



**src** activism  
advocacy  
representation

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## MINUTES:

of the 3rd regular meeting of the 92<sup>nd</sup> SRC held on **April 15th 2020**. Meeting held via Zoom

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*A quorum count was called at 6:20, due to complications to doing this through Zoom it took a while to count.*

*The meeting was found quorate.*

### A. Meeting open at 6:38 pm

#### A1. Election of Deputy Chairperson

The Chair moved that Charlotte Bullock 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:**

Roisin Murphy proxy to Shreyaa Sundararaghavan  
Zachary Pitkethley  
Isla Mowbray

The apologies and proxies were noted.

### D. Changes to Membership

### E. Electoral Report

## **E1. Consideration of any resignations**

Having received rejections from the remaining members of Layla Mkhayber's ticket, the council can now consider Paola Ayre's nomination to replace Layla Mkhayber.

Motion: That the Council accept the resignations.

Moved from the Chair

The motion was put and **CARRIED.**

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

Minutes of the meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> regular meeting of the 92<sup>nd</sup> SRC held on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 were circulated.

Motion: that the minutes of the 2nd regular meeting 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 be accepted.

Moved: Liam Donohoe

Seconded: Charlotte Bullock

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.**

## **I. Visitor's Business**

There was no business for this item.

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

## **K. Elections**

### **K1. Election of 1 Mature Age Students' Officer**

*There were no nominations.*

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

### **L1. Executive Minutes**

Minutes of the Executive meetings from the he 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020

Motion: that the minutes of the executive meetings from the 10<sup>th</sup> March 2020 be accepted.

Moved: Liam Donohoe

Seconded: Kedar Maddali

The motion was put and **CARRIED.**

Procedural motion to move straight to L3. The presidents report moved: Liam Donohoe

Seconded: Liam Thomas  
The Procedural was put and **CARRIED.**

Procedural motion to limit speaking time to 3 minutes  
Moved: Lily Campbell  
Seconded: Jack Mansell  
The procedural was put and **CARRIED.**

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

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

Liam Donohoe tabled a written report:

The past few weeks have been incredibly strange for myself and the SRC. For one, the SRC has looked very different: it has been totally empty, save for the occasional scurrying of a staff member or OB popping by to pick something up. For another, the nature of my role has changed significantly, and so too has the political landscape. With respect to the former, I've mainly been working from home the past few weeks, (largely) relying on social media and communications to achieve change, and have been constantly dealing with unforeseen, USyd-specific issues.

With respect to the latter, new political struggles have emerged and become frontiers for the expression of increasing disillusionment among ordinary people. While there have been some encouraging developments—we have achieved in days things we'd wanted for years—it is hard not to feel dispirited, as if our anger and frustration is going to balloon infinitely as we watch the transition into post-Neo Liberal, increasingly authoritarian Capitalism from behind our laptop screens. If we organise properly, however, we can use this crisis and breakdown in the status quo to grow our movement and fight for a post-COVID world better than the one that preceded it.

Hopefully this report gives a sense of the extensive work myself and the SRC has been undertaking, and offers some hope as to how we can achieve disaster relief for the vulnerable now and a better world after this crisis in the future.

#### **Mutual aid initiatives**

I have been pushing the SRC to play an active role in emerging mutual aid initiatives, and am pleased to report that we have had a lot of success therein. These initiatives can be further divided into USyd-specific and community initiatives, respectively.

#### USyd-specific

Myself and other SRC staff / OBs have formed a mutual aid working group and have been meeting a couple times a week to update each other on our progress. We are trying to prepare "essentials packs" for vulnerable students, which will contain non-perishable foods, sanitary items, and other goods which will help students survive this crisis. We will also put SRC pamphlets, health advice, and cooking instructions in these packs, along with other information that will be of use to students. We are investigating how else we can expand our contributions to USyd students' quality of life in this period, including by working more closely with the USU.

I also started a separate mutual aid group chat on WeChat to engage students who have not been engaged by existing community mutual aid initiatives. We are hoping that the more direct and intimate context, along with the immediacy of Mandarin and LOTE communication, will help identify students who would otherwise be neglected and also lead to quicker, more impactful help. We are hoping to respond to student concerns as they arise in the group chat, and also use it to advertise and link up with broader mutual aid groups, like those mentioned below.

### Community-wide

We have also played an active role in emerging community mutual aid groups, particularly Inner West Mutual Aid, promoting the network to students and encouraging our OBs to join and assist those in need. Moreover, we have printed flyers for a number of Mutual Aid groups in Inner and Greater Western Sydney, which have since been distributed in countless letter boxes to increase engagement.

We are investigating additional ways of supporting these networks, including by: a) sourcing / buying masks, gloves, and sanitisers, b) bundling those products into hygiene packs that get distributed to aid volunteers, c) offering our essentials packs to non-students.

### **Addressing the concerns of USyd Students**

The transition to online learning and assessment has created innumerable problems for USyd students. To help address these concerns (and off-campus ones too), I set up an SRC COVID-19 response group, which now has over 150 members from a diverse range of political and personal backgrounds. I also made another equivalent group chat on WeChat back in February. These groups have become effective and sprawling spaces for the dissemination of information, formulation of strategy, and execution of our strategies.

I have spent most of the past month fighting to address these problems on students' behalf — I thought it'd be easier to detail each struggle individually. In general, however, there are a number of mechanisms I've used to push for improvements, including:

1. Raising concerns and remedies at every relevant committee meeting.
2. Issuing public statements and social media content platforming student concerns and making specific demands, then sharing these into every online space I can find.
3. Reaching out to media contacts to ensure that the mainstream media published articles about USyd's response which highlight student concerns and our preferred remedies.
4. Organising and publicising petitions and surveys.
5. Social media bombing (spamming key figures or reputationally-sensitive organisations with our demands / struggles on Twitter, Facebook, WeChat, etc.)
6. Organising weekly zoom catch ups between SRC Executives and major University decision-makers where we raise emerging concerns.
7. Sending daily emails to the Vice-Chancellor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education), Registrar, Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Student Life), Chair of Academic Board, and any other relevant University decision-maker.
8. In some cases, playing a small organising role in grassroots campaigns, helping to facilitate outcomes by introducing people to each other, making strategy recommendations, printing content, etc.

I have used at least one, and often all, of these strategies in order to address the concerns listed below.

### Academic concerns

#### *Grading and adjustments*

1. Context: students have been crying out for some adjustment to grading and marks. A petition (not prepared by the SRC) demanding the introduction of pass / fail marking got thousands of signatures, while our own surveys have indicated overwhelming support for some change. We presented the case for students forcefully but persuasively, convincing senior University decision-makers of the need for urgent action and the specific benefits of certain remedies.
2. What are the outcomes so far?
  - a. We publicly and privately fought for (and won) multiple mark-adjustment procedures, including Within-assessment mark adjustment, Post-assessment mark adjustment, and computation of a COVID-adjusted end of degree WAM.
  - b. We publicly and privately fought for (and won) the application of DC, UC, and RI grades to minimise instances of student failure.
3. What are we still working on?
  - . An extension of the Discontinue without fail (DC) deadline, and the granting of automatic refunds to any students awarded a DC.
  - a. Further measures for students who fail this semester, including the possibility of full course refunds or omission of failures from transcripts.

#### *Special considerations*

1. Context: with all the chaos and challenges of this period, the need for a special considerations system which minimises and corrects for disadvantage is more pressing than ever. As well as that, the demand for Special Cons. will be enormous over the next year, so we need it to be efficient and compassionate. With the help of our Casework department, we have platformed emerging and prospective student struggles, and have achieved a number of excellent changes.
2. What are the outcomes so far?
  - a. We pushed the University to accept Special Cons. requests even where they don't have an accompanying medical certificate or statutory declaration. We are pleased that they now only require a student declaration, where students explain their disadvantage and may be required to submit supporting evidence of this impact, but do not need the aforementioned cumbersome documents.
  - b. We pushed for simplified and more relevant decision making processes, and achieved additional categories of claim, including emergency professional duties (e.g. health care workers), technological or circumstantial problems (e.g. not enough space in house to do exams), and / or substantial carer responsibilities.
  - c. Informal reassurances that the University will be especially compassionate in the granting of Special Cons.
3. What are we still working on?

Further assurances that the University will be compassionate and relax their definition of “compelling”, so that all plausible cases of disadvantage are granted Special Consideration.

### *ProctorU*

- Context: students are very angry about the new invigilation system for exams, ProctorU, which uses webcam technology to live stream and monitor students as they complete exams. In addition to the obvious strategies canvassed above, I have also amplified the petition made by our Education Officers and participated actively in the non-SRC-affiliated “Say No to ProctorU” organising group. I have used the SRC and our information channels to encourage students to organise within their Units of Study and pressure UoS Coordinators to embrace alternative assessments.
- What are the outcomes so far?
  - We have been helping students organise within their Units of Study, and are pleased that—through their efforts—many UoS Coordinators have announced they won’t proceed with exams that use ProctorU.
  - We pushed the University to minimise its use of exams so that ProctorU is only used in circumstances where: A. Exams are absolutely necessary for professional accreditation reasons, and B. There is no alternative way to undertake the examination but for using ProctorU. We believe that most uses of ProctorU satisfy these criteria.
- What are we still working on?
  - The total elimination of ProctorU. Failing that, guarantees / proof that ProctorU is only being used in situations which meet the criteria above.
  - In scenarios that meet the criteria above, granting Special Cons. (alternative assessments or estimate) for students with well-founded objections to ProctorU. If no assessment or estimate is possible, then the automatic granting of a DC grade and full refund.

### *Research and learning*

- Context: with libraries closed USyd students and staff have lost access to a lot of essential learning and research resources. This is particularly problematic for Honours and Higher Degree-by-Research students. We have been supporting a student campaign for increased access, including by raising their concerns with University administration (per the mechanisms listed above) and signing + platforming an open letter they prepared.
- What are the outcomes so far?
  - The temporary provision of additional electronic resources by certain publishers.
  - A process for requesting and getting physical items.
  - A process for requesting digital copies of print journal articles.
- What are we still working on?
  - Further digitisation of resources.

### Student welfare

### *Student housing*

- Context: a significant grassroots campaign has emerged calling for eviction moratoriums and rent suspensions in University accommodation. Myself and the SRC have been assisting as best we can, including by establishing the WeChat groups for the campaign, helping produce and print flyers for students in accommodation, platforming the campaign on social media, and representing student concerns to the University.
- What are the outcomes so far?
  - We helped residents in University accommodation achieve a moratorium on rental evictions.
- What are we still working on?
  - Rent reductions and suspensions for all students in University accommodation.
  - Expanding the campaign to include residents in other student accommodation, particularly private providers.
  - Pushing for broader rent suspensions and legal reform to prevent exploitation of migrants and International Students.

#### *Financial and material support for students*

- Context: with countless students losing their jobs and generally displaced by indefinite economic malaise, we have been fighting to ensure the University looks after its students. Many of our demands were implemented early into this emergency and were formed in response to the travel bans, particularly policies concerning International Students.
- What are the outcomes so far?
  - We pushed the University to increase funding for loans and bursaries, and extend them to International Students (previously they were only open to Domestic Students).
  - We pushed for support packages for students affected by travel bans, and these led to fee rebates, peer-learning advisor schemes, and other financial grants.
- What are we still working on?
  - Pushing for funding for our Food Bank so we can directly provide food and essential goods for students.

#### *Financial and material support for staff*

- Context: with the University shutting down and implementing shameful austerity policies, staff have been worked to the bone while more precarious than ever. We have platformed and publicised the NTEU's fight for fairer conditions, and we will continue to express our solidarity as meaningful as possible.
- What are the outcomes so far?
  - The University agreed to fund 2-weeks of cover for all staff, including casuals.
- What are we still working on?
  - Further and permanent re-engagement of all tertiary education employees who expected or had been offered work, including on a casual basis, through 2020.
  - Supporting the NTEU's struggle for greater support for staff, particularly the USyd branch.

#### **Fighting for our survival**

I have also been engaged in countless battles and projects that go beyond these USyd-specific struggles. I have once again broken these down by struggle.

### Welfare

- Context: with income streams turning off for countless students and workers, it's essential that the state step in to keep people alive. I have been working hard on broader campaigns aimed at expanding social security so that more people can access payments and the payments they get actually make a difference.
- What have I done?
  - I wrote an Honi Soit article about the way economic conditions and government austerity would harm quality of life and cost lives around the same time social distancing and lock-downs started to take effect. I also began using social media to highlight those concerns around the same time.
  - Pushed media contacts to publicise these concerns and write stories about student economic struggles.
  - I prepared a petition calling for the government to support the vulnerable with key health and economic demands.
  - I developed a QR code which linked to that petition, then helped produce posters with that QR code and our demands, which I subsequently helped poster around USyd and King Street.
  - I raised these concerns consistently and forcefully with the National Union of Students' President, Education Officer, and Welfare Officer, sharing our petition and demands before they had made any public comment or initiated a campaign.
  - I / the SRC played an early and leading role in the campaign for expanded Youth Allowance, not only by offering our own response as a model, but also by platforming and cooperating with their campaign as much as possible once developed.
- What are the outcomes so far?
  - Welfare expansions were granted to all Youth Allowance, AUSTUDY, and ABSTUDY recipients (over 200,000 students!) after tireless campaigning and lobbying by the NUS.
- What are we still working on?
  - The inclusion of non-citizens / non-residents in JobKeeper and JobSeeker programs, as well as other social security mechanisms for them (this is especially important as it includes many of our International Student friends).
  - Reformed welfare eligibility requirements, particularly by reducing the age of independence from 22 to 18, ending mutual obligations, and granting eligibility to all part-time or deferred students.
  - A significant increase in the Disability Support Pension.

### Government support

- Context: beyond welfare, there are countless other ways the government could and should be supporting the general public at this time.
- What have I done?

- Amplified and platformed the NUS' demands around improving social security and JobKeeper, including by sharing countless graphics to social media.
- Platformed the Housing Defence Coalition (Sydney) and participated in some of their organising meetings and discussions.
- Am part of organising discussions to create a national structure for mutual aid and housing defence groups, with a view to organising a national rent strike campaign.
- Wrote an Honi Soit article on economic malaise more generally.
- What are the outcomes so far?
  - A flimsy moratorium on rental evictions.
  - The shady JobKeeper program (which gives money and therefore total discretion to employers, rather than directly to employees, encouraging roting, corruption, and no payments).
- What are we still working on?
  - Total suspensions of rent and utility bills.
  - Improvements to the NDIS.
  - Extensions and financial / legal assistance on Visa applications for all non-citizens, particularly International Students.
  - Modifying JobKeeper so it pays workers directly.
  - Expanding JobKeeper to anyone with any kind of casual job, regardless of their length of employment.

### Anti-racism

- Context: this period has seen a concerning increase in racism, from the initial travel bans through to anti-Chinese attacks / incidents through to increasing eco-fascism. Now more than ever we have to monitor and fight oppressive attitudes in our communities.
- What have I done?
  - Organised two protests against the travel ban, both of which were already covered in an earlier report to Council (in addition to broader information about media work and social media campaigns undertaken in relation to the travel ban).
  - Worked with the University to produce anti-Xenophobic content, including posters and videos (I was even in one!)
- What are the outcomes so far?
  -
- What are we still working on?
  - Total suspensions of rent and utility bills.
  - Improvements to the NDIS.
  - Extensions and financial / legal assistance on Visa applications for all non-citizens, particularly International Students.
  - Modifying JobKeeper so it pays workers directly.
  - Expanding JobKeeper to anyone with any kind of casual job, regardless of their length of employment.

### **What else have I been up to?**

While COVID-19 and its downstream impacts have been the main focus of my attention, I have still tried to make time for other considerations. I have, among other things:

1. Investigated whether we can revise / continue with the SRC Food Bank, which received over \$70,000 in funding before SSAF Contestables were frozen.
2. Continuing with the Constitutional and Regulatory Reform, which meetings to restart soon.
3. Attended countless committees.
4. Finalised the hiring of our second solicitor, who is now working at the SRC!
5. Assisted staff with the transition to work from home, including by offering emotional support as they grapple with workplace and personal challenges.

Evidently, it has been a very busy period, and there are many more things that I have neglected to mention. In any case, I hope it's clear that I have been working hard (and hopefully effectively) for students. I am very keen to continue to play an active role in all these fights, and am very open to any feedback on or criticism of how I've been going about things!

Discussion:

Liam Donohoe spoke to his report and covered its key points

Motion to accept the report of the President.

Moved: Mikaela Pappou

Seconded: Swapnik Sanagavarapu

The motion was put and **CARRIED**.

## **L2. Report of the Executive**

Report of the executive from the 9<sup>th</sup> March to the 14<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

Motion to accept the report of the executive

Moved: Liam Donohoe

Seconded: Liam Thomas

The motion was put and **CARRIED**.

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

Charlotte Bullock and Felix Faber tabled a written report:

As we can see from the fact that we are for the first time in this Council's history meeting not in person, but online, the only way to describe the last few weeks is 'unprecedented.' All students are adapting to new ways of leading our lives, to new social circumstances and to new modes of study, and unfortunately, for many, to new financial circumstances. We have been working hard with other office bearers at the SRC to respond best to the new situation in which students have found themselves and fight for the social, academic, and financial well-being of students.

Once the university announced that classes would move online, we began contacting university management to share our concerns regarding a whole range of issues affecting students. In particular, we had the chance through two formal university committee meetings, being the Student Consultative Committee and the UE: Student Life Committee to raise issues regarding the

way the university would approach marking and the presentation of results for this semester. On top of the anxiety of adapting to new modes of study and for many, being without a reliable source of income, maintaining academic standards in the face of factors they are not able to control adds undue stress to students' lives. In those meetings, we initially raised the possibility of a change in the way transcripts were presented or making the inclusion of this Semester in our WAMs optional. Working with other office-bearers, we've been able to contribute to the SRC's many achievements for the academic rights of students.

Through the newly reinstated Interfaculty Committee, we organised with some of the faculty society Presidents to distribute information about the SRC's work around Covid-19. We also had a meeting of the Interfaculty Committee in which we discussed how each Faculty Society was adapting and responding to the Covid-19 pandemic, and the specific needs of various faculties in the move to online learning.

Since our attendance at those two committee meetings, we have also been in contact via email with university management and had two further informal Zoom meetings with them. This provided a valuable opportunity to discuss and develop the ideas we had raised in the Committee meetings. We are particularly pleased that the university has taken what we see as a sensible and measured approach by introducing a system, in which students' transcripts will appear with the better WAM from that calculated with and without this Semester's grades.

We have also been contributing to the SRC's efforts to establish a mutual aid programme to ensure that students have access to vital commodities. We've also been working to establish links with existing community organisations in the Newtown, Ashfield, Glebe, and Redfern areas. We think given the often negative role that the University plays in gentrifying communities in the inner city, it is important that we work to build solidarity with local communities.

Motion: that the report of the Vice Presidents be accepted.

Moved: Liam Donohoe

Seconded: Mikaela Pappou

The motion was put and **CARRIED**.

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

Abbey Shi and Liam Thomas tabled a written report

Over the past weeks we have been incredibly busy working closely alongside the President, Vice-Presidents, General Executives and Office-Bearers to respond to the ongoing COVID-19 situation, and the implications this has had for students.

We have been in regular Zoom meetings with university management, predominantly Susanna Scarparo (Pro Vice-Chancellor, Student Life) and Peter McCallum (Director, Education Strategy), regarding the University's response to the situation. We have raised a number of concerns that students have identified in the switch to online learning, predominantly the implication on students' performance, special consideration and the use of ProctorU software for exams.

We are pleased to report that these meetings have been largely productive, with the University implementing, or in the process of implementing, a number of measures to better support students. In the last few days we have seen the University announce that it is overhauling the WAM system during this time of upheaval, ensuring that students will have both a standard WAM and a WAM minus the results from this period. This goes a long way to addressing the concern that this period may have lasting negative impacts on some students and their performance, particularly students without access to reliable internet such as those in the regions. It's also been pleasing to see the University adopt a more compassionate special considerations process, which now will not require a medical certificate and will be expanded to cover for technology issues. It's also pleasing that in our conversations they've expressed an interest in continuing this more equitable and fair special cons system post COVID-19, whether this happens however remains to be seen.

We do still share the concerns of the SRC and the student body more broadly concerning the use of ProctorU software and are incredibly disappointed that the University refused to listen to students and push back the census date. With mid-semester exams still to come, we will soon get a better picture of how ProctorU is going to be implemented across different faculties and units. We have already heard some concerning reports from students about invasive practices being taken by ProctorU invigilators such as taking remote control and going through students files/open applications, and not allowing students bathroom breaks. We'll continue to raise these incidents and issues with the University.

Abbey has continued to work closely with the international student community, ensuring that they are kept up to date and their issues are being brought to the table. We are concerned for the welfare of the international student community, especially following the Morrison Government's disgraceful decision to refuse to give them financial support. International students in Australia have been told to simply go home if they can't afford to stay, despite the fact that international travel is near impossible at this time. We have been conveying our concerns and these issues in meetings with University management however there's a lot of work to be done in terms of support for international students.

Discussion:

Liam Thomas spoke his report adding that this time has highlighted the importance of the SRC and having a strong SRC.

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

Moved: Liam Donohoe

Seconded: Vivienne Goodes

The motion was put and **CARRIED**

## **O. Report of Committees and Officers**

### **O1. Report of the Education Officers**

Jazzlyn Breen and Jack Mansell tabled a written report

March has been chaotic, to say the least. COVID-19 has disrupted the world profoundly, and we are facing a health, economic and social crisis on a scale unseen in any of our lifetimes. Students have been put through the wringer. Formerly concentrated in casual retail and hospitality jobs, and already facing serious issues of structural poverty, many of us are feeling the crunch. As the university tries to balance its face-to-face shutdown with its financial losses, issues impacting students arise almost hourly. In very difficult circumstances, where face-to-face contact and conventional organising is virtually impossible, our work has continued nevertheless, with a heightened sense of urgency. The nature of the situation means that any report on our work will inevitably leave out some details and activity we have been engaged in, but we've tried our best to cover everything. The response of the SRC as a whole has been commendable, and nothing we have done has been without the collaboration and support of other activists in the union.

### **No student left behind**

One of the key campaigns we have been engaged with has been the campaign to extend the COVID-19 welfare supplement. Spearheaded nationally by the National Union of Students, the campaign has been successful in having the COVID-19 supplement extended to Youth Allowance, Austudy and Abstudy recipients, an enormous boost for students facing financial stress. Others who have still been left behind after changes to COVID-19 supplement eligibility are recipients of the Disability Support Pension, students under the age of 22 who are not considered independent from their parents (despite many living away from home and being financially independent in practice), and part-time and deferred students who are ineligible for Youth Allowance. Jazz produced a very successful infographic from the EAG page that was shared widely in the lead up to our first victory in extending the supplement. We are also supporting the NUS campaign to extend JobKeeper payments to 955,000 casual workers who have been employed by their current employer for less than 12 months, and note that this category includes many students.

We are fighting strongly for international students, as well as other non-citizen categories, to receive the same support as citizens. Thus, we are supporting the NUS-led campaign to extend Subclass 500 visas to the 580,000 international students who remain in Australia, and the campaign to extend JobKeeper and the COVID-19 supplement to visa workers. This aims to support some of the most vulnerable people in society, but also to continuously raise the standards and expectations for treatment of everybody. If we accept that some people deserve less, it is much harder to fight for more. We completely reject the logic that Scott Morrison put forward, that migrants and international students who cannot support themselves should return to their 'home' countries. Their home is here and they should be supported.

### **Student accommodation**

Students living on campus have been faced with limbo. Many students were pressured to leave their accommodation, or be forced to stay and pay full rent despite severe financial stress and no services. Due to a campaign in conjunction with residents, and we would particularly commend Aman Kapur and Willow Lont for their efforts to raise a fuss in their respective places of accommodation, the university has introduced a moratorium on evictions. While this does not address the financial stress that students face in trying to satisfy exorbitant rent payments, it is an important victory in an ongoing campaign. Similarly, we support campaigns to reduce or suspend rent payments, including but not limited to rent strikes. This has included circulating letter templates for tenants to make demands on their landlords. The government's 'moratorium' on evictions is a lie and the fight here will be ongoing, as financial stress inevitably endures beyond

the acute period of the health crisis.

### **Marks policy**

Students should not be made to suffer for COVID-19 affected study. Formal exams and testing is inadequate at the best of times. Our campaign to win a 'no-disadvantage' policy for marks during COVID-19 has been quite successful. Already the university has implemented: 1. Revised Special Consideration arrangements: accepting a student declaration as evidence, modified decision-making (including new categories, like technological fault or emergency professional duties); 2. Use of alternate grading systems: more generous awarding of Discontinue without fail (DC) (with automatic refund), Unit of Study Continuing, and Result Incomplete grades; 3. Mark adjustments: within-assessment adjustment, post-assessment mark adjustment, and—our favourite—Computation of a COVID-adjusted end of degree Weighted Average Mark. Whilst the fight is not over, it has been the pressure of the SRC that has won this. In addition to DC's being more available, it is imperative that we continue fighting to

### **ProctorU**

An issue that we have taken up in particular is the use of ProctorU software by the university to conduct online exams during this period. ProctorU software is extremely invasive and creates security, privacy and accessibility issues, and this is of serious concern to students. This overreach is extreme, particularly in the circumstances of COVID-19, in which studies have been severely disrupted, and when many students have lost employment and/or been forced to move home. Students should not be penalised for any disruption to studies produced by the COVID-19 outbreak. The university's attempts to introduce ProctorU represent an extremely punitive approach to examinations that should be opposed entirely. So far, some unit of study coordinators have committed to using alternative methods, however, the university has not backed down. We have written and circulated a petition that has almost 400 signatures already, and Jazz has produced another useful infographic explaining the basic issues with ProctorU. Using the experience of the campaign against similar Cadmus software in 2017, and working with the Say No to ProctorU group, we hope to have a university-wide back down on using the software.

### **Staff solidarity**

The university shut-down has had serious impacts on staff, with many of these flowing on directly to students' learning conditions. We have been working closely with the NTEU in supporting their campaigns to preserve conditions and wages during this period of full-frontal attack by management. This has included attending NTEU Campaign Committee meetings and Members' Meetings, and before the shutdown we produced a video explaining why students need to stand in solidarity with staff during the COVID-19 crisis, edited by Jazz. Staff have routinely shown their gratitude for our support, and a keen interest in how the COVID-19 crisis is affecting students. We have reached out to the NTEU to assist with various campaigns we have been engaged in.

### **Poster campaigns**

While it was still possible within social distancing regulations, we engaged in a series of poster runs with SRC, Students Organising Resistance and other groups' posters. These ranged from general slogans about the COVID-19 crisis to promoting various organising spaces and mutual aid groups in order to fight during the crisis.

### **Workers organising resistance**

Jack has been working with workers organising resistance, a group set up to deal with rank-and-file organising concerns during the pandemic. This has included liaison with and advice for young workers trying to enforce and extend health and safety measures in their workplaces. This has included student casual supermarket workers, who have subsequently organised successfully in some Coles supermarkets to have alcohol-based hand sanitiser available to staff in-store.

### **Refugees**

Refugees are some of the most oppressed people in society at the best of times. They are also some of the most heroic fighters. COVID-19 threatens to further ravage the lives of millions of displaced people worldwide, from Gaza to Guatemala to Mumbai to Melbourne. Squalid, close-quarters living conditions, and poor sanitation, healthcare and nutrition is a recipe for mass murder in these places. In place of the regular Palm Sunday rally for refugees, we proudly participated in an online action calling on refugees to be freed immediately and given the medical and social support that every human being deserves.

In Australia's own detention centres, hundreds of refugees have begun a hunger strike over fears that their living conditions will exacerbate the threat of COVID-19 infection and death. We stand in full solidarity with their struggle. We would like to note as well the draconian use of new social distancing laws by the Victorian Andrews Labor government to try and prevent Refugee Action Collective members from staging a completely safe, socially-distanced car convoy protest in solidarity with detained refugees. This kind of overreach is in line with the hypocrisy of the national cabinet's punitive approach to social distancing of ordinary people, all the while keeping non-essential industry running to line the pockets of the bosses. We oppose any restrictions on the right to protest.

### **Enviro**

In what seems a distant memory, the March 13 uni student climate strike was our last chance to get in the streets for a while. Jack chaired the demonstration that called to: 1. Support Indigenous Sovereignty; 2. Sack Scomo; 3. Shut down the fossil fuel industry; 4. Make the climate criminals pay; 5. Fight for a just transition. At a time where governments are using the cover of COVID-19 to push through destructive environmental policy (see: Dan Andrews' Labor government pushing through deforestation and gas exploration), having had a student protest immediately before the shutdown will put us in better footing to keep fighting in the streets as soon as humanly possible. Unfortunately the situation disrupted the planned Student General Meeting and May 15 Climate Strike, but as mentioned, we will be back.

### **Pell release**

We would like to take the opportunity to say fuck George Pell, and the seven high court judges that acquitted him.

### **Discussion:**

Jack Mansell spoke to his report coving its major points and saying that this current crisis is possibility the worst one for global capitalism in our lifetimes if not ever. Adding that the tertiary education sector was going to be deeply affected and this is already being seen, and that as students we should not accept cutting of courses or staff conditions furthermore that the only viable longterm solution is properly funded and state owned education. Adding there was concern that people weren't wanting to spea

Motion: that the report of the Education Officers be accepted.

Moved from the Chair

The motion was put and **CARRIED**

## **O2. Report of the Wom\*n's Officers**

Ellie Wilson and Vivienne Guo tabled a written report

The University of Sydney Women's Collective organises on stolen Aboriginal land. Sovereignty was never ceded and we recognise that colonialism began with invasion and continues today in various forms. We fight for decolonisation always.

### **COVID-19 AND GOING ONLINE**

With the outbreak of COVID-19 in Australia, our lives have descended into mayhem. In order to minimise the spread of COVID-19 and prioritise the safety and well-being of all students, the USyd Women's Collective has postponed or moved most of our events online for the foreseeable future. Our weekly meetings will now be on Zoom.

In times of crisis, community is survival. We have been active in the mutual aid initiatives that the SRC has been organising and we urge people to get involved in them if they haven't already.

### **EVENTS: READING GROUPS**

In March, WoCo collaborated with the USyd Enviro Collective to run a non-autonomous reading group on Deborah Bird Rose's 2017's article 'Shimmer'. This reading group aimed to further an understanding of ecofeminism and the intersections between environmental and feminist activism. We also ran a cross-collective reading group on capitalism and crises in the time of COVID-19, discussing the nature of this crisis, the role the state has played in facilitating it, the impending meltdown of the financial system and possibilities for resistance. Though online reading groups are new for us, we hope that they were open and educational experiences. So far, we have gotten positive feedback that suggests it would be worthwhile running these on a regular basis, and we look forward to running more in the future.

### **WOMEN'S HONI 2020**

Women's Honi will be going ahead for Week 8 and we're really excited for this year's edition! We'll be discussing white fragility, decolonising beauty, queer ecofeminism, COVID-19 and domestic violence, the Kafala system in the Middle-East, and more. Keep an eye out.

### **DAY OF THE UNBORN CHILD**

This year, the march for International Day of the Unborn Child at St Mary's Cathedral - which is frequented by vocal anti-choice advocates, neo-Nazis and jury-convicted pedophiles - was cancelled. WoCo normally counterprotests this every year; we have always been staunchly pro-choice and pro-bodily sovereignty in the fight for reproductive rights. Abortion is not just a women's rights issue but an issue that affects trans men and non-binary people as well. It is also an issue that falls most starkly on poor people, regional people, people of colour, Indigenous people, disabled people, and the most marginalised in this world.

This year is the first time where WoCo has found itself in a political landscape where abortion has been decriminalised in NSW, and though it was a huge victory, there are many other obstacles that remain (for more information, read this [Honi](#) article written by Vivienne Guo and Shania O'Brien). As part of our continued fight for abortion access and reproductive justice more broadly, we will be publishing 'My Body, My Choice', a pro-choice zine that details how to get an abortion, why reproductive justice as a topic that extends beyond just abortion decriminalisation is important, and discusses the issue of forced removals of Aboriginal children.

### **ON CARDINAL GEORGE PELL**

*CW: Cardinal Pell, sexual abuse*

On 7 April, Cardinal George Pell, the highest ranking Catholic official in Australia and a jury-convicted pedophile, walked free after being acquitted of his crimes in the High Court. Seven High Court judges ruled to overturn a unanimous jury decision made in 2019 which convicted him of child sexual abuse.

Words cannot express how devastating this has been for survivors. We hear you, we believe you, and we are so sorry. This ruling sends the message that those with money, power and influence will be allowed to roam free while the marginalised are kept silent and sidelined as collateral damage to maintain the status quo. It is known that in cases like these, where assailants have occupied positions of power and reach, that the number of survivors are likely much larger than we know. Sexual assault is almost always terribly handled by the justice system; many survivors don't come forward, those who do often face defamation law, and only a minute fraction of cases result in a conviction. The apathy of courts is shameful and disgusting. The justice system is not only broken, it is crumbling to the ground. It will bring everyone but the rich and powerful down with it.

Remember that the legal truth is not always the truth. This ruling does not mean he is innocent, but rather that the corrupt courts have found that there is reasonable doubt not to convict him. He has been freed on a legal technicality, not on a finding of innocence; even beyond the findings that the High Court has deemed to not be enough to convict Pell, there remain other cases, each damning enough in themselves. Cardinal George Pell is a pedophile, sexual predator and an abuser. We stand in solidarity with those who are directly affected by Pell's crimes; those that he abused directly and those whose abuse he oversaw and facilitated. You are not alone, and we will not abandon you in the continuing fight for justice.

#### List of state and territory based sexual assault counselling hotlines (from EROC)

- *1800 Respect National counselling helpline: 1800 737 732*
- *Bravehearts Counselling and support for survivors of child sexual abuse: 1800 272 831*
- *Child Wise Counselling provider: 1800 991 099*
- *Lifeline 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention: 13 11 14*
- *Care Leavers Australia Network 1800 008 774*
- *PartnerSPEAK Peer support for non-offending partners: (03) 9018 7872*

*All of these hotlines are free to call, and can refer you on to any other services you may need. They can also provide support to family and friends of survivors.*

In conclusion,

## **PRO LIFERS GO TO HELL TAKE CARDINAL PELL AS WELL**

Discussion:

Vivienne Guo spoke to the report coving the major points and reminded everyone to look out for Women's Honi.

Motion: that the report of the Wom\*n's Officers be accepted.

Motion: Liam Donohoe

Seconded: Mikaela Pappou

The motion was put and **CARRIED**

### **O3. Report of the Social Justice Officers**

Evidently, the current situation has hampered a lot of in-person activity. Nevertheless, before the virus hit Australia, I continued to build the March 13 Climate Strike and went along to it. In hindsight, it's quite clear that it was essential that the climate strike actually happened, contrary to many of the sectarian arguments made in the previous council meeting. As fate would have it, it seems like that will be the last protest we have for months, as many others have been cancelled, which justifies the original arguments myself and others made about continuing a tradition of climate activism and not waiting months until the next climate strike.

#### **The move to online**

The fact that most people are self-isolating and that university has moved to completely online courses, does not completely hamper our ability to promote activism or radical politics. I have participated in several livestream forums around issues such as casual workers and mass sackings, refugees camps and prisons amidst the pandemic and workers' resistance during the crisis. Hosting online forums and meetings is an important way SRC office-bearers can attempt to politicise this crisis, explain its causes and point to solutions.

We cannot let this crisis go to waste; governments and businesses sure won't. It is a crisis caused solely by capitalism, by the underfunding of healthcare worldwide, by the profit motive and by the system's dynamics which inevitably lead to economic crisis, impoverishing and murdering millions. All office bearers should be clear about this and should advance anti-capitalist solutions. No longer can our demands and strategies compromise with the current system. We cannot look to parliament or opportunist political parties. The SRC should understand the current situation as it is- one of an international health and economic crisis- and begin to act accordingly. There is no time to waste in transforming it into a fighting body that takes up student questions and broader political issues, and which has an uncompromising and militant attitude. All office bearers and student activists should join Workers Organising Resistance (WOR) and Students Organising Resistance (ROR) to begin planning campaigns against attacks by university management and by businesses nationally. There has never been a more urgent task.

Discussion:

Deaglan Godwin spoke to his report covering the major points and highlighting the importance of unionism, supporting workers and strike actions at this time.

Motion: that the report of the Social Justice Officers be accepted.

Motion: Liam Donohoe

Seconded: Grace Bowskill

The motion was put and **CARRIED**

#### **04. Report of the Global Solidarity Officers**

Over the past month I've done what I can to continue to build a number of activist campaigns despite the coronavirus lockdown. The pandemic has triggered a global recession that is likely to be longer and deeper than the Great Depression, and already millions of people have been made unemployed with images circling of long dole queues outside Centrelinks. Students and young people are amongst the hardest hit and so I've been promoting and helping to build online campaigns to demand that students be supported by the government and universities during this period. I've been campaigning online to end the user-pays university model that forces students to rack up huge amounts of debt for their education because university should be free for all students including international students. In the wake of the crisis the University of Sydney took the opportunity to crack down on staff by using labor hire and implemented a hire freeze amongst other attacks. Unfortunately the NTEU rally against these attacks had to be cancelled due to the outbreak but before this I attended a campus organising meeting and helped make a promotional video that aimed to encourage students to show solidarity with staff. This battle is not over and I will continue to organise students to defend staff against University management. From the Global Solidarity Facebook page I joined the online Palm Sunday protest for refugee rights, a campaign which is especially important given that refugees are some of the most vulnerable people in the time of coronavirus. While campus was still open I helped organise the Students for Palestine introduction meeting which brought in number of new people interested in getting involved in Palestine activism and was an overall success. As the health and economic crisis worsens I will continue to campaign online to show solidarity with workers and the oppressed around the world in the time of coronavirus, particularly those on the frontlines such as healthcare workers, supermarket workers, refugees, prisoners, or workers striking to demand workplace closures.

Discussion:

Holly Hayne spoke to her report and covered its main points and quoting Rosa Luxemburg's 1916, Junius Pamphlet "[Bourgeois society] ... transition to Socialism or regression into Barbarism". Adding that the Covid19 health crisis was worthy of note alone with mass graves being dug in New York City, and prison labour being made to dig mass graves. Mass layoff are not just temporary and many of these will continue after the lockdown. Holly echoed Jacks comments about educations being nationalised and fully funded. Adding to her report that this crisis has also seen an attack on civil liberties, with a protest in Melbourne which was held in compliance with all social distancing laws saw two people from the same household in a car together fined \$43 000 for participating in a protest showing support to refugee being held in a hotel. Also noting the racism and classism of how the social distancing laws are being enforced.

Motion: that the report of the Global Solidarity Officers be accepted.

Motion: Liam Donohoe

Seconded: Jack Mansell

The motion was put and **CARRIED**

### **O5. Report of the Queer Officers**

Recently, the Queer Action Collective, as with everyone else, has been quickly adjusting to the new online model of university, social events, and activism.

We have been continuing with our weekly meetings, and are doing strong cross-collective work, including reading groups, a zoom party, and fundraising. Members of QuAC have also been involved in the work of other collectives, including contributing to WOCO's two upcoming publications, a zine and Women's Honi.

We are looking to put on a reading group in week 8 of this semester, on what we can learn from the community response to the AIDS crisis, and how we can apply this strong model of community mobilisation and mutual aid to the current COVID-19 crisis. Reading groups are particularly valuable at the moment, as they allow members of the collective to socialise in what can be a very isolating time, and reading and learning can be a good distraction.

Members of our collective are heavily involved in the new SRC Mutual Aid Campaign, of putting together hampers of essential items to distribute to vulnerable students at the moment who are facing job or housing instability. We are currently in the stage of recruiting volunteers and contacting businesses to donate items to us. We could always use more help!

We have also been involved in an SRC group which agitates University Administration to respond to the COVID-19 crisis in an effective and compassionate way. Recently, this group has been successful in one aspect, as the university is changing how WAMs will be recorded.

We are also in the process of gathering pitches and expressions of interest for editors for Queer Honi, which will be published in Week 13 of Semester 1. We are especially interested in analytical and original pieces, as well as art of all forms, and are looking for editors with a range of experiences.

Discussion:

Paola Ayre spoke to the report highlighting its main points.

Motion: that the report of the Queer Officers be accepted.

Motion: Liam Donohoe

Seconded: Vivienne Goodes

The motion was put and **CARRIED**

## **O6. Report of the Welfare Officers**

This month has been a very tumultuous time. The last protest I was able to help organise was the climate strike on March 13. This protest involved a couple of different universities across the state, and drew attention to the perennial climate disaster. That was the last in person protest we were able to hold, and since then, the change to online learning has transformed how we can organise. The health and economic crisis has raised many political questions. Lots of students are casual workers who now face unemployment. Not only has the health crisis affected students, but the economic crisis is sure to change life irrevocably. Confined to our homes, I have put effort into organising online. Joining groups like SOR (Students Organising Resistance) and the like. It's so important to keep up online outreach at this time.

Discussion:

Madeleine Clarke spoke to her report and wanted to emphasise the extent of the crisis at this point. Adding that governments around the world were not prepared even though they knew this is was going to happen eventually. Already food banks in the USA have run out of food as people have lost their jobs. Noting that across all sectors capitalism is making worker pay for this crisis. Madeleine highlighted that casual workers and international students are especially affected. There is growing demand for activism around rent strikes and support for workers and students, so they are not left behind during this health and economic crisis.

Motion: that the report of the Welfare Officers be accepted.

Motion: Liam Donohoe

Seconded: Jack Mansell

The motion was put and **CARRIED**

## **P. Special Business**

There were no items of special business.

## **Q. Motions of Notice**

### **Q1. The SRC unionises international students to protest to current opal card non-concessional scheme**

#### **Preamble**

As early as July 1989, the NSW Government stopped issuing concession cards to international students, after which the half-fare concession became a privilege exclusively reserved for local students. In 2006, the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association (SUPRA) and a group of international students took the matter to the courts. The NSW Government's response was to pass the Transport Administration Amendment (Travel Concession) Bill 2006, making it legally justified to continue the discrimination.

This move has saved the Government at least \$13 million every year but is in breach of international student's equal rights. The former NSW Deputy Premier insists that the government must "target its concession resources to those it considers most in need", and that international students who pay more than \$40,000 per year for their degrees must be deemed ineligible because 'they have already indicated to the Federal Government, in obtaining a student visa, that they are fully self-sufficient and able to meet their own living expenses while in Australia' (NSW Legislative Assembly Hansard, 6 June 2006).

Mr Watkin's statement is not backed by common sense or logic. International students paying full university fees does not translate into 'they are never in short of money.' Students from different cultural backgrounds starting a life in a foreign country is by no means an easy task – especially when facing rampant exploitation in the workplace, poor living conditions, and an outrageously expensive rental market. This generalisation of international students also ignorantly exclude students who are here on scholarships and students with a financial background barely supporting their preposterous tuition fee. These students have no means of obtaining a secure source of income. They have a limited 20-hour working limit each week and this is barely enough to support a student's basic needs. Employers offering higher remunerations are also reluctant to hire international students.

More importantly, a student's right to travel concession derives not from whether they could afford their living, but from their status as a full-time university student who is not yet financially independent. It is not just about money, it is about fairness! Try to think of universal suffrage – one has the right to vote not because they are rich or noble, but by virtue of their citizenships of a state. It's not just about fighting for some extra money to spend, but about fighting for a right that's always should have been rightfully ours.

Besides, we do hope international students to be more engaged, a general open letter of "no punishment from the uni" is not enough, international students have faced too much stress, sometimes they are just afraid of getting in trouble, so they may need a more clear statement.

Transportation fairness is the business of all students. Travel ban relates to transportation fairness in the international movement of students.

**Platform:**

1. The SRC, via all social media channels, supports international student opal card campaigns.
2. At this special time, international student enrolment is low in New South Wales. In other states, all international students get concession in public transport, international student enrollment
3. International student representatives, in alliance with domestic student representatives, seek a fair fare system in NSW, which includes: free transportation in the City area for users of public transport.
4. International student representatives, in alliance with domestic student representatives, seek a fair fare system for NSW, which includes: concession for students enrolled in tertiary education institutions.

5. Similar to Western Sydney University's policy, the SRC demands university to offer opal card subsidy to international students on campus.

**Action:**

1. The SRC translates all campaign material in all international students.
2. The SRC will organise a petition letter and protest at NSW parliament's transportation committee budget planning day.
3. The SRC will encourage and support student engagement in the Fair Fare campaign.
4. The SRC will issue an open letter, particularly to international students, to letting the general community understand that it is ok to speak up for one's own rights.

**Discussion:**

Abbey Shi spoke to her motion saying they had already begun to push the state and federal governments on this issue, adding that international and domestic students needed to come together to protest this and fight for fairness for international students.

Wayne (Jiale) Wang spoke to the motion noting that due to coronavirus the protest needs to be postponed or change as it was important to take social distancing seriously. Wayne added that it was not saying that international students cannot afford it, it was about fairness, and fairness was the main point that should be considered.

Maddie Clarke commended that motion and said that it was outrageous how international students are treated as cash cows on all fronts not just university fees, but things like student concession denials. Adding that the crisis the university is currently in with international students withdrawing really shows how the tertiary education system really is for profit. Continuing on she noted that it was the exploitation of international students that also hindered the ability for domestic students to advocate for things like free transport, which should be a right for domestic and international students.

Keigan Mera spoke to the motion added that he did some research on the contributions of international students to the Australian economy, saying that in 2017 the NSW government had a surplus of near 5 billion dollars, and 1.2 billion the following, more than enough to offer support and protect the welfare of international students. International Student's pay their taxes, and it is unfair that they have to pay more for services they've already paid for.

Lily Campbell spoke to the motion saying that she agreed with the motion and international students should get student concessions cards. Adding that due to the scale of the current crisis aims should be higher than just concessions cards, looking at the horrible treatment of international students, such as offering cash incentives to try and return to Australia after borders had closed, when the universities knew they would have to close and they would be moved online regardless. They have lost their jobs and received no support from the government, and international student workers are not eligible for job keeper, meaning employers are financially encouraged to fire their international workers in order to keep on more domestic workers. Many international students are now also unable to return home to their country of origin. The Universities knew this was going to happen and they still encouraged students to come here.

International students should not be paying full fees, they should have their rent frozen, we need to go higher than opal cards we need full refund for everyone.

Abbey Shi made her concluding remarks saying the supports proposed a press conference held before the Easter break for the place for the university sector ignore and excluded supports for international students. Scott Morrison said he urged international students to go home but at the time, there were already many flights cancelled and travel restrictions in place making getting home impossible for many.

Moved: Abbey Jiaqi Shi

Second: Wayne Jiale Wang

The motion was put and **CARRIED**

## **Q2. No Uni Cuts! Student Campaign Against Cuts to Courses and Jobs.**

### **Preamble**

1. The university sector has been hit hard by the coronavirus pandemic and the economic crisis which coincided with it. Many universities are expecting significant losses, in the figures of hundreds of millions. But university management won't bear the costs for this- they will want to transfer the costs onto students and staff, all while they maintain their million dollar salaries and billion dollar profits.
2. The University of Tasmania has been the first to show how this directly impacts the quality of students' education. In mid-March, the university slashed the number of available courses from 514 to 120. It also slated that job cuts would follow the reduction in courses. This is plainly an attack on both staff and students, reducing the choice available to students, while leaving potentially hundreds of staff out of a job.
3. The University of Sydney is no stranger to course cuts. In 2016, Vice-Chancellor Michael Spence cut over a hundred degrees, and shrunk the number of faculties from 16 to six. The university finally completed the closure of the Sydney College of the Arts this year, moving the degree back to the central campus and forcing students to participate in widely inappropriate facilities. The results of this are plain for anyone to see; course guides which list unit after unit as unavailable, overstretched faculties and a decline in the diversity of the courses offered.
4. The situation at the University of Tasmania, and in preceding years, the University of Sydney, is a prologue for the story likely to play out in the upcoming year. Universities Australia has estimated 21,000 jobs will be gone in six months. Although little has been said about course cuts, university managements nationally will be looking for ways to restructure universities in order to maximise profits. The quality of education and of life for students always suffers as a consequence.
5. However, the situation has not failed to arouse the indignation and anger of many students. Students are angry about the proposed use of invasive technology such as ProctorU, about the commitment to maintaining normal marking standards at certain universities, and about

the cost of their degrees remaining the same despite a radically different course being delivered than what was promised. The potential to galvanise students into a progressive campaign that demands government and management foot the bill for the crisis thus exists.

6. The crisis in the university sector is undoubtedly a product of the user-pay system, which commodifies education and turns institutions into for-profit businesses. This has other consequences, such as the over-reliance on and hyper-exploitation of international students, as universities seek to grow the market for their products, which in turn has further led to the current crisis. Only free education can resolve this contradiction and provide quality learning to the largest number of people. Furthermore, free education must be extended to anyone, regardless of their nationality, citizenship or residency.

### **Platform**

1. The SRC will run a “No Uni Cuts” campaign alongside Students Organising in the Resistance (SOR), which demands no job or course cuts, the abolition of rent for students, indefinite visas for international students and the cancellation of all course fees and provision of free education to all students.
2. The SRC supports the National Day of Online Action on April 24, including, but not limited to, the online petition, livestream with the NUS Ethnocultural Officer and solidarity photo campaign.
3. The SRC commits to a policy of free education and opposes any attempt to increase the costs of degrees.
4. The SRC rejects a strategy of collaboration and cooperation with university management and government, and focuses on militant activism at both a grassroots student and a rank and file union level.

### **Action**

1. The SRC and Office Bearers will share the event page for the April 24 National Day of Online Action, encouraging others to take part.
2. Office Bearers will attend the NSW EAG organising meeting this Friday to plan the NDOA.
3. The SRC and Office Bearers will join the NDOA on April 24 by posting a solidarity photo on the SRC and OB Facebook pages along the lines of “No Uni Cuts”, and share the livestream from the SRC and OB pages.

Moved: Lily Campbell

Seconded: Deaglan Godwin

Lily Campbell waved her speaking rights.

Deaglan Godwin spoke to his motion saying that we were going through the worst crisis global capitalism has ever faced. The tertiary education sector has lost 100s of millions of dollars this is because students are forced to pay for education rather than it being properly funded by the state, it is treated like a commodity and they are run as businesses for profit and international

students are treated like cash cow. Adding that the system is going to try to make students and workers foot the bill, course cuts and staff cuts are the new normal and it is seen already in the many cuts seen at universities around Australia. We should be fighting this asking for a reduction in fees while student experience a reduction in quality and stand in solidarity with staff to protect their jobs, wages and conditions.

*Liam Donohoe resigned the chair to Charlotte Bullock*

Grace Bowskill spoke to the motion saying she believed there needed to be more discussion on the face we are in a huge crisis considering the politics of this council and that the SRC is in a good place to push and advocate at this time and should be doing so. Adding that the unions are neglecting their members by agreeing to talk to management and consider a 20% pay cut. Continuing she said that we know that attacks on staff lead to a reduction in quality education for students, as seen in Tasmania with 400 courses cut. The SR should be pushing for student rights and there is going to be a large period of class struggle and there are going to be huge attacks on the working class, and capitalism will not be able to continue as it has done. The casualisation among students is extremely high and they are one of the most vulnerable groups financially at this time and so should not be paying rent.

Liam Donohoe spoke to the motion agreeing with all the past speakers and adding that this is the most important campaign for the SRC at this time, noting comments that have said that this is important for all the working-class struggle as it sets the standard. As scary as crisis are, they are perversely exciting as the structures that have bound us up are no longer and there are new possibilities as these structures break down, and hopefully this will be able building a new post covid19 and possibility post capitalist world. We don't know what the long term consequences will be right now but a few more semesters, years or decades of bad zoom lectures and overcrowded classes and over worked staff who are probably just 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students in your degree teaching tutorials is the trajectory at the moment and one where student will be charged 3 or 4 times as much as they are now for that crappy service. This is a really important motion, but let's not just fight back let's fight for a better system and hopefully inspire others to fight for a better works as well.

Lily Campbell spoke to the motion we need to raise expectations, the dole was doubled in a day and how long have people been fighting for a raise in Newstart. Big corporations receive billions in bailouts and no on questions it, it's a political decision on who to bail out, not one of money. Clearly the government is not willing to support the university sector not receiving much more than they were already guaranteed. There is this idea that is a business loses money then the workers should have to pay but accepting a pay cut, this has been accepted by many including supposedly left wing unions like the NTEU and the United Workers Union (UWU), and the accepted argument is if you don't accept a pay cut then you lose your job, instead of accepting this there should be radical reactions of strikes and calls that don't mean job losses. Sydney has taken lead this rebellion against the NTEU leadership and it's at stance that's now being taken up in Victoria and Queensland. The university is going to try and get money from wherever it can including from student unions and other funds.

Lily Campbell added that she would like to hear from someone from National Labour Students as this is a really important campaign around education.

James Newbold spoke to the motion commending it said it was a good motion and that we should be supporting industrial democracy when it come up like in the NTEU. Adding that he sensed there was a desire to start some drama with the last comment but wouldn't be getting any from him.

Lily Campbell said she was disappointed that no one else was speaking to the motion, it was boring no one wanted to talk about an important campaign.

Mickalea Papu spoke to the motion saying ti was a really important campaign and it was essential that as we face this monumental campaign and that she is personally of the opinion we should stand our ground.

Swapnik Sanagavarapu spoke to the motion saying that Lily Campbell had mentioned that the idea that workers should bear the brunt of the crash over the capitalist class is being promoted as fact and this is extra ironic considering capitalism is founded on the idea that capitalist are supposedly to be entitled to profit because they take risks, and part of that risk is also bearing the brunt of losses, though we see that once there is a crisis the brunt of losses and the results of the risks are borne but the workers, this shows that it is labour that produces vale and profit, not the capitalists. We should be supporting labour and humanity.

Liam Donohoe spoke to the motion again adding to what people have said and saying that we should be excited even in this dismal time as we can play a role in the change, and this is an excellent opportunity to express the politics we've always wanted to expresses and change what we've already wanted to change and we need to take this extremely seriously, the conditions of the past are not coming back and we need to think about what we want the future to be and commit ourselves s to the struggle, even though the conditions in which we are in are incredibly difficult. But in some ways, this is the easiest we've been able to have a meeting, these are historical times and we need to be able to look back and say we did everything we could.

Sofie Nicholson spoke to Q4 instead of the current motion, not realising what motion was being discussed. Talking about Stronger unions have been backtracking and making liberal concessions not in workers interests and that this health crisis is going to turn into an even more harmful economic crisis, they are going to make things harder for workers, and wanted to ask if this was about creating a rank and file NTEU campaign and reject management's suggestions, and asking why there isn't more for pushing for a campaign it just condemns university bosses. On realising it was the wrong motion Sofie requested her questions be responded to when we reached the appropriate agenda items.

Swapnik Sanagavarapu spoke to the motion again wanting to highlight the NTUE concessional and appeasing behaviour while anything we lose now is going to be hard to get back we see this rolling back of civil liberties and control of the state, but it is something to be aware of on the positive side too. If we win better staff consultation, workplace democracy it's going to be harder to pull that back off us. Swapnik concluded saying that while it's an incredibly depressing time at the moment it's important to remember what political philosopher Antonio Gramsci said 'pessimism of the intellect, optimism of the will' [paraphrased not a direct quote]

Moved: Lily Campbell

Seconded: Deaglan Godwin

The motion was put and **CARRIED**

*Liam Donohoe Resumed the Chair*

### **Q3. Abolish the Camps and the Prisons**

#### **Preamble:**

1. For refugees and inmates trapped in prisons, social distancing is impossible. Their continued imprisonment during a global health crisis means that coronavirus will run rampant throughout prisons and will essentially amount to the mass murder of some of the most oppressed, vulnerable people in society. It is important to demand the total abolition of all forms of prisons in order to effectively deal with this public health crisis and ensure freedoms for the oppressed.
2. The Moria refugee camp on the Greek coast has 20,000 refugees trapped in a facility designed for 3000. It has only one toilet for 1600 people and refugees already suffer from preventable illnesses. Coronavirus is already ravaging U.S. prisons, with jails in New York being referred to as "the epicentre of the epicentre" and Rikers, where inmates were forced to dig mass graves for Coronavirus victims, has 700 confirmed cases of COVID-19.
3. The government has been increasing its attacks on civil liberties during the pandemic. The Victorian Police has fined activists from Refugee Action Collective (RAC) for participating in a safe protest which was observing social distancing measures. Activists were taking part in a protest at the Mantra Hotel, where the refugees trapped inside for eight months, facing degrading conditions and no access to basic sanitation - one guard refused to give them soap, for instance. RAC activists remained in the car, with no more than two people from the same household inside, and blockaded the hotel. This is hypocritical considering the protest was much safer than most activities still considered "essential" by the government.
4. Prisons exist to discipline people and prevent resistance, as we have seen with the blockade of the Mantra Hotel. The real criminals are the courts, the governments and the justice system, who will let the mass murder of inmates and refugees happen, all to maintain a structurally unjust and unequal system. In order to achieve human rights, prisons must be abolished, even when the pandemic ends.

#### **PLATFORM:**

1. The SRC stands in solidarity with refugees and inmates from around the globe who are fighting against their imprisonment, in whatever way they choose to resist.
2. The SRC opposes mandatory detention, demands the immediate release of all inmates and refugees and condemns both the Labor and Liberal parties for their role in creating and maintaining detention facilities.

3. The SRC supports prison abolition and demands that all prisons and detention centres are indefinitely closed forever, even after the coronavirus pandemic has ended.

**ACTION:**

1. The SRC supports the protest called by Melbourne Refugee Action Collective and opposes the repressive, authoritarian actions of Victoria Police. The activists' fines should be immediately cancelled. The SRC values the basic political right to protest.
2. The SRC calls on the government to close all prisons and detention centres indefinitely. The SRC demands that hotels be requisitioned to house refugees and prisoners and that they are given welfare provisions.
3. The SRC council will take a solidarity photo (on Zoom) for the refugees trapped at the Mantra hotel and the Melbourne activists, who are being punished by the Victorian government.
4. The text of this motion will be posted on the SRC's Facebook page with the solidarity photo. All collectives are encouraged to share it.

Discussion:

Sophie Haslam spoke to the motion saying he the corona virus crisis has revealed how the prison system works, and that every politician who has voted for the expansion of the prison system of mandatory detention, or people like Alan Joyce who has fired over a third of his workforce should be locking in a jail cell themselves, the conditions are appalling, and the real criminals are the politicians who force people into these conditions. Adding that this was not just the far-right leaders like Boris Johnson, Trump, Bolsonaro, or Scott Morrison, it is also the ALP, seen in the Labor lead Victorian government which saw refugee activists fined 10s of 1000s of dollars for standing up for refugee rights. These laws and restriction do not apply to the ruling class they are only applied to oppress the poor and disadvantaged. Adding that the SRC should be looking to a future without prisons at all, and where the working class and the oppressed are not locked up in cages.

Lydia Elias spoke to the motion echoing Sophie's statements calling the prison system barbaric and noting the lack of adequate of sanitation in prisons when there is not a health crisis adding that important things like hand sanitiser are band in prisons because of the alcohol content. If it's not racist reasons, it's also if capitalism deems you unproductive. Most of these people are not criminals they are refugees, working class people, who are not given proper care. Adding that we should be going the refugee rights protests and people shouldn't be fined for protesting safely. The organiser of the protest mentioned earlier was arrested at his home and had his laptop confiscated, you can dive to the shopping centre, but you can't safely protest against the suppression of human rights.

*Liam Donohoe resigned the chair to Charlotte Bullock*

Liam Donohoe spoke to the motion wanting to note that at the moment we live in a fascist state, hopefully it was a temporary one but it is effectively a fascist state and this is most visible in the border control regime, this is in many way what members for the ruling class have wanted for many years, and one of the many years it has been speculated that as a response to climate

change the ruling class would close borders to the global south and they have now been able to achieve this and accelerate this and they will not be easy to ease, without significant push back. The ruling class will still start to allow small levels for migration as the health crisis dissipates but they will be incredibly racist on how they reopen borders, and it will not be health based but power and race based. Adding that what we should not be naïve to the fact that there will be a multitiered and racist border control system that will discriminate against refugees from all backgrounds to prevent them from entering Australia which would make Australia at best a liberal democratic fascist state.

Sofie Nicholson spoke to the motion and repeated Lydia's point of the arrest of the protest organiser saying she believed it was really important to highlight this as he was arrested before the protest occurred on a conservative and archaic anti-protest law from the 1950s for 'inciting a protest'. Adding that the conditions of refugees are horrendous, and many are already here for health-related reasons and are at greater risk. Continuing saying that a more concrete thing to do in the immediate is to defend our right to protest and staying at home wasn't going to protect us from the fascist policies being rolled out, and the police brutality we are seeing rolled out.

Swapnik Sanagavarapu spoke to the motion quoting who he believed were Robert Paxton's comments "fascism as the suppression of the left amidst a crisis", we are at a historic juncture and we will fight for civil liberties and human rights or we will have a fascist state under the guise of public health, protection and safety. Adding that the theme is we need to seize this moment and fight for a better world and that we can feel we have achieved something and that the loss of life and livelihoods would not be for nothing.

Maddie Powell spoke to the motion and wanted to highlight that the most punitive cruelty put on prisoners and refugees, that there is hope amongst the horror with a growing resistance to these conditions in places all around the world and people rejecting and protesting and at times destroying the building in which they are trapped and we should stand with those in resistance as these are reasonable responses to the cruelty to which people are being subjected here and around the world. Concluding that we need to support those who are pushing against these systems and that the current health crisis has helped put a spotlight on the conditions in detention centres and prisons.

Vivienne Guo spoke to the motion saying the history has shown nothing if not that prisons are not rehabilitative and do not help people or society. As mentioned many of the people in the prison system are people of colour or Indigenous and many of them will not make it out meanwhile people like George Pell are let out and free to walk in our communities. Vivienne concluded by quoting from an article saying "crisis allow us to see a better world and we have to fight through them."

*Nicholas Comino lost connection with the video and appointed Maia Edge his proxy 8:29pm*

Moved: Sophie Haslam

Seconded: Holly Hayne

The motion was put and **CARRIED**

Lily Campbell said it was a shame there were people who would vote against the motion but not speak to why.

*Liam Donohoe resumed the Chair*

#### **Q4. Solidarity with NTEU rank and file**

Preamble:

Australian universities are in crisis. Losses precipitated by the COVID-19 crisis have plunged the user-pays funding model into disrepair. Conservative NTEU estimates put the sector-wide losses for 2020 at at least \$5 billion. At its own admission, losses for Sydney University alone are at least \$470 million. In response, university bosses across the country are looking to force the burden onto staff through savage cuts to jobs, wages and working conditions.

Universities Australia has already admitted that at least 21,000 jobs are on the chopping block, but the real figure is likely to be far higher. In addition, university bosses want staff to take a cut of around 20% to their take-home pay, whilst simultaneously being worked harder and more punitively to make up for job losses. The restructuring of the sector around changed enrolment revenue will also likely see courses cut back to only the most profitable ones, as has occurred at the University of Tasmania.

Shamefully, and without any consultation with members, the National Executive of the NTEU has entered into negotiations with the bosses, accepting that there must be cuts to wages and conditions in order to 'preserve jobs'. Their statement entirely omits reference to casual workers, of which many are already facing unemployment. Historically, cuts to wages have not preserved jobs in the medium-term, and instead are used to boost profits for business. Similarly, conditions which are traded away are rarely won back in periods of recovery in profits.

Staff, however, are refusing to accept the logic pushed by university bosses. Rank and file NTEU members, led nationally by the organised Sydney University branch of the NTEU, are pushing past their own officials to fight the bosses, and to demand that the government and university bosses pay for the crisis in the sector. At Sydney University, NTEU members last week overwhelmingly passed a motion censuring the National Executive and committing to a fightback against cuts in the sector. The outcome of this fight will determine the future of the higher education sector, not just for staff, but for students as well.

Platform:

1. The University of Sydney SRC condemns university bosses for their attempts to force losses onto staff and students;

2. The University of Sydney SRC unconditionally supports staff fighting back against cuts to jobs, wages and conditions;
3. The University of Sydney SRC supports full public funding for higher education, and abolition of fees for all students.

Action:

1. The University of Sydney SRC releases a public statement endorsing the motions passed by Sydney University NTEU members at their meeting on April 9;
2. The University of Sydney SRC takes and publishes a photo (or screenshot) of solidarity with staff fighting the cuts.

Moved: Jack Mansell

Seconded: Jazzlyn Breen

Discussion:

Jack Mansell spoke to the motion saying that we are in a battle to protect even the neoliberal education we were getting now and that the stakes are so high because if students and staff don't win the quality and conditions of our education are going to be far worse. Without fighting for staff and conditions we could lose 20 000 jobs, and they are pressuring people to take pay cuts to protect their jobs and we know that this won't save jobs as historically it just means that the bosses pocket the savings. Jack continued saying that it doesn't appeal to the NTEU national executive, because they have already been censured by their members as so this motion does not want to give them power when they have proved themselves unreliable at best traitorous at worst, but keep it with the rank and file members who make up the union.

Holly Hayne spoke to the motion this is an important motion and it's important to differentiate the members and the management of the university. Holly spoke to the USyd NTEU's motion calling on the government to completely fund and bailout the education sector and this is what we should be fighting for. The rank and file member are really important especially for a union that has the capacity to fight back, and the arguments made by union management are not sound and won't build the union nor will it protect jobs.

Yasmine Johnson spoke to the motion noting that every cut, is a cut to student conditions and this is these cuts are both imminent and serious. Staff at UNSW have already been asked to take a voluntary reduction in hours which is just a way of saying the same amount of work for less pay. Adding that accepting these cuts doesn't protect jobs, it is likely that management will push for people to take these cuts to pay and hours and then cut jobs regardless. Yasmine said that as an NTEU member going to a meeting and seeing the outrage that the head office of the unions would be going and making deals behind the members backs was appalling and created understandable outrage. University of Sydney is a national leader and the SRC should be getting behind the rank and file member of the union to fight these cuts. Continuing Yasmine noted that National Labor

Students at the meeting had mentioned industrial democracy and that she would like to hear their perspectives on this issue and their opinion of the union bureaucracy and leaderships actions many of whom are already supposedly in discussion and negotiation with the bosses. The supposedly left wing NTEU, has been going and making such deals and telling your member that you are going to be selling them out over the long weekend is not a particularly democratic thing to do. Yasmine concluded saying she would like to hear more peoples thought on this issue.

*Liam Donohoe resigned the Chair to Charlotte Bullock*

Liam Donohoe spoke to the motion but noting his comments are probably more relevant to Q2, saying that government has the capacity to fully fund education an they are also able to fund all essential services and the question as to why they don't is big but simple and its they don't care about ordinary people and universities in particular produce people who try to challenge and hold governments to account. This follows the trajectory seen by governments introducing VSU in 2006 and HECS in the late 80s, as well as all the deregulations and staff cuts campaigns over the years using economic reasons to help stem political discourse. They will have the money when airlines and banks need to be bailed out, they don't want the universities to be bailed out because they don't want to be challenged. They actively fear the consequences of higher education which is a critical and thoughtful population which call them to account so they are happy to see it fall by the wayside despite the impact on the Australian economy this will have.

Kedar Maddali said that the one good thing about this is it highlights the trend of opposing the larger conservative nationally scaled organisations and the locally, at least in Sydney, there is a push back against these groups willing to compromise workers' rights and this bodes well for the University.

Sofie Nicholson spoke to the motion repeating her comments from earlier reiterating that she supports the rank and file fighting back against concessions and the actions of the executives of the union. But also to fight back against these cute it is necessary to launch a broad campaign and think about how these campaigns are going to be launched and what the demands will be not just a general condemnation of the bosses.

Swapnik Sanagavarapu spoke to the motion saying that if a union does not represent it's rank and file members it has no purpose. While some branches are stanch others are full of careerists who are willing to make concessions to management. Adding that he wanted to reiterate the point made by Liam that there is a push to place the burden of this economic crisis on the working class, even if you are fiscally conservative, there is no better time for a government to morrow money and international interest rates are low and there is a low public debt while there is still quite high private debt. There should be a sting fight to reinvigorate the union movement as there is such low density at the moment and we should be looking to change that.

Mikaela Pappou spoke to the motion saying that in general she completely agreed and backs the democratisation of the union, and it is the job of the union to represent the rank and file members and the bureaucracy should be condemned for not consulting with the member when making deals and that is undemocratic. Adding this has turning into a productive discussions about the unions and how we as the SRC should support the unions, but mostly the rank and file members of the unions, and that when the unions go to the negotiating table that they are not going with an agenda created by themselves and not set by the members. Mikaela concluded by commending the motion to the council.

Jack Mansell spoke to the motion and wanted to continue on from Swapnik Sanagavarapu's comments and add that the NTEU's email made no mention of casuals even though they are in most precarious positions and are making up a large number of joining members hoping to protect their jobs and conditions. This is what we want to see happening, and instead the national office has said they want to preserve jobs but not those job – they don't care about casuals, and they don't want to fight to protect jobs. Jack continued saying he disagreed with Liam Donohoe's analysis of why governments don't want to fund universities saying it was less that they are a hot bed of resistance, and more that they're not going to be injections into the economic from international student as they have been in the past, they are looking at them and thinking they are not going to be profitable. Jack then spoke to the type of campaign he wanted the SRC to run, which was highlighted in Q2, on how students can be a part of this campaign of rejecting cuts and supporting staff. Concluding saying this motion was about supporting the two motions endorsed by USyd NTEU and this is the basis of a campaign to be run.

Deaglan Goodwin spoke to the motion saying hat the position taken but the national executive of the NTEU is anti-democratic and so should be opposed on those grounds and should also be opposed on the grounds that it ties the interested of the worker to the interests of the bosses when they are counter opposed. University management are saying the University's have lost income so workers need to take a wage cut to keep their jobs, but we know that in a few months they are going to come back and people are going to lose their jobs anyway and we should be rejecting this as acceptable. Workers need to demand that there is enough money to keep all their workers and this is true of the university sector and of Sydney University with its millions of dollars in investment portfolios, universities could be nationalised and could pay all staff, the NTEU executives position should not just be rejected for being undemocratic but also because it argue for a bankrupt strategy for the union movement, the workers deserve everything they have and they deserve more and they shouldn't have to pay for the crisis the bosses have gotten themselves into.

Liam Donohoe responded to Jack Mansell comments saying that he didn't believe that the government decisions for bailout had anything to do with long term financial profitability in the short to ling term, looking at airlines as an example, or looking at job keeper and the wide net that

it covers many of which are unprofitable sectors. Liam reiterated that he believed universities are and have been hot beds of political resistance and thought and on top of the long-term profitability issues they are looking at this as it is a lose/lose situation for them.

Moved: Jack Mansell

Seconded: Jazzlyn Breen

The motion was put and **CARRIED**

## **R. General Business**

Sofie Nicholson requested to move 3 motion from the floor.

Liam Donohoe accepted the motions from the floor.

### **R1. MOTION: No Workers Left Behind! Support Workers and students taking action on May 1.**

#### **Preamble**

The May 1 Movement, with the support of the Maritime Union of Australia Sydney Branch and Construction Forestry Mining and Energy Union NSW Construction and General, have initiated a major day of action on May 1. They are organising a car convoy, actions at workplaces and more and are calling on other unions and organisations to join and support the action.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, trade unions and social justice groups in Sydney were planning a major stop work rally on May 1, a historic day of International working-class solidarity, uniting for “workers’ rights - social justice - climate action”. While we respect the need for “social distancing”, finding creative ways to resist is more urgent than ever.

Along with sickness and death worldwide, the COVID 19 pandemic is driving one of the most profound crises of capitalist production in history, with mass unemployment across the world. The working class and oppressed social groups are already suffering the most, with the worst still yet to come.

The Morrison government’s huge stimulus packages have been designed to protect corporate profits. Millions of workers are potentially excluded from the JobKeeper subsidy and many bosses are taking advantage of the pandemic to slash staff, wages and working conditions.

Instead of support services to help people stay home, draconian police powers are being used to target marginalised groups and stop safe forms of protest.

Migrant workers, international students, refugees and others are facing destitution as they are excluded from income support and health care. Colonised and poor nations including Indigenous peoples in Australia and across the Pacific region are set to be hit hard by the virus. The virus doesn’t recognise nationality or visa status and either does our solidarity.

Sanctions imposed by the US and allies are stifling response to the virus in some countries. And continuing imperialist wars and brutal anti-refugee policies continue to displace millions and exacerbate the threat of the virus.

While the world grapples with the COVID-19 threat, the climate crisis is intensifying and natural disasters, such as recent hurricanes in the Pacific continue to cause destruction and dislocation.

We are living in an extreme emergency. The scale of the crisis demands that we abandon the old ways, damaging ideas and the failed system we live under.

The demands of the May 1 action aim to meet this crisis head on and include:

- + Stop job cuts, stand downs and attacks on wages and conditions. Safe workplaces and special paid leave for all workers affected by COVID.
- + Immediate expansion JobKeeper to cover casuals, gig workers, migrant workers, refugees, international students and many others being sacked or having hours and pay cut through this crisis.
- + Freeze on rents, mortgages and evictions.
- + Don't bailout essential services - nationalise them. Companies such as airlines and private health companies are currently receiving a huge amount of public funding, they must be taken into public ownership.
- + International solidarity: Rights to secure residence and healthcare for everyone in Australia. Lift economic sanctions. Increase international co-operation in medical research and care, including through immediate increases in Australia's aid budget.
- + Climate jobs now: turn around mass unemployment with a public works program to decarbonise the economy and guarantee a just transition for all fossil fuel workers, Indigenous communities and all communities on the front line of the climate crisis.

We note that the University of Melbourne National Tertiary Education Union Branch Committee has called for universities to join the action in an April 15 motion saying:

"We:

1. Call on the Australian Government and our employers to fund the \$5 billion shortfall without any job or conditions cuts to casual, contract or permanent employees.
2. Call on the NTEU state and national leadership to mount an industrial and political campaign to defend every job, every condition and every income of staff. The campaign should include a May 1 NTEU day of action. In Victoria, this will include a car convoy and other actions to meet at respective campuses and convene in the city at Liberal Party Headquarters."

Platform

1. The University of Sydney Student Representative Council endorses the May 1 day of action and its demands.
2. *The University of Sydney Students' Representative Council holds that any rebuilding of trade union strength in this period requires opposition to Union officialdom*
3. *The University of Sydney Student Representative Council condemns the pro-business actions of the CFMEU leadership and calls for all construction sites to be closed with full pay*

Action

1. The University of Sydney Student Representative Council will support student participation, promotion and organisation for the May 1 Day of Action by providing printing, publicity and legal support if required.

Discussion:

Sofie Nicholson spoke to her motion outlining the background of it noting the planned May Day action which was being organised by a group of militant union delegates and officials. They are calling for an action to still take place on May 1, via a car convey and actions at workplaces, and looking for wide support for the campaign and the line no worker left behind. This is also about protecting our rights to protest and

stand against the draconic laws and increased police powers, showing support for those like casuals who have very little job security, international student and migrant workers who are not supported by the government's assistance. Sofie concluded by calling for support from collectives and the council to promote and support this event.

*Liam Donohoe resigned the chair to Charlotte Bullock*

Liam Donohoe spoke to the motion saying it's incredibly important and that the social justice and union movements coming out of this time are important and we should do what we can to support them.

Lily Campbell said while she supported the motion and that day of action but thought it did not call out the unions particularly the CFMEU and the MUA on their lack of proper action. Adding that they should not be considered militant unions when they have worked with the bosses to get to the fair work commission to have the conditions in these industries dropped, so that people can go to construction sites at 3am which puts peoples in danger and the CFMEU have even threatened bosses too keep sites open when they have tried to be closed for WHS reasons, it means they have given up the idea that you can defend people wages even when site shutdown which has been seen in other industries around the world. The MUS has rallies against people being sacked but their line was that they would be willing to work for free to keep the city operating. But while it's good to fight we should not be giving cover to these unions while they protect profits and work with the business associations. Lily continued saying that it's not just the NTEU and other so called left wing unions who are willing to go to the fair work commission and sell out members, the UWW also have said they are willing to accept 50% pay cuts in order to protect jobs, and we should be fighting for no one to take a pay cut ,or lose their job and these things are not counterposed, we can fight for both and win both. Support action is important, but it needs to be explicit otherwise it comes off as cover.

Sofie Nicholson responded to Lily Campbell's comments saying that while she agrees with the necessity of condemning union bureaucracy and actions that sell out rank and file members, but unions are made of rank and file member and condemning the unions out right in this motion condemns the rank and file members. Sofie Nicholson said she agreed with Lily Campbell but not in the context of this motion.

Maddie Powell spoke on the motion saying she agreed with the motion and with Lily Campbell's comments. Adding that she doesn't think that drawing a line between the cretinous actions of the union executives and the rank and file and knowing they are distinct things is not the same as condemning the unions entirely or condemning union activism. There has been an upswell in grassroots activism and it's very clear these are bottom up rebellions, and while places like the SDA are doing very little members are creating their own unofficial stop work actions until proper safety measures are implemented. Militant unionism is coming from the rank and file and it's disappointing to note that left wing unions like the NTEU are lagging behind them. Maddie concluded saying that this is an important motion but it is important to condemn the bureaucracy for aligning with the bosses.

Swapnik Sanagavarapu spoke to the motion adding that he does not see the need to condemn union bureaucracy when the motion is concerned with a group of rank and file members of historically militant unions even if in recent times they've done some stupid things. Adding there is no immediate necessity or relevance to this motion for such condemnation.

Jack Mansell spoke to Lily Campbell's comments and proposed 3 amendments to the platform, saying that the way it is written highlights the need to make the distinction as it calls on the NTEU's national leadership to run a militant campaign. This can be seen recently when the branch president of the NTEU at Usyd tried to block two members from circulating and moving a motion and a members meeting calling it

undemocratic. If we want to win we need to be critical of the union officialdom:

“The University of Sydney Students’ Representative Council holds that any rebuilding of trade union strength in this period requires opposition to Union officialdom.

The University of Sydney Student Representative Council condemns the pro-business actions of the CFMEU leadership and calls for all construction sites to be closed with full pay”

*They were not amenable to the mover.*

The amendments were put to a vote

Moved: Jack Mansell

Seconded: Grace Bowskill

The amendments were put and **CARRIED.**

Lily Campbell spoke responded to Swapnik Sanagavarapu comments saying she felt it was important to note this as it’s criminal that the unions are willing to go to the bosses and sacrifice conditions to create unsafe workplaces to keep sites open. The aims of the union here are so low that they are willing to let people die to keep jobs. It’s not true that this is just a rank and file campaign Sofie Nicholson said herself that this was rank and file and union officials, and they are willing to let people die and that’s criminal and we are opposed to official selling out their members and we need to recognise that those at the top of the unions at the moment are not our friends and we need to put pressure on them.

Sofie Nicholson spoke to the motion saying she was not pleased that the motion had been changed to one that condemned the unions over condemning the bosses, but that she noted that the issues raised are all true but they were not what this motion was about.

Moved: Sofie Nicholson

Seconded: Liam Donohoe

The motion was put and **CARRIED.**

*Liam Donohoe called a quorum count at 9:40pm*

*The meeting was found quorate.*

Procedural motion to limit speaking time to 1 minute

Moved from the Chair

The procedural was put and **CARRIED.**

**R2. Motion: Don’t let coronavirus threaten our right to protest.**

**Preamble:**

Victoria Police have used draconian powers to stamp out dissent, in a move that has implications for unions, climate activists and all movements for justice and change.

On Good Friday, they arrested Refugee Action Collective member Chris Breen in his house, held him for nine hours at Preston police station, seized his electronic devices and charged him with incitement under section 321G of the Crimes Act 1958 for involvement in a RAC car convoy.

The same day, police also harassed and fined dozens of activists with a total of almost \$43,000 for taking part in the RAC convoy, which had been organised as a demonstration of compassion and solidarity with refugees in the Mantra Hotel in the Melbourne suburb of Preston Despite activists being isolated in cars, with no more than two occupants from the same household.

The detention centres and the hotels refugees are being detained in are very high risk environments with crowded conditions and no possibility whatsoever of practicing adequate social distancing. Many of the refugees are also particularly vulnerable because of underlying medical conditions. More than 1200 doctors have signed a letter calling for the release of refugees from detention. ALP federal MPs Ged Kearney and Peter Khalil have also called for their release and for income support for refugees in the community.

The action was entirely safe. Police actions are the real threat and are further evidence of the arbitrary and discriminatory way police are abusing their powers on 'health' grounds.

#### PLATFORM

1. The SRC condemns the laws that prevent safe protests and grant police enormous powers to target ordinary people who pose no threat to anyone's health
2. RAC was right to exercise compassion on Good Friday and signal support for the refugees in Mantra.
3. Premier Dan Andrews should be using the health powers to free refugees, rather than quashing safely conducted protest and political dissent.

#### ACTIONS

1. The SRC will add it's to RAC's official statement calling for:
  - 1) The charge against Chris Breen to be dropped.
  - 2) No infringement notices to be issued.
  - 3) Refugees and asylum-seekers to be released into community care.
  - 4) Government approval of car convoys and other safe forms of political protest.
2. SRC will publish this statement on their facebook page, encouraging students to sign in solidarity
3. The SRC supports the photo action called by Sydney Refugee Action Coalition on Friday in solidarity with refugees and the targeted activists and will promote it on its Facebook page.

Sofie Nicholson spoke to her motion this motion cover a lot of what was discussed in the previous similar motion on refugees but deals more specifically with police rights and the removal of rights to protest, and wanted to write a motion to sign on directly to the action points remanded by the Refugee Action Collective (RAC)

Grace Bowskill spoke to the motion saying that this whole situation "is a cop's wet dream" with the extra powers they have been given, and the way these fine have been put out have been outrageous, and are used to victimise those who stand up to injustice. Concluding this is happening under a supposed left-wing government in Victoria and there is nothing left wing about that government.

Sophie Haslam spoke to the motion this is part of the winding back of our civil liberties the ruling class have been hoping for decade and we should be fighting back like there have been in other countries. The government doesn't like giving people rights, we have to fight for them. This situation is an indictment on the Labor party who started mandatory detention.

Moved: Sofie Nicolson

Seconded: Cooper Forsyth

The motion was put and **CARRIED.**

**R3. MOTION: Defend Student Housing!**

## Preamble

We welcome the Vice Chancellor's April 1 email response to student pressure committing that the university "will not be evicting students who come to us for support". However there has been no public communication of this decision. On April 1 UNSW sent a letter to all students announcing a 6 month moratorium on evictions from student housing. Sydney Uni should announce a similar policy at bare minimum. We do not want any students to be left in the dark about this, as knowing they will have a guaranteed place to live during this crisis will give students experiencing financial stress some relief.

However, we also protest the fact that students' demands to suspend student rent have been ignored by the university despite 60 tenants signing a letter including this demand. Some students (for example in Regiment) have suspended their accommodation to go elsewhere during the crisis and do not have to pay rent. Those students who have nowhere else to go should also be able to have their rent suspended too. We do not know how long this crisis will go on for. An application dependent, one-off loan of \$1000 will not make up for the drastic loss of income people are experiencing. Relying on such a loan also means students are incurring debt solely in order to furnish profits to housing providers in a pandemic. This is not acceptable. The University should prioritize compassion to students who are struggling to pay rent during this time.

Further, the suspension of rent must be a uniform policy for all student tenants. Forcing students to individually plea for rent reductions doesn't guarantee equal treatment for all students. It disadvantages those who may not be well placed to advocate for themselves. Such a process also creates unnecessary stress that will likely impact students' mental health and academic performance negatively. Students have a right to housing during this crisis and the university has a duty to make this clear beyond all doubt.

We also express concern about the failed attempt to stop students putting signs with their demands for housing security and protection in their windows at Sydney University Village. The use of staff without PPE to remove these signs is completely unacceptable. We will continue to hold the university accountable until its policies prioritize protecting students over protecting profits.

## Platform:

1. The University of Sydney SRC demands immediate suspension of rent for all student tenants during the Covid-19 lock-down.
2. The University of Sydney SRC demands the announcement of a 6 month moratorium on evictions at minimum in line with the V.C's statement that the University "will not be evicting students who come to us for support"

## Action:

1. The University of Sydney SRC will sign on to the latest international student letter to the Vice Chancellor text as above
2. The University of Sydney SRC President will demand a meeting *between University management and the students impacted about university housing to put forward the demands above*
3. The University of Sydney SRC will provide printing, legal support and publicity for the campaign
4. *The SRC will take part in the photo cation campaign calling on the University to "end evictions, suspend student rent".*

Discussion:

Sofie Nicholson spoke to her motion covering the main point and noting that there has been a grassroots upswelling of student in student accommodation who have been threatened by management saying they leave they have to keep paying rent but if they're evicted, they have no rights. It's mostly calling for rent suspension for anyone in student housing.

Maddie Clarke spoke to the motion saying that it was pretty criminal that the university has decided to kick out student especially for international students who have been left to defend for themselves and as so many have lost their jobs and there has been little with regards to supporting renters just landlords. People should be organising round this and encouraged everyone to join in and fight for rent strikes.

Prudence Wilkins-Wheat spoke to the motion saying that this is a really difficult time for students. Adding that while the University has put a moratorium on evictions it's not well published yet and left many people in uncertain circumstances. and proposed an additional action point to take part in the photo campaign.

*It was amenable to the mover.*

*Liam Donohoe resigned the Chair to Charlotte Bullock.*

Liam Donohoe spoke to the motion wanted to note that while what has been happening has been great the focus on university accommodation is more like low hanging fruit and there is a lot of tenancy issues happening at the moment that are not on campus, and University management are not as bad as places like Uni-Lodge.

Kedar Maddali spoke to the motion saying it was an important motion and that people not being able to pay rent and living in a state of limbo is a really stressful situation and lifting the burden of rent can make such a difference and that he supported this campaign.

Sofie Nicholson asked Liam about his issues with action point 2.

Liam responded to those comments saying that speaking the Vice Chancellor would do very little and speaking with management who are dealing with this would be better for getting an outcome.

Sofie asked to change the motion to University management rather than Dr Spence specifically.

James Newbold spoke to the motion and wanted to mention that what is happening is we are listening to the tenants first but here it's people immediate material conditions so it's not something that should be done trivial and this is something that needs to be handled really carefully but it was important that the SRC take this on.

Moved: Sofie Nicholson

Seconded: Aman Kapoor

The motion was put and **CARRIED.**

*The meeting closed at 10:11pm.*