



SYDNEY UNIVERSITY POSTGRADUATE REPRESENTATIVE ASSOCIATION

MINUTES FOR THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD AT THE SUPRA OFFICES AT 6:00PM AT 21ST MARCH 2012.

Chair: Angelus Morningstar
Minutes: Thomas Munro
Present: Kylee HARTMAN-WARREN (arrived 6:45), Maria INDELICATO, Hye KIM, Angelus MORNINGSTAR, Thomas MUNRO, Pip MURATORE, Sivaruman PURUSHOTHUMAN, Alex THOMAS, Bradley WELLS, Rosemary WHITECROSS

Meeting opened at 6:15pm

1. Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome

2. Housekeeping

2.1. Apologies Cyrus ACHAEMENIAN, Khawaja ALMAS, Alice BRANDLI, Nadia ANWAR, Alice BRANDLI, Kareena DENLEY, James FLYNN, Marie GERMA, John NOWAKOWSKI, Felicity WILSON

2.2. Proxies Alex THOMAS carries the proxy for Khawaja ALMAS
Rosemary WHITECROSS carries the proxies for James FLYNN and Felicity WILSON
Katherine HARPER carries the proxy for Marie GERMA
Pip MURATORE carries the proxy for John NOWAKOWSKI
Thomas MUNRO carries the proxy for Alice BRANDLI

2.3. Notifications

3. Report from Staff*

Margaret Kirkby spoke to council, though this will rotate between staff members who are interested. We have a new staff member, Louise, starting on Monday. Case work is pretty high. There has been a high percentage of casework with mental health issues. Margaret has commenced regular outreach at the faculty of health sciences. The librarian there has made a space available for SUPRA on Thursdays. The faculty of health sciences is very pleased that SUPRA has a presence there.

4. Elections

4.1. Nominations to Council

5. Minutes of Meetings

5.1. Minutes of the meeting of Council, 21st February, 12

5.2. Business Arising From Minutes

[Motion 01/120321] **That Council accepts the tabled minutes with noted Amendments.**

Moved from the chair

Seconder: Thomas MUNRO

Result: **CONSENSUS**

6. Reports of Meetings

6.1. Report of Publications & Community Engagement Committee, February, 12

6.2. Business Arising From Reports

[Motion 02/120321] **That Council accepts the tabled reports**

Moved from the chair

Seconder: Thomas MUNRO

Result: **CONSENSUS**

7. Officer Reports*

7.1. President Report*

Angelus has been very busy as there has been a lot on at the moment. He would like somebody who is passionate about the Turnitin program and would like to spearhead this campaign. Tim SCRIVEN can bring this to the Education Action Group to get a motion against this. Maia (guest) would be interested in taking this on and being involved in investigating this further.

7.2. Vice-President (Policy)

7.3. Vice-President (Community)

7.4. Secretary

7.5. Treasurer

7.6. Director of Student Publications

7.7. International Student Officer

7.8. Queer Officer

7.9. Disability Officer

No report received

7.10. Business Arising From Reports

[Motion 03/120321] That Council accepts the tabled reports of officers

Moved from the chair

Seconder: Thomas MUNRO

Result: CONSENSUS

8. Report from Postgraduate Fellow

James FLYNN sent his apologies for this week.

9. Governance

9.1. Student Services and Amenities Fee [IN CAMERA]*

This item was IN CAMERA

10. Substantive Positions

10.1. Staff Cuts*

Tim SCRIVEN has been representing SUPRA at the Education Action Group (EAG). There was a rally today that started outside Fisher to the Quad where EAG members and their supporters marched and pretended to die outside the Vice-Chancellor's office; they were then marked with chalk outlines and the area was declared an 'educational crime scene.' The university has announced that it has indefinitely delayed the continuation of redundancies.

We need to own this campaign more and not forget the cuts to general staff.

[Motion 04/120321] That Council empowers Tim SCRIVEN to represent SUPRA at the Education Action Group in relation to these campaigns. And that he be the main person involved with our grassroots campaigning against the staff cuts.

Moved from the chair

Seconder: Thomas MUNRO

Result: CONSENSUS

10.2. Process on Consultation*

Our constitution requires us to 'regularly' consult with the student body. This is very vague and often difficult to implement and will have to be examined.

11. Policy

11.1. Constitutional Recommendations*

As the AGM approaches it will be our annual opportunity to review the Constitution and propose changes.

01.01 Membership Model

Issue: SSA fee means that the Subscriber/Supporter model is likely obsolete. Additionally, the term Subscriber has been confusing many as it has connotations of paying a fee.

Recommendation: Remove all references to Supporter and re-term Subscriber to Member.

Outcome: CONSENSUS

01.02 Constituency

Issue: There are some students who are taught by USyd, but are not examined by them and therefore not formally enrolled at USyd. These students are affected by University policy but lack representation.

Recommendation: Extend the definition of constituency to also include: “All persons who are undertaking postgraduate study through a course provided by the University but are not an enrolled student at the University.”

Outcome: **It was recommended that this issue be explored further as there was some suggestion that these students may have representation elsewhere. This was deferred to a policy committee meeting.**

01.03 Extraordinary Membership

Issue: Some constituents, such as those enrolled at other institutions but doing courses at USyd (or as mentioned above), require Council approval to make them Constituents/Members.

Recommendation: Give the President discretionary authority to make qualified people Members upon application.

Outcome: **It was recommended that this issue be explored further as there was some suggestion that these students may have representation elsewhere.**

01.04 Registration

Issue: The constitution requires us only to get contact details from students for membership, where we need Student IDs as well.

Recommendation: To require student IDs for membership.

Outcome: CONSENSUS

01.05 Renewal

Issue: The membership database is becoming outdated and obsolete, with many members who have since graduated.

Recommendation: To include a provision that requires the renewal of membership every two years (or similar). NB: that renewal will not require us to re-enter details.

Outcome: **The idea was accepted in principle, though more information regarding the administrative costs involved and practical application was sought.**

01.06 Expiration of Membership

Issue: Currently, membership extends until the AGM. For members who graduate in Semester 2, this means they could theoretically go a whole year before their membership expires. This also has implications for eligibility to run for Council and Office as well as the length of their term of Office.

Recommendation: To cause membership to expire at the end of December or June.

Outcome: **There was a straw poll which was slightly in favour, though it seems this idea needs to be pursued further.**

01.07 AGM

Issue: The AGM happening in May (making Reps-elect in June) and this creates a small window for hand-over. It also occurs close to examinations and becomes difficult to get attendance.

Recommendation: To change the time of the AGM to be in April, perhaps during the mid-semester break.

Outcome: **There was an extensive discussion about when the best time would be. The First week of May was the accepted position.**

01.08 Election of the President

Issue: I have serious concerns about the fact that the peak representative of the postgraduate students is not actually selected by them. I believe that the AGM is either the appropriate forum to elect the President and/or vet the nominees.

Recommendation: To hold the Presidential Elections during the AGM.

Outcome: **There was an extensive discussion around whether this would be a good idea, or could result in stacking and factionalism. There was a strong indication that it would be ideal to have candidates ‘vetted’ at the AGM and questioned, but elected as normal.**

01.09 Grammatical and Typographical Errors in Constitution

Issue: Despite best attempts, there are always errors.

Recommendation: A provision that permits Council to amend typographical errors in the Constitution subject to ratification by the Senate.

Outcome: **There is no need to have this included as it should just be done as standard practice.**

01.11 Disqualification from Council

Issue: The grounds for removal from Council and eligibility to run for Council are perhaps not rigorous enough. The position of Council is one of probity and there are no checks pertaining to the responsibility of nominees.

Recommendation: There should be provisions in the constitution for disqualification from Council on the basis of bankruptcy, fraudulent conduct, violent conduct, and other significant misconduct that would preclude people from being the director of a million dollar organisation.

Outcome: **There was some concern raised about what could be seen as an invasion of privacy. It was also raised that while some criminal activity, such as fraudulent conduct, could be relevant, other ‘criminal’ activity that may have arisen through activism or similar should not disqualify people from being on SUPRA council.**

01.14 Council Composition

Issue: The numbers of Council is static and does not necessarily reflect the changes in demographics.

Recommendation: That Council composition be linked to Equivalent Full Time Student Load (which is proportional to SSAF). It is recommended that there be one position on Council for every 500 of postgraduate EFTSL (which is 20 atm), with a minimum of 15 positions. That 1 position be reserved for int students for every 1000 EFTSL of PG Int students, 1 for every EFTSL of women students, Coursework and Research alike.

Outcome: Council was against this proposal and wished to keep the system as is.

01.15 Council Composition

Issue: Having two different types of Councillors is problematic, which means we have to create loopholes and regulations covering transitions between the two and the like.

Recommendation: That distinctions between the two be absolved, meaning that there are only Councillors. The Equity Officers would remain the prerogative of those Equity Groups to elect (probably through constituted causes or similar). This also has the benefit of including those persons into the composition of Council, which they currently are not.

Outcome: CONSENSUS

01.16 Sixth Equity Group

Issue: Rural, Regional, and distance students are a significant minority constituent that need some way to have their voice heard.

Recommendation: Creation of a Rural and Regional caucus/collective.

Outcome: CONSENSUS

01.17 Suspension

Issue: There is no formal power that allows Council to suspend persons from Council where they have been breaching the regulations.

Recommendation: Create those provisions.

Outcome: CONSENSUS

01.18 Redundant Provisions

Issue: Many of the Provisions in the Constitution are covered by other Regulations, and there are a few points where they contradict each other. Some (not all) of the Electoral Regulations, Rules of Order, Financial Regulations, and Records Management are an example of this.

Recommendation: Remove provisions from the Constitution to relevant Regulations, save where it is important they remain entrenched in the Constitution.

Outcome: CONSENSUS

01.19 The Executive Composition

Issue: Effectively, there is a need to create more hours for the workload being undertaken by the Executive, but often these are not within the duty statement of some of these roles.

Recommendation: Create three VPs overlooking the three principle portfolios of our work (Policy/submissions/etc), (community development), and (publicity/social media, etc). These should be at 20 hours per week each, enabling international students to do these roles. Also, the Secretary and Treasurer should be amalgamated into a Gen Secretary at 20 hours.

Outcome: This requires further discussion.

01.21 Committee Membership

Issue: Concern was raised about subscribers being able to be members of Executive Committees.

Recommendation: Limit membership to exec committees solely to members of Council.

Outcome: CONSENSUS

01.23 Incorporation

Issue: Whether we should.

Recommendation: Above.

Outcome: To be discussed at another time.

11.2. Childcare Access*

This item was deferred due to time constraints.

12. Other Business

12.1. O-week overtime

Kylee HARTMAN-WARREN would like to claim 15 hours from each week during O-week for a total of 30 hours.

[Motion 05/120321]

That for the weeks of 20th February to 4th of March Kylee HARTMAN-WARREN's claimable hours be increased by 15 hours for those two weeks.

Moved from the chair

Secunder: Tim SCIVEN

Result: CONSENSUS

The meeting closed at 8:45pm