
MINUTES OF THE AUSA STUDENT COUNCIL MEETING WEDNESDAY 24 FEBRUARY 2021



PAT HANAN MEETING ROOM, 207-501 | 6PM - 8PM

PRESENT: *Anamika Harirajh (President, AUSA), Alan Shaker (EVP, AUSA), Makayla Muhundan (eNVP, AUSA), Ishie Sharma (WVP, AUSA), Alofa So'olefai (Treasurer-Secretary, AUSA), Emma Cooper-Williams (PGO, AUSA), Lavi Abitbol (QRO, AUSA), Vivien White (WRO, AUSA), Mihiterina Williams (Tumuaki, NTM), Ash Singh (President, SAMS), Rishi Khattar (President, OPTOM), Hannah Colquhoun-Petherick (President, SciSA), Holly Mace (President, ALES), Lucy Collier (President, ESSA), Sam Robertson (President, AUMSA), Blake Scanlen (President, SOMSA), Ishita Chawla (President, AUCSA), Vira Paky (President, AUGSS), Jessica Kim (President, APSA), Liam Davies (President, ASO)*

LATE: *Katrina Jordan (SUPA Pres.), Temi Adelekan (Class Rep Manager), George Perry (AUES Representative), Kevin Guo (ISO)*

IN ATTENDANCE: *Teisa Unga (Living Wage Movement Representative), Will Watterson (AUSA General Manager)*

APOLOGIES: *Junyi Wang (UoA Council Representative)*

MEETING COMMENCED 6:08PM

1. PRELIMINARY MATTERS

1.1. **Welcome and Introductions**

The Chair welcomed each President and President representative. Presidents and Presidents representative introduced themselves to one another.

1.2. **Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest

2. LIVING WAGE MOVEMENT

A representative of The Living Wage Movement educated the Student Council about their foundation and purpose within the country and within universities. Victoria University currently supports this movement to bring the topic that is raising the living wage to the attention of their university for university cleaners and students who work alongside their studies. Her visit to the Student Council was purposed to gage the interest of AUSA to partake in this initiative on behalf of all the Presidents of the faculty clubs.

KATRINA JORDAN (SUPA PRESIDENT) ENTERED THE MEETING AT 6:15PM

Membership will be \$50 per annum and will go towards training that will be hosted by The Living Wage Movement as well as forums. More information will be sent to the chair of the Student Council for distribution to the faculty Presidents. The Living Wage Movement alongside AUSA will advocate for an increase to the living wage through various mediums if AUSA agrees to becoming a member of The Living Wage Movement for Universities.

A member of the council requested that a decision be postponed until the next Student Council meeting so that each President can go to their respective executives and gage their position on such a movement. This requested was granted by the Chair.

Action: Chair to distribute additional information sent from The Living Wage Movement to faculty Presidents.

GEORGE PERRY (AUES REPRESENTATIVE) ENTERED THE MEETING AT 6:24PM

TEISA UNGA (LIVING WAGE MOVEMENT REPRESENTATIVE) LEFT THE MEETING AT 6:35PM

3. CAMPUSLIFE REVISION OF SMOKE-FREE POLICY

The University is opening consultation regarding a revised smoke free campus policy where AUSA will be submitting a submission on behalf of the Student Council. The Student Council was informed about the purpose of upgrading the policy which was primarily to be agreeance with the updated Legislation regarding Smoke-free spaces.

A question is raised regarding the purpose of a smoke-free environment at the University – is it to decrease the health consequences for the student body, is it purely for optics, or is it due to the smell? A member of the Student Council raised the point that the problem with smoking to external parties is the smell; the addition of vapes to the current smoke-free policy won't be as distracting compared to cigarettes as vapes tend to smell nicer than cigarettes. This opinion was shared by many others on the Student Council.

Another member of the Student Council brought up a point stating that the current policy is clearly not as effective as there are many who smoke around the City Campus. They suggest that the University should be proactive in ensuring that the policy is followed rather than

Action: Chair to circulate the link to the policy to the Student Council.

4. AUSA OPERATIONS PLAN 2021

The AUSA Officers spoke on behalf of their sections with the AUSA Operations plan – Student Voice, Student Experience, and Student Support.

The Engagement VP highlights that one of the focal points of the Student Experience section is to increase collaboration between clubs rather than competition. To achieve this, the Weeks Tender was primarily to offer student clubs the opportunity to collaborate with others who will be running similar events to cater to a larger audience rather than individual faculties. Due to lack of time, any questions about the Weeks Tender or the Student Engagement section should be sent to the Engagement VP for

clarification. The Engagement VP also reminds the faculty Presidents that the due date for the Weeks Tender application is this Friday.

The Education VP looks to increase the student voice by having sub committees within the Student Council so that all different facets of the university may be heard whether it be RAs or International students.

The Welfare VP is focusing primarily on the Mental Health Hui which will take place in the first semester across the campus as well as the review of student support services to produce a report that may be presented to the University to highlight key areas where students believe that they can better serve students.

5. STUDENT COUNCIL SECTION ON AUSA WEBSITE

The work of the Student council has been private since it's humble beginnings and it does not receive the recognition that it should. To rectify this, AUSA will be including a Student Council section on the AUSA website where a photo of the Student Council Members, their respective faculty club, and a short bio shall be uploaded for the student body to view.

Administrative issues were raised such as some Presidents not being on the mailing list for Student Council notices.

Action: Double check and update the mailing list.

Action: Chair to email the Student Council requesting a photo and a short blurb for the AUSA website.

6. STUDENT CONSULTATIVE GROUP

The Student Consultative Group is the avenue through which the University gathers the views of the students. The Student Council are encouraged to bring any items that they wish to put on the SCG agenda for discussion. The final date for submission for SCG is Friday 26 February at 12pm. The next meeting for SCG is Monday 8th March 2021.

The Chair received a phone call from the Vice-Chancellor about a potential committee being setup between the Officers of the AUSA Executive and the Senior Executive of the University. This is a huge step for AUSA as the current setup of the Student Council and the roles of the faculty clubs allow for the perfect access to student concerns.

Action: Invitations of the SCG meeting to be sent out to the members of the Student Council.

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1. *Semester One Examinations*

The Chair reminds the Student Council that their purpose is to advocate for all students, especially those who are less fortunate relative to other students and those who are unable to speak up for themselves.

A member of the Student Council raises a point that some departments are changing the final exam to a test designed to curb the online examinations as these tests will be held in person. The Chair advises that this be added to the SCG agenda.

A member of the Student Council commends the University on their flexibility to have tailored approaches as some students would prefer in-person examinations due to the nature of the exam e.g. music students. However, it is unclear as to what the specific faculties or departments are who will be allowed the flexibility.

7.2. O-Week Update

Thankfully, the O-Week festival will be going ahead given the change to COVID Alert Level 1 on Tuesday. The Student Council is encouraged to attend the festival with their associations as well as Party in the Spark. Student Council members are informed that they each receive 1 free ticket to Party in the Spark.

7.3. Feedback about Online Discussion Forums

As a part of the many committees that the Education VP sits on, the Teaching and Learning Committee have asked for the view of the students regarding Online Discussion Forums such as Piazza. This was due to the possibility of Piazza moving to a licensed version. However, Piazza will be moving towards an ads-based model like Wikipedia. The Education VP opens the floor for discussion.

The primary factor that seems to entice students using online discussions such as Piazza is their ability to interact with the lecturer. Some lecturers are proactive and will respond to comments on Piazza - some here and there, others religiously. However, not all lecturers agree. Some faculties have had the benefit of having their lecturers set times during which they will be available to answer questions on Piazza. Other faculties will not receive a response or an endorsement on answers from their lecturers which leaves the students confused and less confident about their answers. The Student Council members raised a point where they thought answering questions on Piazza was a part of the tutor's role. One member raised the fact that consistency is key as they have gone from classes which use Piazza religiously to other papers who don't give it a second thought.

As a result of the online learning last year, Piazza was heavily utilised where possible while other faculties such as Urban Planning have not used Piazza. A suggestion is made about providing training for lecturers who do not know how to use Piazza in their course as this may be potential barrier that disadvantages students in these faculties from collaborating with each other and communicating with the lecturer.

TEMI ADELEKAN (CLASS REP MANAGER) AND KEVIN GUO (ISO) ENTERED THE MEETING AT 7:10PM

Anonymity protects the integrity of the students and allows them to ask questions that they would otherwise not ask in person. This is the main feature that students like about online discussion forums such as Piazza. This highlights the problem with Canvas where anonymity is not feasible. In addition, Piazza provides students with the opportunity to upload photos when asking and/or answering questions, and functions which is beneficial for students in mathematics-based papers across the different faculties.

The members of the Student Council note that there are no significant barriers from accessing online forums besides those that are obvious e.g. no device, no internet, etc.

Action: Add to the SCG agenda about departments attempting to curb online exams.

7.4. Craccum

In previous years, Craccum has asked to attend Student Council but have been declined due to the belief that their attendance would hinder the ability of the members of the Student Council to voice their concerns and opinions. The benefits of inviting Craccum is their ability to publish about issues that the Student Council wish to bring to the attention of students. Likewise, they will also be able to boost the reputation of the Student Council so that it is known to the student body.

The Student Council is divided on whether to invite Craccum as the prominent fear is that Craccum may publish something that maligns the image of a member of the Student Council. A member questions the possibility of having Craccum signing a confidentiality agreement, but this would defeat the purpose of Craccum as a media outlet. However, the final decision would be down to the Student Council to decide whether this is the route that they would wish to take. Other members of the Student Council advocate for the attendance of Craccum as this would be good for the student body to know what the Student Council is up to.

The Chair suggests inviting the editors of Craccum to the next meeting to explain their role and discuss what they would be looking for if they were to attend Student Council meetings. This was agreed upon by the Student Council with no objections raised.

Action: Email the Craccum editors requesting their attendance at the next Student Council meeting.

Concerning other matters, members of the Student Council are requesting copies of Craccum at the Grafton and the Epsom Campus as they have in the past not received the magazine in these campuses.

The addition of the Te Ao Māori editor role is explained by the Co-Tumuaki of Ngā Taura Māori. The Te Ao Māori editor role has been granted to Mairatea Mohi.

8. REPRESENTATIVE AGREEMENTS

The representative agreements are taken as read. The physical copies of these are handed out to the members of the council to sign. No questions were asked regarding the representative agreements.

9. NEXT MEETING

The next Student Council meeting will be held on Wednesday 10 March, 6pm. Location to be confirmed.

MEETING CLOSED AT 7:40PM

SUMMARY OF ACTIONS:

- Action 1: Chair to distribute additional information sent from The Living Wage Movement to faculty Presidents.**
- Action 2: Chair to circulate the link to the policy to the Student Council.**
- Action 3: Double check and update the mailing list.**
- Action 4: Chair to email the Student Council requesting a photo and a short blurb for the AUSA website.**
- Action 5: Invitations of the SCG meeting to be sent out the members of the Student Council.**
- Action 6: Add to the SCG agenda about departments attempting to curb online exams.**
- Action 7: Email the Craccum editors requesting their attendance at the next Student Council meeting.**

SIGNED AS A TRUE AND ACCURATE RECORD

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anamika Harirajh", is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized, with the first part being a large, looped "A" followed by "namika" and "Harirajh" in a cursive script.

Anamika Harirajh, Chair of the AUSA Student Council