



Arc @ UNSW limited
SRC MEETING MINUTES
Monday, 2 October 2023
Online (TEAMS)
6:00 pm

Present: Paige Sedgwick, Reid Hou, Daniel Mulia, Pepsi Sharma, Nadia Pandoulis, Hannah Horton, Gina Elias, Corwin Ollis, Cherish Kuehlmann, Rebecca Blundell, Emma Terry, Chiara Moore, Shovan Bhattacharai, Jeremy Groh, Michael Rahme, Mitch Battersby,

In attendance: Zachary Morris, Alissa Foster, Amal Naser, Josh Chen, Michael Grenier, Naama Carlin, Noam Peleg, Jordana Silverstein, Nour Al Hammouri, Peter Slezak, Alex Ryvchin, Kim Stern

Apologies: Mya Thit Khet, Estell Mathew, Harrison Zheng, Dan Magee, Junias Tjanaria, Caleb Watts, Danielle Moutopoulos, Tanvi Vakkalagadda, Rosina Baumann, William Nguyen

Absent: N/A

1. Meeting Opening

The meeting opened at 6:20pm

1.1. Acknowledgement of Country

Completed by the SRC President.

1.2. Apologies

Apologies were received from M. Thit Khet, E. Mathew, H. Zheng, D. Magee, J. Tjanaria, C. Watts, D. Moutopoulos, T. Vakkalagadda, R. Baumann, W. Nguyen.

RESOLUTION

THAT the apologies received from M. Thit Khet, E. Mathew, H. Zheng, D. Magee, J. Tjanaria, C. Watts, D. Moutopoulos, T. Vakkalagadda, R. Baumann, W. Nguyen are accepted.

CARRIED

1.3. Conflicts of interest disclosure

N/A

1.4. Previous minutes

1.4.1. Confirmation: 4 September 2023

RESOLUTION

THAT the minutes from the SRC meetings held on 4 September 2023 are accepted as a true and accurate record.

CARRIED

1.4.2. Matters arising/ action list

The action list was noted.

1.5. Meeting administration

1.5.1. Trigger Warning Announcements

Trigger warnings announcements were made in relation to Indigenous rights, Palestine Israel conflict, and LGBTI+ discussions.

1.5.2. Safer Spaces Policy Reminder

The Safer Spaces Policy was read, and key expectations reiterated to attendees of the meeting.

1.5.3. Selection of meeting observer

C. Kuehlmann was appointed as meeting observer.

1.5.4. Items flagged for immediate discussion

Order was suspended with the leave of the Council. The minutes reflect the order of events.

2. Matters for Decision

2.4. Appointment of Councillor B – Shriya Shivakumar

The paper was taken as read.

RESOLUTION

THAT the election of S. Shivakumar to Councillor B is carried.

CARRIED

2.1. The UNSW SRC adopts the IHRA working definition of antisemitism and stands against antisemitism

The paper was taken as read.

An amendment to the motion was proposed:

- THAT the UNSW SRC restates its opposition to antisemitism and recommits to fighting against racism and the far-right, and
- THAT the UNSW SRC recognises that Judaism and Zionism are not the same and therefore opposition to Israel's occupation and oppression of Palestinians should not be conflated with anti-Semitism.

G. Elias spoke for the above amendment to the motion:

- The proposed IHRA definition conflates criticism of Israel and antizionism with antisemitism.
- 7 Australian universities have refused to adopt the definition, with only 2 -3 adopting it.
- The UN have stated that the definition poses a threat to freedom of speech, academic freedom and the right to speak freely for Palestine.
- A request for the extension of the SRC's usual speaking time to allow robust conversation.

P. Sezak spoke for the above amendment:

- P. Sezak provided an overview of their family history within Nazi labour camps, and experiences of antisemitism.
- Antisemitism cannot be isolated from human rights concerns and antiracism programs.
- The IHRA definition of antisemitism is the deliberate manifestation of policy to shut down criticism of Israel.

A. Foster spoke against the amendment:

- A recent survey revealed that over 64% of the Jewish student community have experienced antisemitism with over 50% hiding their identity and 1/5 avoiding campus entirely.
- The amendment was not crafted in consultation with Jewish students and too often the experiences of antisemitism have been politicised.
- The IHRA definition and examples of antisemitism is not an all-encompassing list of what antisemitism is, it is an educational framework.

K. Stern spoke for the amendment:

- The fact that there are many Palestinians in refugee camps show that Israel is a racist endeavour. If the IHRA definition is adopted, it will inevitably be an attack on the freedom of speech, academic freedom, and pro-Palestine activism.

- The IHRA definition has been disowned by the writer of it, as it has been used repeatedly to destruct Palestine activism, versus stifling genuine antisemitism.

Z. Morris spoke against the amendment:

- Antisemitism is a very real issue on-campus.
- During the previous SRC meeting, Z. Morris called out for students to reach out to him and other Jewish students on-campus to discuss how to tackle antisemitism together. However, no contact or consultation was ever made.
- There is a dire need to act and to listen to Jewish students. There are Jewish students hiding their Jewish identity as they do not feel safe.

A. Naser spoke for the amendment:

- The IHRA definition has the potential to stifle political discourse and create further political ramifications.
- Anti-Palestinian racism is experienced by people daily. The IHRA definition will increase anti-Palestinian racism and create unsafe places on campus.

Voting was carried out for a proposal to add one "FOR" and one "AGAINST" speakers.

MOTION

THAT the SRC adds one speaker "FOR" and one speaker "AGAINST" in relation to the Amendment to Motion 2.1.

NOT CARRIED

The SRC voted on the amendment to the motion.

MOTIONS

THAT The UNSW SRC restates its opposition to anti-semitism and recommits to fighting against racism and the far-right.

THAT the UNSW SRC recognises that Judaism and Zionism are not the same and therefore opposition to Israel's occupation and oppression of Palestinians should not be conflated with anti-Semitism.

NOT CARRIED

The original motion was debated.

A. Ryvchin spoke for the motion:

- The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance is not a lobby group, but an alliance of 35 democratic countries that come together under the mission of ensuring that future generations can understand the causes of Holocaust and reflect on its consequences.
- Voting no to the IHRA definition equates to stating that the Jewish people's experiences are a fabrication, and that Jewish voices do not matter.

A. Foster spoke for the motion:

- IHRA is an education tool to better understand how antisemitism manifests.
- Everyone should work together with Jewish students to amplify their voice.

N. Carlin spoke against the motion:

- As a Jewish Israeli, N. Carlin notes that there is no consensus about the definition. The Israeli and Palestinian conflict is embedded in the definition and conflates antisemitism and antizionism.
- The definition puts academics who are critical of Israel at a precarious position publicly.
- The definition was not used to protect students, but rather used to target academics and students at universities in US and UK that have adopted the IHRA definition.
- The Jewish University Experience Survey is flawed as it was sent to Zionist students.

A. Foster spoke for the motion:

- The Jewish University Experience Survey was conducted through the Social Research Centre, where it was also sent to Jewish Student Clubs and was publicly made available in centres throughout Jewish communities. It did not ask about students' connection to Israel, but rather about their experiences on-campus.
- A main takeaway from the survey is that students are hiding their identities. Regardless of their opinion of the Israeli Government, students are unwilling to engage in these conversations. IHRA is about understanding and allowing people to criticise Israel. It does not make someone antisemitic. The IHRA definition is about the recognition, education and understanding of Jewish people.

G. Elias spoke against the motion:

- P. Sezak and N. Carlin and many others show examples explicitly where we should criticise Israel as a racist endeavour.
- The writer noted that the definition has been weaponised and is used to silence critics of Israel. The SRC should stand against such racism.

A. Foster spoke for the motion:

- It is important to listen to the Jewish community. With regards to antisemitism, the IHRA definition is endorsed by all mainstream Australia Jewish organisations.
- The IHRA definition states that criticism of Israel level the same as any nation and cannot be considered antisemitic. The definition is a guide for conversations and for people to understand the nuances to antisemitism.

RESOLUTION

THAT the UNSW SRC adopts the IHRA working definition of antisemitism and stands against antisemitism.

CARRIED

2.2. The UNSW SRC Condemns the Labor Governments Housing Australia Future Funds (HAFF) and supports the Greens in opposing it

The motion was removed by the writer.

2.3. The UNSW SRC opposes the Labor Governments attacks on LGBTI rights

The paper was taken as read.

E. Terry spoke for the motion:

- LGBTI people have been historically oppressed by religious institutions. Students and staff have on many occasions been expelled by religious organisations.
- The SRC should criticise the Labor Government for passing the Religious Vilification Bill and the Religious Discrimination Bill.

A guest spoke for the motion:

- The Bills are means for the Far Right to reopen their attack on LGBTI people.
- The State Labor Government had even hosted an anti-trans public forum.

P. Sharma spoke against the motion:

- The Queer Collective held an internal vote to gather Queer students' opinions on the Bill.
- The Queer Collective as a result find no justification in opposing the Bill. There are protections for freedom of speech and for those traditionally oppressed by religious groups.

K. Stern spoke for the motion:

- Despite the Queer Collective votes, there are inevitably queer students on both sides of the argument. The votes are not representative of the whole queer community on-campus.

C. Kuehlmann spoke for the motion:

- The Religious Vilification Bill only benefits the motives of the Far Right and the Christian Right.
- Amending the Anti-discrimination Act to protect the rights of religious organisations is not about protecting minorities.

MOTION

THAT the UNSW SRC opposes the Labor Governments attacks on LGBTI rights.

NOT CARRIED

2.5. The SRC Condemns the use of academic settings to promote transphobia

The paper was taken as read.

P. Sharma spoke for the motion:

- Transphobia has mostly been the issue in ADA and Social Sciences Schools. Queer issues were prevalent in course content, where content was framed incorrectly.
- The Queer Collective is also reaching out to the University regarding the issue, and would like the SRC's support in it.

P. Sedgwick spoke for the motion:

- There is still much work to do in this space. Students should not be worried about their course content.

C. Kuehlmann spoke against the motion:

- The SRC should not be calling the University to censor academic freedom, which may open doors to further issues. More so, the SRC should oppose bigotry.
- There is right-wing politics in many courses on-campus. The SRC should organise a protest against staff whose views are not welcome.

E. Terry spoke against the motion:

- Transgender people are willing to speak out. The SRC should speak out in the public sphere.
- Whether it is this motion or the motion opposing the Religious Discrimination Bill, the Government is racist in many issues.

P. Sharma spoke for the motion:

- This motion is not asking people to hide their opinions, but rather simply asking the University to not promote misinformation.

RESOLUTION

THAT the SRC Condemns the use of academic settings to promote transphobia.

CARRIED

2.6. UNSW SRC will no longer hold meetings on public holidays

The paper was taken as read.

D. Mulia spoke for the motion:

- The SRC should not work on public holidays.

P. Sedgwick spoke for the motion:

- Sending out late papers and performing work on public holidays is not ideal.

RESOLUTION

THAT UNSW SRC will no longer hold meetings on public holidays.

CARRIED

2.7. UNSW SRC support SRC Election Reforms

The paper was taken as read.

H. Horton spoke for the motion:

- It is undemocratic that ticket groups make deals without transparency to students.. It shows no strengths in actual politics. Such deals should be publicised.

C. Kuehlmann spoke against the motion:

- Nowadays, many students are unaware of the SRC elections, and having 65% of eligible voter turnout is an unachievable and unrealistic number to reach.
- It should be up to the individuals and tickets whether they run candidates for certain positions. A ticket may not want to run for every position on the SRC.

D. Mulia spoke for the motion:

- This is about making the election a more democratic process.
- It was clarified that the 65% means 65% of students who vote, not 65% of all eligible students.

A guest spoke against the motion:

- The problems posed in the motion are political and strategic problems. The key is in the SRC standing for activism and fighting as a left-wing group. The answer is not about passing a motion, where the motion itself is undemocratic.

D. Mulia spoke for the motion:

- 65% is an arbitrary majority number.

MOTION

THAT UNSW SRC support SRC Election Reforms.

NOT CARRIED

2.8. The UNSW SRC commits to a Yes vote for the Voice and organising against the racism of the No campaign

The paper was taken as read.

Two amendments were proposed for the motion, of which the writer agreed to:

- Replace "Indigenous Aboriginal Voice" with "Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Voice"
- With regards to the proposed public posts, statements and call-outs on social media, the content promoted will be endorsed by the Indigenous Collective beforehand.

G. Elias spoke for the motion:

- The racist No Campaign has been on the rise with the Referendum upcoming. The SRC needs to actively fight back against the No Campaign.
- The No Campaign is against the real oppression that Indigenous people are facing today. By stating that the Voice will divide the race, the No Campaign is, in reality, taking back Indigenous rights.
- Mainstream politicians are wrongfully stating that colonialism is good.

K. Stern spoke for the motion:

- The No Campaign seems to be winning; hence it is even more important now that the SRC tackles the No forces, who are introducing Trump style politics.

A guest spoke for the motion:

- The Labor Party is carrying out Australian racism currently.
- There are a many Indigenous people in need of resources, but the Labor Government is ignoring their needs.
- The Government rejected about speaking on the topic of racism and has no intention of talking about it actively.

RESOLUTION

THAT the UNSW SRC commits to a Yes vote for the Voice and organising against the racism of the No campaign.

CARRIED

3. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION

3.5. Arc should send a mass email regarding SRC nominations each year

The paper was taken as read.

Discussions:

- The Paddington Representation Officer noted that he and some other friends did not receive email notifications regarding SRC nominations.
- The President noted that Arc sends newsletters containing election and nomination information and noted herself having received such emails.

3. Office Bearer Reports

3.4. President

N/A

3.5. General Secretary

N/A

3.6. Education Office Bearer

Updates:

- There was a large housing rally for the "Get a Room" campaign. Students have been engaged and keen in the rally.
- A "Protest against Vice Chancellor" rally occurred last week.

3.7. Environment Office Bearer

Updates:

- The Environment Collective is planning for the October 9th protest on-campus.
- The Environment Officer is contacting UNSW Sustainability to build events for October 9th.
- The Cross Collective Working Bee has been in strong development.

3.8. Ethnocultural Office Bearer

N/A

3.9. Indigenous Office Bearer

N/A

3.10. International Students Office Bearer

N/A

3.11. Queer Office Bearer

The report was taken as read.

The Queer Officers formed a working group within the Queer Collective based on the transphobia motion. The Queer Officers are working with UNSW faculties, starting with ADA, to reduce transphobia at a university level.

3.12. Welfare Office Bearer

N/A

3.13. Women's Office Bearer

N/A

3.14. Students with Disabilities Office Bearer

N/A

3.15. Paddington Domestic Officer

The report was taken as read.

3.16. Paddington International Officer

The report was taken as read.

3.17. Paddington Representation Officer

The report was taken as read.

The two Cool Down days held at Paddington were a big success.

4. Councillor Reports

4.1. Tanvi Vakkalagadda

N/A

4.2. Emma Terry

N/A

4.3. Dan Magee

N/A

4.4. Chiara Moore

N/A

4.5. Gina Elias

N/A

4.6. Jeremy Groh

N/A

4.7. Shovan Bhattarai

N/A

4.8. Junias Tjanaria

N/A

4.9. Corwin Ollis

N/A

4.10. Mitch Battersby

The report was taken as read.

4.11. Nadia Pandoulis

N/A

2.9. The UNSW supports Students Against Placement Poverty

The paper was taken as read.

C. Kuehlmann spoke for the motion:

- Students are often required to go on placement, where they work for free.
- Many industries that require student placements, such as nursing and social work are in crisis, understaffed and have terrible conditions.

P. Sedgwick spoke for the motion:

- It is difficult for students to sustain themselves if they are not paid for work.
- There are faculty models based on partnerships with sponsors for students to get paid, e.g., the Engineering Faculty has ruled out unpaid placement, as they partner with sponsors. It is important for the University to roll-out this model across all faculties.

C. Ollis speaks for the motion:

- The situation is at its worst. More students work more than they study at any time. This is worsened by a number of industries mandating students to perform free work to receive certifications.
- The SRC should fight against this issue and more generally about education and welfare issues moving forward.

RESOLUTION

THAT the UNSW supports Students Against Placement Poverty.

CARRIED

5. Matters for Noting [discussed only on exception basis]

N/A

6. Meeting Finalisation

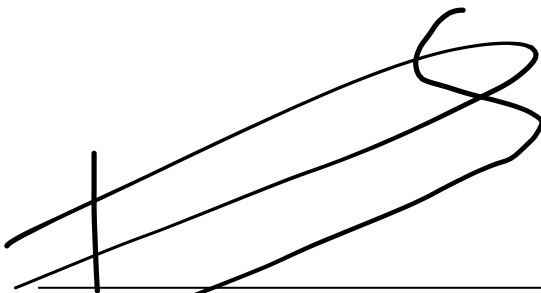
6.1. Meeting evaluation

It was unfortunate that the IHRA definition motion was passed considering how controversial it is. In the future, the SRC should allow extended speaking time and extended number of speakers on controversial matters. It was worth having a lot of political discussion although a long meeting. The SRC should also have more in-person meetings.

6.2. Next meeting date: 6 November 2023

6.3. Meeting close

The meeting closed at 8:40pm.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, written over a horizontal line. The signature is slanted upwards to the right and features a prominent loop at the end.

SRC President Signature – Paige Sedgwick

Date: 16/11/2023