



# Students' Representative Council University of Sydney

**Secretary to Council**  
e: secretary.council@src.usyd.edu.au

Level 1, Wentworth building (G01)  
University of Sydney NSW 2006  
PO Box 794 Broadway NSW 2007  
t: (02) 9660 5222 f: (02) 9660 4260  
int: 12871 www.src.usyd.edu.au  
ABN: 597 391 306 68

---

## MINUTES:

of the 2<sup>nd</sup> regular meeting of the 89<sup>th</sup> SRC held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March. Meeting held in the Professorial Board Room, Quadrangle

---

### A. Meeting open at 6:10 pm

#### A1. Election of Deputy Chairperson

The Chair moved that Bella Pytka be elected Deputy Chairperson.  
The motion was put and **CARRIED.**

### B. Acknowledgement of Country

The University of Sydney Students' Representative Council acknowledges the traditional owners of this land (Sydney), the Gadigal people of the Eora nation. We stand on this land today as beneficiaries of an uncompensated and unreconciled dispossession that occurred over 200 years ago. Many of the descendants of those dispossessed live just down the road in abject poverty, and as young people it is important to recognise how this history of dislocation and disenfranchisement has contributed to the inequality we observe in modern society. We acknowledge both our privilege and our obligation to redress the situation as best we can: to remember the mistakes of the past, act on the problems of today, and build a future for everyone who now calls this place home, striving always for genuinely practical and meaningful reconciliation.

### C. Apologies, Proxies and Leaves of Absence

#### Apologies were received from:

Kim Murphy  
Vinil Kumar  
Ella Bickley  
Paravathi Subramaniam

#### Proxies

Brendan Ma to Lachlan Finch  
Jake Williams to Alan Zheng  
Amelia Chen to Daniel Ergas  
Andrea Zephyr to Roy Elder  
Ed McCann to David Martin  
Georgia Mantle to Imogen Grant  
Marcus Colman to Aashray Narula  
Claudia Gulbransen-Diaz to Edward Bruce  
James Cooper to Gabriel Long  
Isabella Brook to Iman Farrar  
Alexander Shu to Ninad Gundi

Motion: That the Council accept the apologies and proxies.

Moved: Alex Fitton

Seconded: Connor Wherrett

The motion was put and **CARRIED.**

6:20pm Alex Fitton Proxies to Jackson Newell.

**D. Changes to Membership**

**E. Electoral Report**

**E1. Consideration of any resignations**

Evangeline Woodforde from Honi Soit

Gillian Kayrooz from Honi Soit

James Cooper to Gabriel Long

Motion: That the Council accept the resignations.

Moved: Aiden Magro

Seconded: Sophia Chung

The motion was put and **CARRIED.**

**E2. Report of the Electoral Officer**

Motion: That the Council accept the report of the Electoral Officer

Moved: Jake Williams

Seconded: Sam Chu

The motion was put and **CARRIED.**

Procedural Motion to move straight to Q1 and 2.

Moved: Dominic McDonald

Seconded: Liam Donohoe

The Procedural was put and **CARRIED.**

**Q1. Motion of total solidarity with the Syrian revolution against Assad regime**

**Preamble**

In 2011, a protest movement erupted in Syria - ignited by the Arab Spring, demanding social justice and the democratisation of society. The Spring spread across the Middle East like wildfire, toppling dictators with mass protests of millions. This was a region which many before had argued was incapable of revolution or even democracy. The Assad regime in Syria, a 40 year long dictatorship, responded to the peaceful protests with bullets and torture cells. At this point the struggle in Syria became revolutionary, demanding the end to the rule of Bashar al-Assad. The brutal crushing of the Syrian revolution that has continued from 2011 to this day lays to bare the barbarity, and inhumanity of the regime, imperialism and capitalism as a whole.

Freedom, democracy and justice were the demands of the Syrian revolution and the entire Arab Spring. The uproar of the masses across the region overthrew Gaddafi, Mubarak, Saleh and Ben Ali, and Syrians demanded the fall of Assad. The Arab revolutions erupted because, over decades, the regimes had failed their people economically, politically, socially and culturally. The regimes collapsed inevitably – and are still collapsing – under the weight of this historical failure.

In the early years of the revolution, there was an immense phenomenon of the popular masses creating organs of self-organisation. In many neighbourhoods and villages, Syrians organised themselves and created local coordinations that called and planned demonstrations against the regime. These later transformed into the basis of self-administration for running everyday life, especially as so many of these villages were totally cut off from essential services by the state. Such bodies show the depth of the revolution, as the power of Assad waned and people began to collectively take power and organise on a local level to continue the fight despite being under siege.

The courageous people of Syria have continued to protest against the tyranny of Assad, Russia and Iran. When cease fires have been called by the Syrian and Russian governments - in sinister attempts to justify the following intense bombing campaign - Aleppo's residents have refused to evacuate. Instead, in their moment of peace, they have mobilised a series of protests echoing the very same demands that sparked the uprising against President Bashar Al-Assad five years ago, for freedom and liberty from the tyranny of the regime and its allies.

Bashar al-Assad is the unelected dictator of Syria installed in 2000, following his father's death after 30 years in power. Assad decided in 2011 that there was no price in blood he would not pay to stay in power. According to the Syrian Network for Human Rights, since 2011, over 400,000 civilians have been killed, 93% by Syrian government forces. The Assad regime and its allies have committed unspeakable war crimes, including the ongoing use of chemical weapons. There are 6.6 million internally displaced people in Syria and over 4.8 million Syrian refugees who have fled. The regime is extremely sectarian, creating divisions in the region to prevent against events such as the revolution of 2011. Assad deliberately released jihadists from jail in 2011 to taint the revolution with extremism, whilst murdering protesters. His regime perpetrated a series of sectarian massacres in 2012, deliberately provoking a backlash from the Sunni majority. Assad's scorched earth policy, in fulfillment of the slogan, "Either Assad or we'll burn the country", has provided the fertile ground in which terrorism can grow. This is all in an effort to destroy the revolution so entirely that only Assad and the jihadists are left standing. Then, he assumes, the world will have no choice but to back the regime.

There has been a militarisation of various rebel forces as the revolution has continued on, under the banner of the Free Syrian Army. Some of the protesters in 2011, who were shot at like birds by the regime's soldiers, decided to take up arms and protect themselves, so began to bring guns along to protect the demonstrations. At the same time there were growing numbers of desertions from the regime army. In late 2011 and 2012 there were 20,000-30,000 soldiers who deserted with their weapons. These deserters and ordinary people who took up arms organised around the local coordinations have formed the over

3000 armed, non Islamist groups that make up much of the Free Syrian Army. Due to a refusal of all state forces involved to actually back the revolution and provide arms to the rebels, the reactionary groups have strengthened their position relative to the democratic opposition, significantly weakening the ability to push back against regime forces.

Imperialist forces and other groups have become increasingly entrenched in the state of conflict in Syria, pursuing their own interests in a time in which a country is up for grabs.

Firstly, Russia. Since intervening in late 2015, when Assad's regime was on its knees, Russia has significantly bolstered the aerial based attack against the rebels. Under the banner of fighting against Islamic State terrorists, Russia has killed thousands of civilians and Free Syrian Army militants, giving a helping hand to Assad for the purpose of pursuing its own imperialist interests. Syria is now the last bastion where Russia has had a military presence for decades, yet the Syrian revolution has threatened Russia's presence and diplomatic influence in the region. Furthermore, since the ascent of Putin, Russia has sought to recover its place among the great powers, by force if necessary, a policy that has greatly shaped what has happened in Syria.

Whilst Obama has at times rhetorically opposed Assad's genocide, the US has continued to carry out its own imperialist ventures in the region, embracing the opportunity to return to the region it had been forced out of, following the disaster of the Iraq War. US policy for Syria was to let the different groups kill each other, its objective being to destroy the economic and military capacities of Syria. This destruction is likely to go on, to the point where the regime - or whatever future system comes after it - can never constitute any kind of threat to Israel.

There are also major regional powers that are heavily involved in the conflict; Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey, Israel and the Kurds. The ongoing Iran-Saudi Arabia conflict tainted the revolution early on with religious divisions that were not present at the start of the revolution. Saudi Arabia helped extremist islamists, and, on the other hand, Iran intervened under its own religious slogans. The ongoing oppression of the Kurds spearheaded by the Turkish state has also changed the nature of the conflict, as the Syrian Revolution allowed the liberation of the Kurdish people in Syria and brought up the question of Kurdish national liberation. Turkey has at least two objectives - to crush the aspiration for Kurdish autonomy in Syria, and to make sure that Syria's future wouldn't be decided without Turkey's active participation. Israel wants Syria to be weakened economically and militarily, but without the fall of Assad's regime, as this would open up a civil war, threatening Israel and the whole stability of imperialist order in the region.

There are many debates on the Left as to whether or not to support the Syrian Revolution. Some deny that it was ever a genuine revolution and that it was instead a CIA inspired plot. Some argue that the revolution has been subsumed by sectarian conflict, and thus is insupportable, as the rebels are just as bad as Assad and the milieu of other state forces operating in Syria.

The first is the position of Stalinism, suggesting that the only imperialist force that exists in the world is the US, and that the Assad regime - because it's supposedly secular, anti-zionist

and was aligned with the Eastern Bloc during the Cold War- is inherently progressive and must be defended as it transitions to socialism. This is the position of University of Sydney academic, Tim Anderson, who argues that all the crimes of the Assad regime are lies concocted by the CIA. This conspiracy theory should be refuted by all on the left.

Anderson and his ilk ignore the long history of collaboration of the Assad regime with Israel to keep the peace, as well as Bashar's collaboration with George Bush during the "war on terror". Such a theory continues the Stalinist tradition of opposing genuine revolutionary struggles that threaten the power of the 'progressive' state.

More common than the Assad apologists are those who still think that the US is the most culpable party in the Syrian conflict, and that the primary duty of leftists in the West is to oppose our own governments over Syria. Or, similarly, they believe that Assad and the rebels are equally to blame for the violent chaos in the country, and thus we must condemn all sides. This position is largely due to racism. The so called left describes the Syrian rebels as all backward, blood-thirsty, barbaric, "jihadis" and "head-choppers".

In the real world, revolutions are extremely complicated and messy. People like those in Syria, living for decades under a totalitarian tyranny that brutally suppressed all opposition thought, do not emerge from this with fully developed "revolutionary" programs and "correct" ideas that those of us living our entire lives in the relative comfort of western cities may think are necessary. There are lessons to be learnt from the history of the Syrian revolutions. But the key question remains; who's side are you on? The overwhelming majority of the global left have denied the existence of the revolution and thus side with Assad.

Imperialism is not a phenomenon restricted to the United States. Russia, Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Israel are all imperialist forces too, with interests in the chaos of Syria. The left should oppose the efforts of all imperialist forces to make gains in the region. Further, the left should oppose the capitalist state as ever being a structure preferable to a popular revolution.

The revolution maintains its mass character in Syria as the population continues to struggle against the Assad regime. Whilst Free Aleppo has been crushed, many of the surviving rebels have been evacuated to Idlib, where they continue to protest and fight against the tyranny of regime forces. It is highly unlikely that the Syrian population will again accept Assad as the dictator, as they have hardened further against him in the last 5 years. Thus the revolution continues. The extraordinary bravery of the revolutionaries against Assad demands the solidarity of the international left.

Any of the 'left' that support the repressive, violent, sectarian and dictatorial Assad regime, or believe it is in any way progressive or 'transitional' should no longer consider themselves the left. These people support the annihilation of human life in Syria and the extermination of a revolution that has survived against all odds.

In December last year, Assad's army and Russian forces stamped their foot on the long held rebel city of Aleppo. All over social media, citizens of East Aleppo posted videos of what

they thought to be their final moments online. Mr Alhmodo, an English teacher from Aleppo, reflected on the revolution, the depravity of Assad and Putin and the failures of the rest of the world to do anything to prevent the extermination of the Syrian revolution;

“Don’t believe anymore in the United nations, don’t believe anymore in the international community... They are satisfied that we are being killed, that we are facing one of the most difficult or the most serious or the most horrible massacre that is in new history. Russia doesn’t want us to go out alive, they want us dead. Assad is the same... But at least we know that... we were free people, we wanted freedom. We didn’t want anything else, but freedom.”

### **Platform**

1. The University of Sydney Student Representative Council stands in full solidarity with the Syrian revolutionaries in their struggle for freedom, democracy and justice.
2. The University of Sydney Student Representative Council condemns the vicious brutality of Assad and his foreign backers against the Syrian people.
3. The University of Sydney Student Representative Council condemns Russian, Iranian, United States, Turkish, Israeli and Syrian imperialism.
4. The University of Sydney Student Representative Council condemns Tim Anderson for his praise of the Assad regime, endorsing the genocide of the Syrian people.

### **Action**

1. The Student Representative Council will publish the preamble and platform of this motion as their official position on the Syrian revolution.

Dominic McDonald: This is not our business I think we should vote it down.

Liam Donohue: I’m against this for a number of reasons but if there is no one to debate this with I see no point in going into detail.

Moved: Lily Campbell

Seconded: April Holcombe

The motion was put and **FAILED**.

## **Q2. Protest Netanyahu**

### **Preamble**

Benjamin Netanyahu, the current prime minister of Israel, is responsible for war crimes against the Palestinian people in his commitment to the ongoing occupation of Palestine. Since first becoming Prime Minister of Israel in 1996, he has had a blood-soaked career which has included a massive escalation in illegal Israeli settlements, routine massacres in Gaza, an increase in repression and checkpoints in the West Bank, and the economic and political blockade of Gaza.

Between July and August 2014, Netanyahu oversaw the mass murder of more than 2,300 Palestinians, including 500 children. Today, tens of thousands of Gaza residents continue to live among the rubble of destroyed and damaged homes, unable to rebuild due to Israel's economic blockade.

Netanyahu leads the most right wing parliament of Israel to date, with several members of far right parties within his coalition government. This includes Avigdor Lieberman, the defense minister of Israel who recently announced that the next Gaza war will be the last, calling for the genocide of Palestinians trapped in Gaza. Netanyahu won the most recent election in Israel by promising that under his watch there would never be a Palestinian state. The government has been pushing for increased expansion, inciting a surge in illegal settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem in late 2016. Despite international outrage, Netanyahu has defended the settlements into Palestinian land by saying "Israel does not turn the other cheek", further living up to his election promise; to ensure that under his watch there will never be a Palestinian state. The election of Trump to the US presidency and his support for moving the Israeli-American embassy to Jerusalem, which is legally Palestinian land, ensures that Netanyahu's settlement project will only ramp up.

This push to the right further emboldens Israel's colonial project, including the expansion of illegal settlements, further encroaching on Palestinian land. In villages like Ni'lin in the West Bank, the building of the 8metre high Apartheid wall has separated Palestinians from their land and livelihood, facilitating land theft on behalf of illegal Israeli settlements. Palestinian protesters continue to resist their dispossession with weekly protests which are heavily repressed by the Israeli state and armed illegal settlers. Netanyahu has recently threatened the annexation of the West Bank and Gaza if the colonial project continues to be resisted.

Israel has adopted and built up it's own apartheid system, including the separation wall, military checkpoints and Israeli-only roads that criss-cross the West Bank. Apartheid is reality for Palestinians living in the occupied territories. Checkpoints throughout the occupation limit the movement of Palestinians, with workers and students spending hours waiting in lines each day. The general lock out of Palestinians from the Israeli economy has meant that Palestinians are denied basic human needs. This year during the summer months there was a water shortage in the West Bank, as Israel has taken greater control of the Jordan river and increased the restrictions on Palestinian water supply. Netanyahu's government blamed the Palestinians for the water shortage.

Australia's foreign minister Julie Bishop has invited Netanyahu to come to Australia, the first Israeli PM to visit Australia. This is a sign of acceptance of the racist Israeli state, a state which has displaced millions of people and created the largest refugee population in the world. It's a sign of alliance of both Israel and Australia, as both push forth a message of racism, Islamophobia and imperialist aggression under the guise of "self defense" and "fighting terrorism".

Julie Bishop wants to roll out the red carpet for war criminals like Netanyahu because the Australian political establishment and Israel have a lot in common. Just as Israel's expansion relies on the ongoing dispossession and incremental genocide of the Palestinians, the Australian state continues to deny Indigenous Australians land rights, criminalises their communities and steals their children.

While the Liberals and Labor see Netanyahu as a key ally in the West's domination of the Middle East, ordinary people in Australia and the US are increasingly identifying with the struggle to free Palestine. Sydney Uni SRC should stand with the Palestinians against occupation, and support the protests against Israeli apartheid when Netanyahu visits next year.

### **Platform**

1. The SRC condemns Netanyahu and his Government for the ongoing oppression of the Palestinians, including the massacre in Gaza in 2014, the expansion of illegal settlements, the building of the apartheid separation wall and the blockade on Gaza.
2. The SRC recognises and condemns the apartheid conditions placed on Palestinians living in the occupied territories, denying Palestinians basic human necessities and recognises that international support for Palestine helps to break down the apartheid system, just like in South Africa in the 1990s
3. The SRC stands with the Palestinian resistance, within Palestine and worldwide, as it continues to call for justice in Palestine

### **Action**

1. The SRC publicly endorses the protest campaign against Netanyahu when he comes to Australia in 2017 and will help build these demonstrations
2. The SRC calls on all its office bearers and councillors to attend the protests against Netanyahu
3. The SRC will advertise the protest against Netanyahu from its Facebook pages

Will Edwards: Everyone should attend the protest on the 27<sup>th</sup> of Feb.

Adam Boidin: There is no point putting this motion this is not relevant to the SRC

Timothy Berney-Gibson: This is not to do with our function and we should vote it down

Liam Donohoe: This is relevant to the SRC, and I agree with much of this motion, we should be taking political stances on issues like this.

Moved: Paul Bova

Seconded: Chris Anderton

The motion was put and **FAILED**.

*Meeting returned to standing orders*

## **F. Minutes of the previous Council meeting.**

Minutes of the meeting of 89<sup>th</sup> SRC Council held on 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017 were circulated.

Motion: that the minutes of the 1<sup>st</sup> February be accepted.

Moved: Irene Oh

Seconded: William Edwards



The motion was put and **CARRIED.**

**G. Business Arising from the Minutes**

There was no business for this item.

**H. Question Time** of 15 minutes, which may be extended by resolution for a further 15 minutes.

Adam Boidin asked how Isabella Brook was doing. Isabella Brook replied well.

Imogen Grant inquired about SSAF negotiations, Isabella Brook said she would go into more detail in her report if Imogen was happy to wait till then.

**I. Visitor's Business**

There was no business for this item.

**J. Report of the Undergraduate Fellow of Senate**

**K. Elections**

**K1.** 1 Indigenous Students' Officer

There were no nominations

**K2.** 1 Mature Age Student's Officer

There were no nominations

**K3.** 2 Intercampus committee members

There were no nominations

**K4.** 1 Director of Student Publications

Nomination from Connor Wherrett

Moved: Edward Bruce wondered

Seconded: Angus Berg

There being no other nominations Connor Wherrett was declared elected unopposed.

**L. Report of the President and Executive**

**L1. Executive Minutes**

Minutes of the Executive meetings from the 30<sup>th</sup> January to the 16<sup>th</sup> February.

Motion: that the minutes of the executive meetings from 30<sup>th</sup> January to the 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017 be accepted.

Moved: Aiden Magro

Seconded: Caitlin Mcmenamin

The motion was put and **CARRIED.**

**L2. Report of the Executive**

Report of the executive from the 1<sup>st</sup> February till the 1<sup>st</sup> March.

The report was circulated and noted.

*The President deferred the Chair to the Deputy Chairperson.*

### **L3. President's Report**

Isabella Brook tabled a written report:

#### **SSAF**

Large chunk of the past month has been spent focusing on SSAF. We submitted our SSAF funding proposal last week that had two main project focuses - one being a part time sexual assault/ discrimination solicitor and the other being a part time multilingual caseworker. This has now gone into arbitration and we should hear of our final allocation within the month.

On top of this we are also in the process of inquiring about capital works, there are a number of improvements that need to be made in the SRC offices to ensure the safety and privacy of our staff and students so we are hoping that the university will foot the costs.

#### **O Week**

A massive congrats is in order for Bella and Dan for pulling together O week.

The SRC's O week was extremely successful - we handed out 1000 bags and talked to hundreds of students about the SRC. Have to give a special shout out to exec members and OBs who helped out at the stall and in bag packing.

I spoke at a number of ~official uni welcomes, which were a good opportunity to get the word out about the SRC and encourage new students to get involved. We also had a presence at some USU O week events - I was involved in an Alumni panel discussion about the future of USyd and we also had a little 'activism/SRC on stage' panel.

Also a huge congrats to the collectives for their incredible efforts, I think everyone did a really great job at engaging students with their collectives and campaigns and it's a promising start to the year.

#### **Academic Issues**

There are a few academic issues floating around the various committees at the moment:

- **Assessment review**

The academic board is looking to do a massive review into assessment. The working group seems to have been formed behind closed doors so I have been in talks with SUPRA about advocating for student voice in this working group.

- **Special Con Matrix**

A new special con matrix was recently passed with the intent to alleviate the issues experience over the past year. SRC caseworkers were quite happy with this matrix so we will be monitoring its implementation and effect over the course of the semester. Stared

- Centralising of Admin Services

The admin services of FASS, Business and Engineering have been centralised into Sydney Admin Services (SAS). We have raised some concerns about how this was being communicated to students and we will be monitoring it over the semester.

- Academic advice

We've have raised some concerns about the availability of academic advice across faculties. I'm following this up with Tony Masters and Pip Patterson.

- Semester dates

A proposal is floating around from senate at the moment to change semester dates from 2019 onwards. It would involve shortening semesters to 12 weeks and pushing back the start of semester 2 by two weeks in order to extend the winter break. We have some obvious concerns around this and the impact it will have on staff and students. I have already written a letter outlining our concerns to the DVC.

- UE student life

One of the new university executive committees is UE Student life. This committee is meant to pertain to issues to do with student welfare and the student experience, things like special con. There is only one student rep on this committee and this is of concern. SUPRA and I have written to Tyrone to advocate for more students to be included on this 'student' life committee.

### **Penalty Rates**

The recent decision to cut penalty rates is going to be something that affects students drastically. We wrote up a press release that was well received.

I've been in touch with some contacts from Unions NSW and various unions across NSW to how the SRC can support our unions. Seems as though things are up in the air at the moment but hopefully some solid plans will come to light over the next couple of weeks.

### **NTEU**

Bargaining period is underway. I attended a branch meeting today where the log of claims was discussed and endorsed to reiterate the SRC's support for the union, especially during the EBA period.

### **Councilor and OB Consultations**

I've been quite delayed in doing this but I'm looking to sit down with any councilors who are interested and discuss the platforms they were elected on and how we can work to achieve this over the year. I'll be sending out an email within the next week so if you're interested in having a chat keep and eye out.

I'm also still in the process of meeting with all OBs – if you're an OB and I haven't met with you/ got in touch with you yet please let me know.

Motion to accept the report of the President.

Moved: Caitlin Mcmenamin

Seconded: Adam Boiden

The motion was put and **CARRIED**.

#### **M. Report of the Vice-Presidents**

There was no report from the Vice Presidents

#### **N. Report of the General Secretaries**

Bella Pytka and Daniel Ergas tabled a written report

#### **O-Week**

O-Week was a great success! We handed out all 1 000 bags to new and returning students. Each calico bag had our own Counter-Course/Orientation Handbook amalgam, a condom (thanks Hero Condoms!), tampons (thanks Moxie!), Cinema Vouchers (thanks Palace Cinema), an SRC calendar (thanks Mickie and Amanda!), SRC fliers (thanks casework team!) and an Honi Soit (thanks Eds!) – and biggest thanks of all to the admin staff, who have printed more handouts, leaflets and posters than we ever thought possible. We have personally received several texts about “that funny handbook”, so we are hopefully radicalising many youths.

With the help of several collectives (particular shout out to WoCo as our guinea pigs), we have trialled a new sign-up and personalised, mass-texting system. For WoCo, we have been able to sign up over 385 new members, and recruited another 40-50 to attend their first meeting. This is a ten-fold increase on previous years. We hope to roll out this system for all interested collectives in the next week.

#### **SSAF**

The SSAF proposal has been completed and was handed in before the due date (no simple extension needed!).

#### **Bookshop**

Along with Izzy, we met with Julie, the Bookshop Manager, and she has asked for us to run a campaign to bring awareness to the Bookshop, focused around the Redfern Run area, so we are looking into starting something over the next couple of weeks. During O-Week, flyers about the Bookshop were in the 1,000 SRC gift bags that we gave out over the three-day period. We'll report back to the next Council how sales at the Bookshop have gone in the first weeks of class.

#### **Electoral reform**

We have been working with various factions on an electoral reforms package, the first hint of which we will get to talk over at this Council meeting – this will obviously be part of a longer discussion, but we're excited to hear your thoughts here. Please also feel free to email us at [general.secretary@src.usyd.edu.au](mailto:general.secretary@src.usyd.edu.au), we'd love to hear new ideas on what we can add in and ways to

make our elections better.

Motion: that the report of the General Secretaries be accepted.

Moved: Connor Wherrett

Seconded: Jake Williams

The motion was put and **CARRIED**

## **N1. Report of the Standing Legal Committee**

Minutes of the meeting of the Standing Legal Committee held on the 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017 were circulated.

The chair moved that the Minutes of the Standing Legal Committee and R1 be reviewed concurrently.

R1. Recommendations to council for changes to Parts 8 12 and 13 of the regulations

Bella Spoke about the recommendations and the other stakeholders that need to be consulted in developing these regulations changes, including making sure there are no unintended consequences on budgets

Daniel Ergas spoke to the regulation change proposals stating that it is important that there is electoral reform.

Sam Chu spoke to the changes stating that the lack of student engagement in the regulations is a key reason for change. And that it is important to have discussion around the changes.

Isabella called for comments on the proposed changes

Adam Boidin: I would like to thank Bella Pytka for going out of her way for making an effort to speak to all the groups on Council to make sure everyone is consulted. There are some regulations that seem really odd and they have not been explained why they have been changed.

1. Limiting NUS ballots to 4 places per ticket - there are 7 spots up for election so this makes no sense
2. Limiting spending to \$50 per person is very limiting for students who want to run on their own, and they will not be able to compete with larger brands
3. We think it is appropriate to determine the amount into a lump sum, and ignoring the amount of work that the EO does and many of these changes

Bella Pytka responded to the concerns noting that:

1. With the NUS Ballot I think that if anything is to be done with NUS it should be in consultation with NUS
2. With regards to Paulene's pay – The reform was an intention to make sure that the Stipend is amended to CPI but the actually motion that was put ties it to our poll clerks wage which is much higher than Paulene intended.

Daniel Ergas spoke about getting in touch with a number of factions and there was a discussion about who would approach whom.

Katie Thorburn reminded the Council that the Electoral Officer is not always going to be Paulene. Agreed that linking the Electoral Officers stipend to the President's stipend matches with a lot of what we already do. The \$50 cap makes running more accessible for low-income students.

William Edwards noted there was a lot covered in the changes and it was hard to break them all down. He noted that there was a lot he agreed with and a number issues that seem unclear and unreasonable: Raising issues with the expansion of the exclusion zone, which would place the exclusion zone on the stairs at JFR, which seems dangerous. Edwards also requested more consultation citing the importance and the need for clear electoral reform.

Bella Pytko noted that the minutes of the Standing Legal Committee did not reject the changes but suggested some further amendments and reform.

Daniel Ergas noted that on the issue of the exclusion zone the current regulations are not followed exactly at the moment and the EO has used her discretion in the past, this should probably be changed.

Dominic McDonald thought that the Electoral Officer should not be responsible for connecting interested students with established campaigns, as that was not their job. McDonald also noted that restricting campaigner number to voters would prevent new students who want to engage with being able to be trained, and hinder their ability to gain confidence in talking to students.

Connor Wherrett expressed concerns for a number of changes:

- with regards to maximum campaigners
- Stat declaration for postal votes, noting that it seemed excessive and maybe should be on a challenge basis, where if people believe there is a problem a statutory declaration should be provided.
- The limiting of CV items seems unnecessary, if people have achievements they should be able to note them

Bella Pytko responded to Dominic McDonald's concerns noting that Adam Boidin had suggested that the campaigner restrictions would only apply on polling days, which could be helpful. Pytko also suggested that the one brand one voter rule was not democratic enough as it allows for slander to go unchecked.

Daniel Ergas echoed Bella Pytko's comments agreeing that such restriction could have negative consequences.

Motion: that the minutes of the Standing Legal Committee meeting be accepted.

Motion: Aiden Magro

Seconded: Caitlin Mcmenamin  
The motion was put and **CARRIED**

**O. Report of Committees and Officers**

**O1. Report of the Education Officers**

There was not report from the Education Officers

**O2. Report of the Women's Officers**

1. O-Week:
  - a) Was a critical recruitment time - nearly 400 new members
  - b) Distributed resources about women's services and campaigns.
  - c) Distributed "consent condoms"
2. Empowering Self-Defence Class:
  - a) Great attendance
  - b) Self-defence is what we do to make our lives safer on a daily basis. Self-defence increases our self-confidence and improves the quality of our lives!
  - c) Sensitive to concerns about victim blaming.
  - d) Encouraged women to develop self-awareness and find their own personal strengths.
3. The Hunting Ground Screening:
  - a) Karen Willis, Nina Funnel, and Ali Henry.
  - b) Was a catalyst for incredible conversation about rape on campus.
4. First meeting:
  - a) Around 80 people in attendance - nearly all new members.
  - b) The visibility of the sexual assault campaign has resulted in mass-interest in the collective.
  - c) Will focus on new member retention and radicalisation through regular events.
5. Anti-capitalist workshop:
  - a) Around 30 people in attendance.
  - b) Covered the history of IWD and capitalism.
6. Sexual assault solicitor:
  - a) SSAF log has been submitted. Will need to see how it goes. SUPRA wrote a submission in support of SSAF allocation toward an SRC specialist solicitor.

7. Survivor Network:

- a) The Survivor's Network has been formed in response to the systemic lack of support systems for survivors of sexual assault and domestic violence.
- b) We believe that communities have a responsibility to provide care and alternatives to punitive criminal justice responses to sexual assault and domestic violence.
- c) The network will function as a peer support group where survivors can share their experiences.
- d) The first meeting of Survivor's Network will be March 15 1pm in New Law 403 (CHECK THIS).

8. LifeChoice:

- a) Approved as a society through USU in 2012; can apply for up to \$4000 of funding annually - this comes from student money
- b) Positions itself as a neutral group when in reality it is an anti-choice lobby group.
- c) Should not exist and should be funded with student money.

Motion: that the report of the Women's Officers be accepted.

Motion: Caitlin Mcmenamin

Seconded: Aiden Magro

The motion was put and **CARRIED**

**P. Special Business**

There were no items of special business.

**Q. Motions of Notice**

**Q3. Save Medicare**

Motion: We move that the Students' Representative Council celebrates the 33rd birthday of Medicare and proudly supports universal healthcare in Australia and around the world. The SRC commends former Labor Prime Ministers Gough Whitlam and Bob Hawke for their pivotal contributions to the creation of Medicare and the health and well being of all Australians. Furthermore the SRC directs its Welfare Officers to organise students in resistance to any attacks on Medicare by the federal Liberal Government.

Will Edwards spoke to the motion, noting that it had originally been intended to be passed at the last Council meeting, which was held on Medicare's 33<sup>rd</sup> Birthday. Edwards added that Medicare is a world-class healthcare system and any cuts to Medicare by the Liberals should be fought and condemned.



Moved: William Edwards

Seconded: Harry Gregg

Motion was put and CARRIED

David Martine asked for his dissent to be noted.

Timothy Berney-Gibson asked for his dissent to be noted.

Lachlan Finch asked for his dissent to be noted.

Aashray Narula asked for his dissent to be noted.

A quorum count was called.

The meeting did not meet quorum.

*The meeting closed at 7:15*