

## **B SEMESTER 2, WEEK 8- Monday 19 October 8:00 am**

### Items

1. Welcome, Apologies
2. Capacity Checkin
3. Shoutouts
4. Portfolio Updates
5. What's On This Week:
  - a. **Mon:**
  - b. **Tues:**
  - c. **Wed:** Interfac Circuit (10am via Zoom), Conquering Imposter Syndrome (10am via Zoom)
  - d. **Thurs:**
  - e. **Fri:**
  - f. **Sat:**
  - g. **Sun:**
6. Bylaws (AN)
7. End of Year Celebration (AN)
8. Open Letter to Vice-Chancellor
9. Without Prejudice

### **MINUTES**

**Meeting Opened:** 8:05am

**Present:** Miriam, Amer, Oscar, Max, Dani, Natalie, Alison, Alex, Mark, Donna, Daniel, Sarah Purvis, Sinem

**Late:** Rosie, Sarah Tang

**Apologies:** Barry, Patrick, Felicity

**Absent:** Abbey, Ibrahim, Deaundre Eden

### **Shoutouts**

(Sinem) shoutout to Deaundre for launch of social justice mentoring program

(Dani) shoutout to Oscar for final walk on the weekend

(Nat) shoutout to Dani for trivia! How was it?

(Dani) really good but not as big as the first one

## Whats on this week

(Oscar) push up challenge for mental health so we will probably try to do something for that during the next couple of weeks

(Amer) Nat do you want to have a chat about conquering imposter syndrome?

(Nat) This is the soft skills workshop I've been talking about all year. Conquering imposter syndrome is an event with CAPS. The event did get postponed for a while because of Covid. Event is at 10-11 am on Wednesday and the speaker is a psychologist who may provide a scientific background on imposter syndrome and give some tips for coping. The event is happening this Wednesday

(Alison) Education guide editor closing on Friday, good opportunity for people who are keen to get involved in editing guides. Encourage your friends or anyone you know to apply

(Oscar) I would be keen to pick everyones brains for ideas of how to generate engagement. Students at large are starting to feel a little bit fatigued from the whole zoom set up. What are everyones thoughts on that?

(Nat) I completely agree, it's the same with online classes. Spending all that time in front of the zoom call is one less engaging and two it kind of drags onwards. I'm not too sure of the solution either, it seems like an inevitable consequence of having events on Zoom. My committee and I are trying to address this. I would love to hear any suggestions

(Amer) Just to clarify Oscar, were you looking to do an alternative to zoom call?

(Oscar) Not an alternative but more so strategies to boost zoom attendance itself. I don't think a genuine alternative is viable given the general pandemic

(Amer) One thing that was raised in the senior exec chat that I brought up... is to potentially look into trying to market events a little bit earlier. Part of the reason why it's so important for us to put in requests 2 weeks before and to also check in with Barry to make sure we've got those things posted, is so we give enough notice for people who are looking to plan their calendar. Things have gotten busy this semester for students with a condensed academic calendar. This semester has been tougher for most students. So giving them enough notice about events is important. I guess another consideration as well apart from notice is to make sure we are closing that feedback loop, to make sure we find out what events the student body would want to attend and try to gain that knowledge rather than premeditating what events they want to go to. Ask committee members whether there needs to be shifts in events to better suit current

demands. Those are a few things to keep in mind I guess. Anyone else? If anyone has any other thoughts feel free to share it on slack.

## **BYLAWS**

(Amer) We left off discussing the advocacy policy bylaw. First things first, I added clause one in based on a comment suggested by Alison in a previous meeting. Alison do you think that's alright?

(Alison) I think it's fine. I think it kind of goes without saying that obviously if at any point we decide to no longer be with the ACNC that it will change.

(Amer) just to clarify as well we do have another bylaw under exec sustainability bylaw that sets out that we should be following what's under the ACNC as well as NSW Fair trading. We have obligations there.

(Amer) I added sub-clause C into clause 2 based on a suggestion made in the last meeting by Eden. This is whether the action would be unlawful.

(Max) I've given this a quick thought but I was just wondering if we think the reasons listed here are largely negative rather than any active considerations of when something is likely to be in SULLS best interest rather than not?

(Amer) That's an interesting observation. I think the reason for that, at least in my opinion Max is probably because we want to allow a wide scope to it and only try to discourage it if it could be negative in any way. Having said that what's in the best interest of SULLS is a very wide scope and I think the considerations made here under clause 2 are still broad for each exec to make those determinations. Especially if there aren't any negative impacts to the society as a whole. Do you think it would be better to frame some of these clauses in a positive light?

(Max) Yeah I'm just trying to think about how we could do that. I'm thinking based on how the bylaw is likely to work, it might be more effective to have it framed maybe in some instances like a presumption that something will be in the societies best interest which the considerations in clause 2 (*audio dropped for the remainder of the sentence*). I'm not really sure how that could be framed. Alternatively, we could have it as a separate list of subsections to suggest when something might be in the societies best interest.

(Amer) I think when discussing this previously, the reason why we opted not making that list was just to not narrow down exactly what the society should be advocating for, but rather leaving those options open and only offering guidance mainly when it would mainly not be ok to do it. If you look at clauses E and F or G then those are a little bit more positive than the first few in terms of what to consider.

(Max) I agree it's a lot less restrictive or it's easier to identify when something is going to be outside the society's interest rather than within it. I guess to make sure in the future that bylaw is being followed it might be important to have positive reasons for forming outside of the bylaw.

(Amer) What example would you suggest?

(Max) I'm trying to think of how it would be worded but I think it would be along lines of a presumption that something is within societies best interest unless certain factors that exclude it. It is hard to square that with what we have now. I agree that not all of the ss of 2 are actively negative like some just seem kind of neutral. So I'm not sure about adding that.

(Alex) I think clause E already contains what would effectively be a presumption if the action concerns or relates to the rights of SULLS members alongside maybe the reputational damage of not taking actions. Those are pretty much the only positive reasons I can think of for why we would take actions. So maybe it could include reputational damage of not taking action as one of our criteria in this list and then I think we do actually have all positive reasons that we would be considering. As well as the fact that it's obviously open for us to consider the other relevant considerations anyway. I think the point of this bylaw is to formalize and structure any discussion that future exec would have if and when they get to the point of considering advocacy in each individual issue and because of that I don't think we necessarily need that presumption because I think it's our natural state to want to do advocacy on most issues anyway. I think this specific bylaw is intended more to stop unreasonable advocacy as opposed to actively promoting advocacy because any VP Social Justice would do that.

(Max) I think I agree with most of that but just in terms of something being unreasonable I think that could be a self fulfilling prophecy in the way that we're structuring the discussion on advocacy or not begins with considerations that suggest what's unreasonable. I would want to recreate circumstances in which it is reasonable, which is just my concern about it. I agree that our natural inclination is going to be positive in most instances but I think we do want to not really create room for error.

(Alex) I agree I think one way to do this would be to think of a couple more reasons that would support advocacy and actually have that to start list rather than end list. It's not really the same as a legal presumption but in terms of the sort of subjective effect it might have on people reading the list, it might have some similar impact rather than locking people into advocacy in situations where they don't necessarily want to.

(Amer) Want to clarify one thing you did in your first comment was a suggestion to add a specific subclause here. Could you just clarify what that was?

(Alex) Yeah, so similar to D where the action would cause a negative response from the SULS community add whether a failure to take action could foreseeably cause a negative response from the SULS community.

(Amer) What do others think about this? Also noting the suggestion made to add some positive considerations as well. I personally think it is quite a holistic list in terms of considerations made. We purposely left it open with the last sub clause but I do understand and share the view that we can try and make this a bit more positive in terms of what's the starting point here. On that note, I'm just trying to see what would be best. Are we comfortable with the way that is now or do we want to have a little bit more time to have some more consideration of how best to draft this clause.

(Alex) As Max raised last week, I'm not sure if we should be taking more time in terms of finalizing the bylaws but perhaps what I said earlier about putting clause F now first, followed by clause E and then maybe clause G and then the rest of the clauses might make the list seem more positive. Just because as it stands all the negative criteria are first and they all stalk up before you get to a positive one, which as Max said makes you feel like it is a very negative list whereas if you put the positive ones first - I think the thing with advocacy is that a lot of the reasons for advocacy are few really important ones. So it's tough to make this a big list of reasons for advocacy, as well as the fact that it is very cause specific. But perhaps doing it this way may make it seem like a more positive list.

(Max) Just to quickly add to that I agree that the positive reasons are fewer but maybe more weighty reasons. So a solution might be rather than stipulating what positive reasons are, maybe just a provision that says how they should be balanced with negative considerations. Although it is not really sort of like a quantifiable assessment, it might just be more feasible than trying to say exactly what positive reasons are going to be.

(Alex) That's true, I think perhaps one way to do it may be to say 'in determining whether taking a certain action is in SULS best interest, the primary consideration is A) whether the action concerns a matter that relates to SULS members and then every other factor in this list are sort of like secondary considerations.

(Max) I think that's good but it does kind of create a presumption that something is in the societies best interest, as long as that would kind of obviate the concerns people had about this presumption.

(Amer) I guess for me I think that there are two considerations that could be made, one should all these considerations be taken on balance? I think the way it's currently structured one would assume that these are all relevant considerations to be taken. If we did decide to change it and put clause A as it currently states and then as a second point, secondary considerations would

be made to B all the way to I. I personally don't see any harm in doing this, I'm not 100% sure whether that would further clarify things. I would love to hear some other thoughts?

(Alex) After thinking about it I don't think it's our place to dictate to future execs what they should be caring about more or less, but rather it's our place to give a starting point to structure and formalize any discussion that they would come to themselves. So I think having this list of factors, what it does is it keeps the door more or less open for future execs to value some more than others. As I said earlier, I do think some execs would value the positive reasons more than the negative reasons. As Vish said they do tend to be more weighty and what we have now is probably as close to perfect as we're going to get. The only suggestion I would make is if we did take anything perhaps adding more factors, but again I think we do have a lot of factors. So I don't think we necessarily need to jog around and create these presumptions or clauses.

(Max) I agree with that and I think that's my biggest concern with having it start with the presumption, just in terms of - I guess I'm coming back to what the bylaw was originally when it comes to structuring discussion. I think to make the bylaw helpful rather than confusing I think it's just important that we delineate what the starting point actually is. I think it's good to start with that sort of positive consideration rather than the negative one because it does mean that it kind of replicates the process I think that we've had in our discussion so far. Like we usually tend to start with considerations of why it's important that we take a certain action and that's just kind of like the way these discussions should go. I guess I could see a certain stance in which without that clarification in the process the bylaw creates, a future executive might be considering why we should do something and then having them not consider what the active reasons in favour of them are.. It then becomes very unlikely that proper considerations for reasons in favour for them doing it. I think it just all comes down to how much we sort of trust that that intuitive process would come through with how future execs would do it. I think we probably can put that faith in future executives but I guess if we are trying to structure that discussion I don't see why we can't have a more complete approach to it.

(Amer) I agree with you. I also want to highlight that we have clause 1 which could potentially be the initial position. I think that's similar at least to most considerations we made this year and part of the reason we want to put this in bylaw is to avoid further conflict about advocacy in the future but also to note that there are many considerations that need to be made and these are a few.

(Amer) If no one has anything else to say on clause 2 then I'll quickly jump to clause 3. I added this in as suggested by Natalie in a previous meeting, what are our thoughts on that?

(Max) My question is just how we can determine what a reasonable member of SULLS would expect? I think we all assume that what we value the society should be doing is a reasonable view of it.

(Amer) Are you referring to personal views of executive members specifically?

(Max) Yes, if the test is whether or not the personal views of the members of the executive is whether it's something a reasonable member of society would expect, I feel like that could in practice be a bit circular, because I think we're all going to assume that what we think the society should be doing is reasonable and objective view of it? Just because I don't think any member of the exec will ever propose something without believing that it is on a reasonable and objective assessment not something the society should be doing.

(Amer) Do you reckon we could further clarify it if we possibly added something along the lines of 'collectively' so basically in terms of actioning it rather than the theory behind it, similar to what we've done this year where we've required the full executive to make the decision collectively? Rather a consideration could be made collectively to what a reasonable and objective person would want SULLS to do in this situation Would that help resolve that concern?

(Max) Yeah I'm just trying to think about it, I think at the end of all of this all decisions around advocacy if its significant enough that it's going to be in the bylaw, then it would have already been thought through collectively by the executive. I guess the effect of those words 'made collectively by the executive' might discourage people from proposing certain things where they think it might not be agreed to by the executive. I don't know if that is necessarily the worst thing.

(Amer) On balance do you think it's best to keep it in? I think it might be better in terms of how to best action this, sometimes in terms of bylaws... (*audio cut out*) ... sometimes it's nice to see this clarification so I would not be opposed to that change. Another consideration that Deandre raised was potentially putting in a clause about what we can and cannot do in terms of inviting members of parliament to events. What do some people think and how would it be best if we were to address that?

(Oscar) I think it might be better addressed somewhere in clause 2 rather than clause 3? It seems it something that fits better in the subsections within clause 2.

(Amer) Noing we only have 10 minutes left, maybe we could defer the vote till the next meeting or whether we could proceed to vote on it now.

Motion to vote on bylaws the way they stand (moved by Amer & seconded by Rosie)

- 14 in favour
- 1 abstention

Amer: For bylaws we usually try to have a unanimous vote on it

Miriam: In the Constitution it says we need to have a unanimous vote for it to pass

Max: I have concerns of how it operates but we can come back to it with another vote because I think we probably do have more of an interest in getting the bylaws done at this stage. My main concern- I think we resolved pretty much all my concerns about ss 2. One last thing I have concern about is the clause 3. It's pretty much going to be a personal view whether the advocacy is within the societies interest, so as written it might cause confusion. The things we've added in terms of 'collective consideration' and 'reasonable objective' I'm not sure it clarifies it as much as it would if we framed it as 'political views rather than personal views'

*Vote was then retaken and all votes were in favour of the motion*

## **END OF YEAR CELEBRATION**

(Amer) I want to thank the executive and committee members for hard work this year. We have about 150 people in total actively working within SULLS. In an ideal world we could meet in person to have an event potentially like a light lunch. A few considerations still have to be made. If that doesn't work I would still like to propose something via Zoom where we could come together to make a few speeches. Think of the best dates for you and your committees

(Rosie) from a logistical standpoint it might be hard to find a place that can fit all of us and comply with regulations. This could potentially cost a lot more money because you would need a much bigger place. It is something we can look into if you really want to try

(Alex) would be feasible for exec but not with sub-committees. A little bit bad for SULLS to be spending money on a formal lunch. We could do something nice with our executive and then encourage everyone to do something nice with their individual committee. Another question is whether this would be paid for by us or by SULLS, it might look a little bit bad if SULLS is spending SULLS money on a lunch for our own executive. That said a lunch might be quite reasonable as opposed to what we originally planned which was a formal event.

(Amer) This idea was floated between Alex, Rosie and I. There are different ways we can approach this, in an ideal world we could make this as nice as possible but there are limiting circumstances. I might post about it on Slack and would love to hear some comments on it. I would also like to note that Max added an open letter to the VC to the agenda so if anyone has any comments please read the document yourself. Can we come back to this next week?

(Max) Since this is time sensitive we might have a slack vote to see if this can go ahead.

(Amer) Can we maybe have a discussion on it for 3 or 4 days on slack and then give everyone an opportunity to vote?

(Max) Yeah I'll put the statement on slack and then give everyone by Wednesday to read it.

Meeting Close: 9:02