



src activism
advocacy
representation

Students' Representative Council,
University of Sydney

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NOTICE BY THE VICE PRESIDENT - MOTIONS WITH NOTICE FOR ORDINARY MARCH MEETING

The following motions were submitted with notice under the Regulations for the ordinary meeting of Council on 6 March 2019:

Q1. We need to support Mental Health

Moved: Dane Luo

Seconded: Nick Forbutt

Platform

The Council:

1. Takes note that the National Union of Students Wellbeing Report, conducted in 2016 alongside headspace, found that 98% of university students aged 16-25 had experienced at least one symptom of a mental health problem which impacted their ability to study, 65% experienced high or very high psychological distress, and 35% experienced suicidal ideation or thoughts of self-harm.
2. Takes note that the University is the lowest ranked G8 University for student support services in the Higher Education Standards Framework's Quality Indicators for Learning and Teaching Student Experience Survey, scoring 58.7%.
3. Understands that Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is the University's primary provider of mental health support but imposes a cap on the number of counselling sessions to 6 per year per student. Furthermore, CAPS does not provide documentation, which hinders the ability of students to add supporting statements for Special Consideration applications.
4. Takes note that students from campuses other than Camperdown/Darlington or Cumberland need to travel to Camperdown/Darlington to access that support, which has been detrimental for students studying at satellite campuses.
5. Is convinced that supporting the mental health of students is crucial and important.
6. Urges the University to improve, expand and provide additional funding to CAPS and mental health initiatives.

Action

1. The President and any student representatives will use all mediums to the University (including on University committees) to advocate for:
 - a. Uncapping the total number of counselling sessions it offers each student per year.
 - b. Bringing counselling and psychological services, or other mental health support, to all satellite campuses by having 'travelling counsellors', setting up new facilities or otherwise.
 - c. Support mental health awareness and initiatives for all students.
2. The Council will campaign to create mental health awareness and inform students on how to seek support.

3. The Council endorses and supports the NUS No Mind Left Behind campaign.

Q2. End weekend exams

Moved: Dane Luo

Seconded: Jayesh Joshi

No student wants to sit an exam on a weekend. Exams held on a Saturday or Sunday are inconvenient, making University even more difficult for rural and regional students. Some students (particularly rural and regional students) travel more than two hours each day just to get to University, so it's beyond reasonable to expect students to travel to University on the weekend for exams when they'll end up spending more time travelling than completing or studying for the exam.

Furthermore, too many students depend on weekend work for their penalty rates, creating pressure against week-to-week living expenses. Too many students can't attend exams to observe religious holidays. Saturday and Sunday exams are added pressure during exam season.

Action

The President and student representatives on the Academic Board and other University Committees shall urge the University to stop holding exams on the weekend and seek alternative arrangements for those exams.

Q3. Cigarette Litter Bins

Moved: Jayesh Joshi

Seconded: Georgia De Mestre

Cigarettes are the largest source of litter in urban areas across Australia. According to WA government report, 7 billion cigarettes are littered across Australia every year. This is obviously unsightly and unpleasant but not only this, cigarette butts have been found in the stomachs of wildlife causing damage and death to those animals. They also leech toxic chemicals such as cadmium, arsenic and lead and take 12- 15 years to breakdown once littered.

However, there is a solution. According to council reports, installation of special cigarette disposal bins resulted in up to a 65% reduction in cigarette litter in tested areas. These bins are highly effective at changing cigarette disposal behaviour as they are clearly labelled, safer and placed conveniently in smoking zones. According to the NSW EPA, full or dirty bins are and an assumption that litter will be cleaned up is a key reason why smokers choose to litter.

Particular areas of the campus such as the Grassy area adjacent to the ABS is often heavily littered with cigarette butts and installing these bins on campus will go a long way in reducing cigarette waste and should result in a cleaner campus and cleaner community.

Action

- The SRC will investigate the cost of these bins and the specifics of where and how they should be installed
- The SRC shall make infrastructure requests for the university to install the bins