



UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY UNION

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UNIVERSITY OF SYDNEY UNION SECRETARIAT

The attached minutes have been accepted by The Debates Committee by resolution as a true and accurate record of the events of the meeting held on 31 July 2008.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Bateman', written over a horizontal line.

Chair – Patrick Bateman

21 - 8 - 08

Date



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEBATES COMMITTEE
HELD AT 5:00 P.M. ON THURSDAY 31 JULY 2008
IN THE READING ROOM, HOLME BUILDING**

PRESENT

MEMBERS:

Ruchir Punjabi, President (*ex officio*)
Alice Dixon, Vice President (*ex officio*)
Patrick Bateman, Chair
Daniel Wodak, Director of Debates
Naomi Hart, Immediate Past Director of Debates
Ellen Ferrington Michaelis
Andrew Garrett
Sam Greenland
Kishan Jasani
James Johnston
Giselle Kenny
Tim Mooney
Stephanie Paton

VISITORS:

Courtney Tight, Director
Angela Evans
Assel Matayeva
Gerard McCarthy

UNION STAFF:

Alistair Cowie, Director Student Programmes
Khym Scott, Committee Secretary

The Chair declared the meeting open at 5:11pm.

1. APOLOGIES AND LEAVE OF ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mr. Douglas Thompson, Ms. Katherine Connolly, Mr. Patrick Wall and Ms. Sophie Stone, a request for late arrival was received from Ms. Melissa Brooks and requests for early departure were received from Mr. Ruchir Punjabi and Mr. Sam Greenland.

DC 106/08 RESOLVED to accept apologies from Mr. Douglas Thompson, Ms. Katherine Connolly, Mr. Patrick Wall and Ms. Sophie Stone, to grant late

arrival to Ms. Melissa Brooks, and to grant early departure to Mr. Ruchir Punjabi and Mr. Sam Greenland.

Stephanie Paton / Andrew Garrett

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Minutes of the previous meeting held 5 June 2008 were considered.

DC 107/08 RESOLVED to accept the minutes of the previous meeting held 5 June 2008 as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

Andrew Garrett / Naomi Hart

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no business arising from the minutes.

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

4.1 Reports

4.1.1 Director of Debates

The Director of Debates reported that since the previous meeting the Schools Day and Australs had both occurred, and that the Social Debate was held last night which he noted had been over-catered.

DC 108/08 RESOLVED to thank all participants of the Social Debate, with especial thanks to Mr. Patrick Wall.

Acclamation

The Director of Debates further reported that he was currently attempting to set a time and date with the Great Hall as the venue in mind for the VERGE Debate. He informed the Committee that he had approached several people to take part in the debate, but as no one was available he was open to further suggestions.

Mr. Andrew Garrett asked whether it was worth being flexible in the topic of the debate. The Director of Debates added that they would still need people good to invite. Ms. Angela Evans suggested Hugo Weaving.

The Director of Debates reminded the Committee of the trivia event to be held Wednesday after Regionals.

DC 109/08 RESOLVED to accept the Report of the Director of Debates.

Andrew Garrett / Tim Mooney

4.1.2 Honorary Treasurer for Debates

Mr. Sam Greenland conveyed apologies to the Union Competitions Directors for his lack of attendance in Semester Two due to unavailability.

Ms. Stephanie Paton asked how much money was in the budget for the Women's Tournament. The Immediate Past Director of Debates thought it was approximately \$5,000.00 in 2007. Mr. Greenland advised that he would meet with the Director Student Programmes to clarify.

DC 110/08 **RESOLVED** to accept the Report of the Honorary Treasurer for Debates.

Andrew Garrett / Naomi Hart

4.1.3 Intervarsity Director

Ms. Giselle Kenny reported on the successes of the Australs teams. She informed the Committee that out of the three proposals taken to Australs one had been passed, and it was now possible to send more than six teams at the discretion of the organisers, however a cap still existed on the number of teams which could break and there are no POIs.

Ms. Kenny advised the Committee that Monash University is to hold Australs in 2009.

Ms. Kenny asked the Committee to consider setting the dates of the Sydney Mini, suggesting the weekend of 22 November 2008. The Director of Debates advised that it was almost certainly the same date as Law Ball. Ms. Kenny suggested that if there were no other objections, organisation should begin and suggestions for Chief Adjudicator and Deputy Chief Adjudicator should soon be canvassed.

Mr. Garrett asked who would convene the tournament. Ms. Kenny advised that it would be the Intervarsity Directors. Ms. Paton put that it should be both the outgoing and incoming Intervarsity Directors.

Mr. Tim Mooney stated that it would be difficult to suggest adjudicators while not knowing who was going to Worlds. Ms. Kenny also reminded the Committee that the dates 4 and 5 December needed to be confirmed for Worlds drafts. She suggested revising the selection list for Australs.

Mr. Mooney proposed that Mr. Ivan Ah Sam be asked for a list. Ms. Kenny asked the Committee to forward suggestions for herself and Mr. Patrick Wall to begin organising.

Ms. Kenny further reported that Mr. Wall was sending CVs for Worlds registration, with twenty adjudicators and three teams. She advised that they were on a waiting list for more teams.

The President passed on the congratulations of the Vice-Chancellor to the Australs contingent.

Mr. Garrett asked the Committee to consider finding out whether places at Worlds were to be awarded on a personal basis, and to make it explicit from the outset. Mr. Greenland answered that spots would be made on a personal, rather than an institutional, basis. The Director Student Programmes advised checking how this would work with funding and determining whom selected people would represent at the tournament.

The Director of Debates informed the Committee that a meeting had been scheduled with Mr. Ah Sam and much would be clarified at the next meeting of the Committee. The Immediate Past Director of Debates observed that if people were offered individual spots there would be a problem with not offering funding as those offered may take unfunded spots and leave funded spots to others. The Director Student Programmes foresaw difficulty in dividing funding evenly.

DC 111/08 RESOLVED to accept the Report of the Intervarsity Director.

Andrew Garrett / Naomi Hart

4.1.4 Women's Directors

Ms. Paton reported that the Women's Tournament would be held this Semester with trials held Wednesday 17 September 2008 and the Tournament a week and a half later.

DC 112/08 RESOLVED to move the discussion *in camera*.

Andrew Garrett / Sam Greenland

DC 113/08 RESOLVED to invite visitors to remain.

Andrew Garrett / Sam Greenland

DC 114/08 RESOLVED to move the discussion *ex camera*.

Naomi Hart / Tim Mooney

DC 115/08 RESOLVED to accept the Report of the Women's Director.

James Johnston / Daniel Wodak

DC 116/08 RESOLVED to suspend Standing Orders and move to item **4.1.7 – Schools' Programmes Directors**.

Sam Greenland / Andrew Garrett

4.1.7 Schools' Programmes Directors

Ms. Ferrington Michaelis reported that the basic problem with the Schools Day was that they had too many attendees, with a total of 93 teams and considerably less volunteers. She noted that originally she was worried that there would be not enough teams and had as such extended the registration date. She added that \$8,500.00 had been raised, and sixty-eight percent of attended students were female. It was noted that most schools in attendance were private schools, with thirteen public schools and with a majority of selective schools. Ms. Ferrington Michaelis advised that the wide range and new schools were a result of a combination of hers and Ms. Paton's databases.

Ms. Ferrington Michaelis recommended that a cap be placed on the number of attending schools, and that Schools Days not be power-paired.

Mr. Mooney expressed concern about placing a cap on the Day. Ms. Ferrington Michaelis pointed out that they were not providing that which they had told participating schools they would. Mr. Mooney suggested splitting the day to include staggered and shorter speeches and preparation days. He added that profit potential should not be limited and that all volunteers should be begged to attend. Ms. Ferrington Michaelis confirmed that she had everyone available, and expressed thanks to Mr. Steve Hind as Chief Adjudicator, Ms. Katherine Connolly and Mr. Greenland as Tab Directors and all Committee Members who adjudicated.

The Director of Debates asked about the recommendation of power-pairing. Ms. Ferrington Michaelis advised that an awareness of the cap was needed, and that it took a long time on the day for attendees to move between rooms which caused delays.

Mr. Greenland observed that in terms of the number of adjudicators present it was unfortunate that only one person from the top two teams of Australs was present for the entire day. He asked the Committee to consider making those people funded by the USU attend compulsorily.

Mr. Greenland asked whether any follow up had been made on the negative feedback received on the day such as a partial refund. Mr. Garrett added that the structure would be good to fix for the next Schools Day and informed that Committee that he had been advised on the day of schools not returning. He supported the idea of sending a letter to schools. The Director of Debates reported that this had been done.

Ms. Paton opposed the idea of a partial refund. She further stated that credible tournaments could not be run if not power-paired, and that it was not time consuming. She advised that when tournaments were not power-paired that it decreased the quality of the experience of those teams paired wrongly, and that if power-paired adjudicators with fewer credentials could be put with worse teams.

The Director Student Programmes confirmed that the CEO and the President were concerned that the damage caused was not insignificant, and reminded

the Committee that it was the second time in a row a similar situation had occurred. He stated that he understood that it was difficult when too large, and suggested more or smaller events. He added that there was a possible contractual obligation for those USU-funded adjudicators to attend, and suggested investigating other incentives. He recommended that once the structure of the day was devised that the administration of the day be given to the Programmes Department to work closely with a Member of the Committee.

[Ms. Assel Matayeva departed from the meeting at 5:47pm.]

The Director Student Programmes further recommended that a working party be formed to consult Ms. Ferrington Michaelis' recommendations to develop a procedural document.

The Vice President reported that she had recently attended a series of meetings regarding where to go with the Schools Programme and its professionalism. She commended Ms. Ferrington Michaelis for her integrity on the day and her developed report. She identified a need to limit the number of attending schools to prevent logistical nightmares, and a placing of too much responsibility on few Committee Members, and suggested a cap of forty to fifty teams and a two-day split. The Vice President expressed concern that the USU may be perceived as being greedy. She agreed with Ms. Paton regarding power-pairing and reminded the Committee that compulsory activities were originally in the points system.

The Vice President stated that in the interest of fostering the USU brand, god will and professionalism that it would be unfortunate to lost one-quarter profit of the day in refunds but better as a whole. Mr. Garrett asked for a clarification of the refund amount. The Vice President clarified that the amount was twenty-five percent of total revenue as suggested by the CEO.

The Immediate Past Director of Debates echoed a commendation of Ms. Ferrington Michaelis. She reminded the Committee that it was important not to lump the Programme on an unwilling Committee Member that that it was important to assist that Member. She suggested in the interest of making the day more manageable first round preparation and clearer ballot papers, and expressed interest in previously attended schools mentoring new schools. The Immediate Past Director of Debates opposed the idea of refunds, observing that some schools were happy and it would be difficult to monitor which schools did want a refund. She further supported the suggestion of compulsory activities.

Ms. Evans identified that there was a general lack of empathy of running debates for Year 7s compared to university students. She suggested redressing the allocated time between the time of the draw and walking between rooms. She further suggested holding a meeting for the adjudicators beforehand. Ms. Ferrington Michaelis informed the Committee that a meeting for adjudicators was meant to occur, but time had run out.

The Director of Debates observed that some faults could have been predicted and prevented and other could not have been, such as the fire alarm and building evacuation. He suggested running a larger tournament and arbitrarily dividing the teams into two debates and power-pairing within each division. He stated that power-pairing was not necessary especially without tab-folding, and further suggested allocating the tournament rooms at the start of the day with a random allocation.

Ms. Paton stated that Macquarie University runs the best Schools Day by providing topics beforehand; giving teams a fifteen minute preparation time once told their sides, and capping the tournament at sixty teams. She added that they charged a higher rate of \$120.00. She expressed disdain for compulsory funded activities.

The Director of Debates added that he also opposed compulsory funded activities, saying that those who were not present provide huge amounts to the Debates community.

The President emphasised congratulations to Ms. Ferrington Michaelis, and observed that it was good to see such passion in an event. He further supported moving the programme to Student Programmes, and supported proposed refunds or other forms of support, stating that the USU does not expect the Committee to generate money.

[Mr. Ruchir Punjabi and Ms. Alice Dixon departed from the meeting at 6:01pm.]

Mr. Greenland believed that power-pairing was not an issue of time, and supported the idea of a split-tab and room allocation. He observed that Year 7 children do not respond to delays, and that there was an expectation from the teachers. He stated that the tournament appeared ad hoc and recommended appreciation the difference between kids and adults. He further supported compulsory funded activities, and suggested docking points from those who arrived late. He also believed that those who contribute a lot to the Debates community gain a lot.

[Ms. Alice Dixon returned to the meeting at 6:03pm.]

Mr. Greenland further stated that the protection of the adjudicators present needs to be addressed, and informed the Committee that Ms. Ferrington Michaelis took the brunt of the teachers' frustration to protect other adjudicators. He recommended that it be made to teachers that the adjudicators are not responsible for the tournament's organisation. He also supported the proposed refunds, identifying that it was good for the brand of the USU and as they did not provide the service promised. He expressed concern at charging a higher rate next time.

[Ms. Angela Evans and Mr. Sam Greenland departed from the meeting at 6:05pm.]

The Director Student Programmes stated that it may have been better for Ms. Ferrington Michaelis if a meeting had been held prior to the tournament, and suggested establishing a working party.

Ms. Courtney Tight supported moving the programme to USU staff.

Mr. Mooney claimed it was bizarre to give preparation time at all, and suggested giving topics beforehand. He also stated that moving the programme to USU staff would solve problems relating to points and point docking.

Ms. Ferrington Michaelis reported that the USU staff she had worked with were incredibly helpful, namely Ms. Rowena Manalo and Mr. Khym Scott. She informed the Committee that information was being presented which she was not aware of prior to the meeting, and remarked that she should have held a subgroup or asked for assistance earlier. She stated that the Schools programme was incoherent, and would like to have something in writing for the handover. She also informed the Committee that Ms. Misa Han had assisted on the day before the tournament.

Mr. James Johnston agreed that moving the programme to USU staff was good and supported the idea of a manual. He further supported proposed refunds to assist the perception of which University's Schools Day each school should attend, especially those who attended for the first time. He also supported capping the number of teams.

Mr. Garrett supported refunding twenty-five percent of revenue, and asked that the CEO be informed of the support from the Committee.

The Director Student Programmes informed the Committee that the decision would be made by the President and the CEO in evaluation of budgetary limits.

Ms. Kenny concluded that the format of the tournament needed to be solved, suggesting establishing a working party.

Ms. Paton reminded the Committee that compulsory funded activities were removed for a reason, and believed it would be offensive to ask for written submissions of exception.

Ms. Ferrington Michaelis supported the proposed refunds, advising that she didn't promise schools a handbook for a reason, but that it would be useful. She informed the Committee that she had received queries, and that there was still interest in it.

The Director of Debates stated that it was potentially better if the handbook was made immediately and sent off to the schools, being good for the USU brand and professionalism, and better than simply a refund.

Mr. Gerard McCarthy identified a further issue of the standard of adjudicators, believing that first years were unskilled and suggested looking at a training day. Mr. Garrett advised that there would be seminars held in Semester Two. Mr. Mooney believed that debaters and adjudicators shared the same set of skills. Ms. Ferrington Michaelis opposed this belief. The Director of Debates suggested that a seminar for adjudicators be held at the beginning of 2009. Ms. Kenny suggested that adjudicators may be of a higher standard if given a fifteen minute briefing. Ms. Paton advised that the adjudicators at Schools Day were better than at all other universities.

- DC 117/08** **RESOLVED** to establish a Working Party to:
be chaired by Mr. Patrick Bateman;
consider compiling a document outlining the procedures of Schools Day Tournaments;
be comprised of the Director of Debates, the Vice President, Ms. Ellen Ferrington Michaelis, Mr. Sam Greenland, Mr. Ivan Ah Sam, Ms. Stephanie Paton and Mr. Tim Mooney;
be minuted;
be promoted via regular measures;
conclude its activities at the completion of the reporting of the first meeting;
to report to the Committee; and
to hold the first meeting in the coming week.

Daniel Wodak / Naomi Hart

- DC 118/08** **RESOLVED** to formally acknowledge and thank Ms. Ellen Ferrington Michaelis.

Acclamation

- DC 119/08** **RESOLVED** to formally acknowledge and thank Mr. Steve Hind, Ms. Katherine Connolly, Mr. Sam Greenland, those Committee Members who adjudicated, Ms. Rowena Manalo and Mr. Khym Scott.

Acclamation

[Mr. Alistair Cowie departed from the meeting at 6:22pm.]

- DC 120/08** **RESOLVED** to accept the Report of the Schools' Programme Directors.

Tim Mooney / James Johnston

4.1.5 Communications Director

Mr. Kishan Jasani had nothing to report.

Mr. Jasani asked when the website would be functioning. The Vice President advised that the new USU website should have gone live last night, but had been delayed by three weeks. She informed the Committee that the Debates programme should be able to run from the USU website and that there was

concern if run externally. She encouraged Mr. Jasani, Mr. Garrett, the Director of Debates and the Chair to see Ms. Rachael Chan and Ms. Claudia Crosariol.

Mr. Jasani also asked whether the lecture theatre in Carslaw Building had a video camera, suggesting the possibility of taping seminars and uploading them to the website. The Director of Debates was unsure but advised that it would be possible to set up.

4.1.6 Union Competitions Directors

The Immediate Past Director of Debates reported on IVs, advising that there was no Chief Adjudicator yet, and that the pro/am tournament to be held 21 September 2008 was as yet unplanned.

Mr. Garrett enquired as to whether an informal meeting had taken place to make the tournament one day long. The Immediate Past Director of Debates advised that it had, and decided that it was difficult to commit to more than one day. She reminded the Committee that five minis and two tournaments were already being held this Semester, and it couldn't run if all weekends were committed. She added that it would be efficient for room hire charges.

DC 122/08 **RESOLVED** to accept the Report of the Union Competitions Directors.

Tim Mooney / Ellen Ferrington Michaelis

4.1.8 Social Directors

Mr. Garrett had nothing to report.

The Vice President asked when trivia was being held. The Director of Debates advised that it was to be on Wednesday. Mr. Jasani asked what questions had been selected. Mr. Garrett informed him that it was an open mix.

DC 123/08 **RESOLVED** to grant the Committee a time extension of up to thirty minutes.

Daniel Wodak / Ellen Ferrington Michaelis

DC 124/08 **RESOLVED** to accept the Report of the Social Directors.

Tim Mooney / Ellen Ferrington Michaelis

4.1.9 Development Officer

Mr. Mooney reported that the demonstration debate was held last night and it had gone well.

[Ms. Alice Dixon departed from the meeting at 6:29pm.]

He further reported that the world champion team would be holding the BP seminar next week, and there would be a 'how to adjudicate' seminar the week after.

DC 125/08 **RESOLVED** to accept the Report of the Development Officer.

Stephanie Paton / Andrew Garrett

5. **OTHER BUSINESS**

Mr. Jasani advised that he would check Carslaw Building for video taping equipment and facilities.

Ms. Kenny expressed concern that with all minis and tournaments coming up the Committee required a functioning Treasurer. The Vice President disputed the myth of inaccessibility to the programmes' budget. The Chair asked whether Mr. Greenland did not want to be Treasurer. The Vice President clarified that it should be fine by the next meeting.

DC 126/08 **RESOLVED** to thank and congratulate Mr. Patrick Bateman for chairing the meeting.

Acclamation

6. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held at 5:00pm on Thursday 21 August in The Reading Room, Holme Building.

7. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

With no other business to be attended to the Chair declared the meeting closed at 6:33pm.