for the sacred fire, for example.

The Women's Officer asked why the University was not approached to give them money. The Education Officer noted that it was a sign of solidarity. The Women's Officer agreed, but suggested asking the University for support as well.

Motion [FEB11-06]: *That SUPRA Council stands in solidarity with the Redfern Aboriginal Tent Embassy and supports their struggle against the Aboriginal Housing Company's plans to redevelop the area.*

Moved: Brigitte McFadden **Seconded:** Michael Butler

Carried.

Kylee Hartman-Warren entered at 6:39 p.m.

A councillor asked why the request is for \$350 and how it would be spent. The Education Officer noted that, when the Tent Embassy requires something, it would be available for SUPRA to spend money on their behalf.

Procedural motion to move to a vote. Carried.

Motion [FEB11-07]: *That SUPRA Council donates \$350 to the Redfern Aboriginal Tent*

Embassy for general running costs of the embassy.

Moved:

Brigitte McFadden

Seconded:

Michael Butler

Carried.

A councillor suggested that this is cronyism and worth investigating. The Education Officer noted that the receipts will be provided to the Finance Manager; John Fell noted that he would show these receipts to councillors upon request.

★ 12. Other Business