



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 12 March 2009.

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

Chair – Patrick Bateman

16.04.09

Date



**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE DEBATES COMMITTEE
HELD AT 5:00 P.M. ON THURSDAY 12 MARCH 2009
IN THE READING ROOM, HOLME BUILDING**

PRESENT

MEMBERS:

Ruchir Punjabi, President (*ex officio*)
Alice Dixon, Vice-President (*ex officio*)
Patrick Bateman, Chair
Douglas Thompson, Deputy Chair
Steven Hind, Director of Debates
Stephanie D'Souza
Angela Evans
Ellen Ferrington Michaelis
Naomi Hart
Alice Hudson
Kishan Jasani
David Mann
Jacques McElhone
Tim Mooney
Sriram Srikumar
Andrew Thomas

VISITORS:

Courtney Tight, Director
Melissa Brooks
Michael Coutts
Caroline Dimond
Michael Falk
Eleanor Jones
Catherine Marks
Daniel Swain
Patrick Wall

UNION STAFF:

Alistair Cowie, Director Student Programmes
Khym Scott, Committee Secretary

The Deputy Chair declared the meeting open at 5:08pm.

1. APOLOGIES AND LEAVES OF ABSENCE

DC 031/09 **RESOLVED** that late arrival be granted to Mr. Ruchir Punjabi.

Steven Hind / Ellen Ferrington Michaelis

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Mr. Patrick Wall observed that the minutes of the previous meeting incorrectly recorded the mover and seconder of resolution **DC 002/09**.

DC 032/09 **RESOLVED** that the minutes of the previous meeting held 12 February 2009 be accepted as true and accurate records of proceedings pending specified amendments.

Stephanie D'Souza / Andrew Thomas

3. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There was no business arising from the minutes.

4. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

4.1 **Amendments to the *Debates Committee Guidelines and Procedures***

The Director of Debates spoke to the motion.

[Ms. Melissa Brooks arrived at the meeting at 5:11pm.]

The Director of Debates noted that he had forgotten to amend service provision. He noted that the impartiality problem previously discussed about the Director of Debates had been replaced by the Director Student Programmes, who will make decisions in discussion with the Director of Debates.

[Mr. Kishan Jasani arrived at the meeting at 5:13pm.]

The Director of Debates further noted that the Contingent Captain had now been removed from the appeals panel due to previous discussion about their impartiality and suitability.

DC 033/09 **RESOLVED** that the Committee recommends that the Board accepts the changes to the *Debates Guidelines and Procedures* accepted at the previous meeting of the Board held 18 February 2009 **and** the proceeding amendments by **special resolution**.

Steven Hind / Tim Mooney
[Carried unanimously]

8. **THE POINTS SYSTEM**

8.2 Points may be allocated for (categories of points)

8.2.1 Service points

- i. Two hour shift at O-Week stall: 20 points
- ii. Attend a Schools Day: 30 points
- iii. Attend a meeting of the Debates Committee: 20 points
- iv. Deliver a seminar at Regionals: 20 points
- v. Select Easters teams: 30 points

8.2.2 Adjudication points

- i. Adjudicate an entire internal tournament (i.e. Grand Slam, Sydney Open): 30 points
- ii. Adjudicate at Regionals: 20 points
- iii. Coach an Easterns Team: 30 points in addition to adjudication points for adjudicating that team at Regionals
 - a. For this requirement to be met, the coach must adjudicate their team at least once at Regionals and on at least one other occasion.

8.2.3 Debating Points

- i. Debate at an internal or external tournament (i.e. Grand Slam, Sydney Open): 25 points
- ii. Debate at Regionals: 20 points
- iii. Debate at Regionals as a 'Pro' in a Pro-Am team where the team is assembled by the organisers of Regionals: 25 points**

8.3 Exceptional circumstances and contingencies

- 8.3.1 Inability to fulfill requirements in one or more categories: Where a person feels that they will not be able to meet the points requirement under one or more of the three categories they should raise this with the Director of Debates **as soon as is reasonable after the problem becomes apparent to them. The Director will present the person's case to the USU's Director of Student Programs. Where the Director of Student Programs feels that the person is genuinely unable to meet the requirement(s), they may require the person to gain an equal number of points in a different category, or undertake some other task of value to the debating program.** ~~In circumstances where the Director feels that the person is genuinely unable to meet the requirement, the Director may require the person to gain an equal number of points in a different category.~~

- i. To guide the Director **of Student Programs**, being genuinely unable includes circumstances such as the following:
 - a. Inability to attend Regionals because of class-clash
 - b. Inability to attend weekend events because of serious work commitments
 - c. Inability to attend events because of absence from Sydney
- ii. The Director **of Student Programs** should only grant such dispensation where the person requesting it has made reasonable attempts to raise the problem as soon as it was apparent to them and where they cannot accrue sufficient points in the correct category

8.3.2 Carryover of points between Semesters

- i. Points accrued in one calendar year cannot be used to secure funding in a later year.
- ii. If a person receives funding to attend Australs, the points they have accrued will be subtracted from the points required for funding (see 1) and any balance will carry over to Semester Two.

8.3.3 Failure to meet points requirement and appeals

- i. Where a person is selected as a debater or adjudicator but fails to meet their points requirement in any category, subject to special dispensation being granted under ~~8.3.1~~, they will not receive funding to attend the tournament in question.
- ii. In this situation the person has the right to appeal this outcome. Their appeal will be heard by a panel consisting of the **USU's Director of**

~~**Student Programs Union Services Manager**, the President of the Union and the Vice-President of the Union and advised by the Director of Debates and the **Chair of Debates Contingent Captain** for the tournament in question.~~

- iii. Appeals will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.
- iv. In considering an appeal, the panel should consider:
 - a. The reason that the person failed to meet their requirements
 - b. Whether or not the person took reasonable steps to avoid failing to meet their requirements
 - c. The past contribution of that person to the Debates programme
 - d. The effect on the contingent of that person not receiving funding

5. GENERAL BUSINESS

5.1 Reports

5.1.1 Director of Debates

The Director of Debates spoke to his report. He reported that the Schools Day held 20 February 2009 had covered a small amount of report, and had been well received. He advised that he had not received any complaints of an increase in participation cost but that the Committee should be mindful of it.

The Director of Debates further reported that 350 people had signed up to the programme during O-Week at an increase from 120 during 2008 and thanked all who helped. He noted that the first seminar was sparsely attended and stated that the topic matter may have been less attractive to those who were not first-year students. He advised the Committee that they need to make sure to give at least forty-five minutes of limited instruction. He also noted that seminars were now scheduled past Easters and that speakers were being investigated regarding Indigenous affairs and South-East Asia.

[Mr. Michael Falk arrived at the meeting at 5:20pm.]

The Director of Debates reported that all rooms had adjudicators, and stated his appreciation for the second-year debaters were getting their adjudication points out of the way.

DC 034/09 RESOLVED that Ms. Elle Jones be commended for her leadership shown at Seminars.

Acclamation

The Director of Debates noted that debaters who were to participate in a debate at Luna Park on 15 March 2009 were given thirty points due to the late notice provided.

[Mr. Patrick Bateman arrived at the meeting at 5:24pm.]

The Director of Debates further reported that the funding available for Easters was not the same as 2008, being approximately \$100 each. He hoped that it would not be a barrier to participation, and noted that in a situation where more debaters were allowed to attend that the total funding would still be split equally and individual funding would be lower.

The Director of Debates concluded that he would try and invite old debaters to attend the next meeting of the Committee to assist in selecting selectors for Australs and Worlds.

DC 035/09 **RESOLVED** that the Chair be conferred to Mr. Patrick Bateman.

Stephanie D'Souza / Alice Dixon

The Director Student Programmes asked when transportation for Easter would be confirmed.

The Director of Debates advised that the Intervarsity Directors were currently looking into costs.

The Director Student Programmes also asked whether information could be obtained regarding what other universities funded their debaters.

The Director of Debates advised that UTS debaters received \$300 each.

Ms. Naomi Hart observed that all the debaters who were to attend the Luna Park debate were male, and asked what measures the Director of Debates had taken to try to obtain female debaters.

The Director of Debates stated that he had advertised on DebaterBase, then asked individuals personally, but had not done anything specific.

Ms. Hart commented that it may be a bad image to send, though clarified it was still a good list if no female debaters were available.

Ms. Stephanie D'Souza volunteered to attend in place of Mr. Heydon Letcher.

Ms. Hart further observed that Manning Bar had been a good venue for the demonstration debate but it was better as a social event than a demonstration, and asked whether it was held in the most appropriate format. She added that the Committee needed to consider the possibility of new debaters attending Regionals without ever seeing a real debate.

Mr. Tim Mooney identified that the adjudicators for the demonstration debate were bad.

The Director of Debates remarked that Mr. Ivan Ah Sam had done the role well in the past but that they could investigate new adjudicators in future years.

Mr. Wall enquired about Grand Slam, and whether there was a point implication for those who could not attend for the whole tournament.

The Director of Debates asked whether it would be better to award points fractionally according at five points per round attended, or to advise people to not both attending altogether. Consensus was to award points fractionally.

Ms. Angela Evans commented on the Debates O-Week stall, advising that they should not get too complacent regarding marketing. She asked whether they would be getting t-shirts soon.

The Director of Debates stated that t-shirts would not be purchased at all in 2009.

Mr. David Mann asked whether they could be sold.

The Vice-President commented that in the past not all t-shirts ordered had been sold.

Ms. Evans asked if they could be ordered on a custom basis.

The Director of Debates clarified that there was not a problem with having t-shirts, but that it was a cost issue, which he indicated would be better spent on Easters.

DC 036/09 RESOLVED that the Report of the Director of Debates be accepted.

Tim Mooney / Ellen Ferrington Michaelis

5.1.2 Honorary Treasurer for Debates

Mr. Jacques McElhone reported that he would endeavour to send the budget of Grand Slam to the Committee.

[Mr. Douglas Thompson departed from the meeting at 5:35pm.]

The Director of Debates remarked that the \$500 bar tab would not go far, and wondered whether registration fees could be increased to \$35.

Ms. Melissa Brooks advised that the advertised price was already \$35.

The Director Student Programmes advised that cleaning and attendance fees should be budgeted for.

[Mr. Douglas Thompson returned to the meeting at 5:37pm.]

The Director of Debates asked whether costs could be negotiated if the rooms were self-cleaned, and suggested increasing the bar tab to \$1000.

Mr. McElhone further reported that in the next week he would be speaking with the Director of Debates and Director Student Programmes regarding funding for Easters and 2009, advising that he would present a report at the next meeting of the Committee.

DC 037/09 RESOLVED that the Report of the Honorary Treasurer for Debates be accepted.

Steven Hind / Kishan Jasani

5.1.3 Intersivity Directors

Ms. D'Souza reported that twelve teams and eleven adjudicators had been selected for Easters, and the University of Queensland had allowed a decision to be made of how many were to be put on the waiting list, with a withdrawal penalty of half the fee, being \$150 per person. Her personal

opinion was that more teams were warranted and that many would be keen to self-fund. She recommended putting five more teams on the waiting list.

The Director of Debates observed an impression that many were still keen, but advised that it needed to be made clear to people committing that they must pay and go if selected.

[Mr. Ruchir Punjabi arrived at the meeting at 5:42pm.]

Ms. Brooks advised that they need to give first-year students notice that flight costs were not included, and that it needed to be more explicit that they must attend if their team was selected.

Ms. Elle Jones recommended outlining what registration fees cover, being for five days of food and accommodation, but not flights.

Mr. Evans suggested writing a cancellation policy.

Ms. D'Souza remarked that pulling out was not allowed.

The Director Student Programmes recommended having triallers sign a set of terms and conditions.

Mr. Wall reminded the Committee of problems had in 2008 when the Committee thought it was made clear, and remarked that terms and conditions would be good, recommending that if the whole team could not go they should be charged the full registration fee.

The Director of Debates suggested replacing the team with the next highest ranked.

Mr. Wall advised that replacements should happen but could potentially not.

The Director of Debates added that it should be ensured that if a person pulled out for genuine personal or medical reasons that it be let go.

Ms. D'Souza asked whether a five team expansion was appropriate.

[Mr. David Mann departed from the meeting at 5:45pm.]

Ms. Brooks asked whether they were sure the expansion met Affirmative Action rules.

The Director of Debates was unsure, asking the Committee whether they were willing to grant themselves an exemption from Affirmative Action.

[Mr. David Mann returned to the meeting at 5:47pm.]

The Vice-President advised that it was not a hard and fast rule.

The Director of Debates suggested selecting male debaters up until a point where the number of female debaters in the contingent dropped to one-third of the total. He noted that it would be bad to turn debaters away based on their gender.

The Director Student Programmes asked whether they were sure if seventeen teams were sent that they would be able to find sixteen adjudicators.

The Director of Debates confirmed that they would.

Ms. Hart indicated that she was happy to grant an exemption if only a few female debaters were missing but that it was not in the spirit of the regulations.

Ms. Ellen Ferrington Michaelis noted that they only needed twenty-six female debaters, and thought that they would probably be able to fill this.

The Director of Debates clarified that it was only a worst-case scenario, and advised that work had to be done by the Women's Officers to make sure that enough female debaters were trialling and signing up.

Mr. Mooney remarked that there was a problem with recruitment in general if they could only get a one-third female contingent.

[Mr. Ruchir Punjabi departed from the meeting at 5:50pm.]

Mr. Mooney stated that the purpose of Affirmative Actions was surely to improve the participation and exposure of women, and that it was a non sequitur to turn men away.

Ms. D'Souza reported about Australs, stating that the pre-registration period was 15 March to 5 April 2009, with full deposit due on 5 April 2009, and registration period between 22 April and 4 May 2009. She informed the Committee that four teams and six adjudicators were allowed, and that a deposit waiver scheme was being offered to those with less fortunate circumstances.

The Director of Debates asked for the cost of registration.

Ms. D'Souza stated that it was \$550.

Ms. Brooks clarified that the waiver would be judged on an institutional level, rather than a personal level.

The Director Student Programmes asked about whether it was a full team cap.

Ms. D'Souza stated that she was unsure, but that optimistically they would be able to send six teams, and more realistically five teams.

The Director of Debates commented that it was frustrating to be missing spots in a competitive tournament at which Sydney would be able to send good teams.

Mr. Kishan Jasani asked whether the cap would be able to be increased in Asian universities do not attend.

The Director of Debates said that it was doubtful.

Mr. Sriram Srikumar reminded the Committee that it was not their decision.

Ms. Brooks advised that they were more likely to have their adjudicators cap extended.

[Ms. Alice Dixon departed from the meeting at 5:56pm.]

Ms. D'Souza confirmed the selectors as Mr. Tim Mooney, Mr. Steven Hind, Ms. Bronwyn Cowell, Ms. Giselle Kenny and Mr. Sam Greenland.

[Mr. Ruchir Punjabi returned to the meeting at 5:57pm.]

The Director of Debates informed the Committee that Ms. Cowell could not attend for the whole trials, and asked whether she should be substituted for another women or Mr. Dominic Thurbon.

Ms. Brooks asked about rules regarding a minimum of women on a panel.

The Director of Debates clarified that on a panel of more than three people at least one must be female. He noted a convention of panels of more than two being at least half female.

Ms. Brooks suggested that the first priority be finding women.

Ms. Ferrington Michaelis asked if the next highest women could be asked.

Mr. Mooney remarked that it would be strange for someone to step in at the twentieth debate.

Ms. Hart reminded the Committee that last year the selectors came and went.

[Ms. Alice Dixon returned to the meeting at 5:59pm.]

Ms. Hart recommended that no substitutions be made, and that all adjudicators should come and go.

DC 038/09 **RESOLVED** that in the event that all women who register for trials for Easters are selected any further men will be selected up until the minimum AIDA requirement of a one-third female contingent is reached.

Stephanie D'Souza / David Mann

DC 039/09 **RESOLVED** that the Report of the Intervarsity Directors be accepted.

Angela Evans / Ellen Ferrington Michaelis

5.1.4 Women's Directors

[Mr. Douglas Thompson departed from the meeting at 6:04pm.]

Ms. Ferrington Michaelis reported that she was confident enough women would trial for Easters, and that a pre-debate social event was being scheduled for 4:30pm – 5:30pm 18 March 2009 in Holme Courtyard.

[Mr. Tim Mooney departed from the meeting at 6:04pm.]

Ms. Ferrington Michaelis noted that alcohol would not be served but coffee vouchers would be issued. She hoped that Ms. Julia Bowes would be able to attend, and advised that she would send an email through DebaterBase. She added that the event would not be more than \$150.

The Director of Debates suggested sending a message on Facebook to past female debaters.

The Vice-President asked whether the sexual harassment officers had been chosen for Easters.

The Director of Debates indicated that they would be organised later.

Ms. Hart added that it would be in consultation with the Intervarsity Directors and Director of Debates.

Mr. Mann asked for a petty cash system to be established and a process for reimbursement.

The Director Student Programmes advised that he should speak to Ms. Joanna Morrison. He asked the Women's Directors to ensure a date was set for sexual harassment training with him and Ms. Sandra Hardy.

The Vice-President volunteered herself as a sexual harassment officer.

Ms. Hart noted confusion regarding the provision of a Women's Director as a selector for Easters. She noted that the Women's Directors needed to brief Ms. Kenny and Ms. Cowell on their responsibilities.

DC 040/09 **RESOLVED** that the Report of the Women's Directors be accepted

Steven Hind / Naomi Hart

5.1.5 Communications Directors

Mr. Jasani reported that the website was in its final stages.

[Mr. Douglas Thompson returned to the meeting at 6:10pm.]

Mr. Jasani informed the Committee that Mr. Adam Watt was to speak to the Chair regarding the final details. He noted that the draft included seminar videos, a podcast, a blog, and a wikifile for members. He added that the Intervarsity and Competition Directors could also have registration and payment online for tournaments. He further added that there was potential for a retail section, and that he was trying to find an on-demand screen printing company.

Mr. Jasani advised that the Committee needed to create a standard operating procedures document for the website and allocate administration rights, including a guideline of words to censor.

Mr. Jasani also reported that he was working with the University facilities office regarding cameras and video cameras in lecture halls.

Ms. Evans asked how members would get access to the website.

Mr. Jasani advised that they would receive a username and password.

The Director of Debates remarked that they need to think about the policing of the content on the website, preferably giving administration rights to the Director Student Programmes, the Chair and the Director of Debates.

[Mr. Patrick Wall departed from the meeting at 6:16pm.]

The Director of Debates suggested sending a press release to Honi Soit with details of the teams selected for Easters and results of Grand Slam.

[Mr. Ruchir Punjabi departed from the meeting at 6:16pm.]

DC 041/09 RESOLVED that Mr. Adam Watt be congratulated on his work with the Debates website.

Acclamation

Mr. Jasani informed the Committee that the estimated time of completion would be in two to three weeks.

Mr. Srikumar commented that the content at present was taken from the Debates Handbook.

The Director of Debates advised that it could be reviewed and edited at a later date.

[Mr. Patrick Wall returned to the meeting at 6:17pm.]

DC 042/09 RESOLVED that the Report of the Communications Directors be accepted.

Angela Evans / Naomi Hart

[Ms. Angela Evans departed from the meeting at 6:18pm.]

5.1.6 Union Competitions Directors

Mr. Andrew Thomas reported that the budget had been organised by Mr. McElhone, and that he was unable to speak to those in attendance last night or release the topic for the next debate.

[Mr. Ruchir Punjabi returned to the meeting at 6:18pm.]

Mr. Thomas confirmed that he would release details in an email to come.

[Ms. Angela Evans returned to the meeting at 6:18pm.]

Mr. Thomas informed the Committee that twelve adjudicators had been confirmed for Grand Slam and that while fifteen were needed he was confident they would get them. He asked how an equity officer was to be appointed, recommending Ms. Brooks to the position.

Ms. Hart advised that it was generally an informal request, and that the Women's Officers had been asked in the past due to their training and qualifications.

Ms. D'Souza reported that Macquarie were wishing to attend but to send their Easterns teams, and asked whether the novice regulation should be waived.

The Director of Debates suggested charging a higher registration fee.

Mr. Mooney asked whether UTS or UNSW were participating.

Mr. Thomas stated that UNSW was holding its Easterns trials that weekend and were going to report back.

Ms. Hart asked whether dates had been set for Sydney Open.

Ms. D'Souza said that the dates would ideally be prior to Australs trials, suggesting 9 to 10 May 2009.

The Director of Debates asked whether the Chief Adjudicator should be selected now.

Mr. Mooney recommended that the Union Competitions Directors do it at the next meeting of the Committee.

DC 043/09 RESOLVED that the Report of the Union Competitions Directors be accepted.

Steven Hind / Tim Mooney

5.1.7 Schools' Programmes Directors

Ms. Evans reported that feedback forms had been received from the schools, and that the comments were overwhelmingly positive especially as no lunch was provided. She noted a need to rectify higher numbers of attendance. She suggested running Schools Day in conjunction with the Union Competitions Directors in the holidays as a strong selling point.

DC 044/09 RESOLVED that the Report of the Schools' Programmes Directors be accepted.

Ellen Ferrington Michaelis / Douglas Thompson

5.1.8 Social Director

Mr. Mann reported that the budget of the Social Director had been set at \$3000 per month.

[Ms. Melissa Brooks departed from the meeting at 6:24pm.]

Mr. Mann remarked that the high numbers received at the last social event were not anticipated.

The Director Student Programmes suggested using a voucher system.

The Director of Debates identified that a Member of the Committee should have helped with identifying debaters at the event.

Mr. Mooney asked whether it was possible to reduce the budget of the Social Director and move money into tournaments.

The Director of Debates clarified that the given budget was not the same amount as they anticipated spending.

[Ms. Melissa Brooks returned to the meeting at 6:26pm.]

Mr. Mann suggested obtaining information regarding who was in attendance and under 18 to ease the jobs of the bar staff.

Mr. Mann further reported that the next event would be held post-Easters, and that judging from feedback a lawn bowls event was likely.

DC 045/09 RESOLVED that the Report of the Social Director be accepted.

Douglas Thompson / Steven Hind

5.1.9 Development Officers

Ms. Hart reported that the Grand Slam topic area of China was released. She advised that it needed to be publicised in DebaterBase. She noted that after each tournament one adjudicator was now to give feedback on the rounds. She reported that the Seminars programme had been scheduled up until Easters, with the next entitled How to Become a Uni Debater.

DC 046/09 RESOLVED that the Committee be granted a time extension of up to thirty minutes.

Douglas Thompson / Ellen Ferrington Michaelis

Ms. Hart further reported that she was talking at present to mentors for Easters teams and at present had twenty to thirty names.

[Mr. Douglas Thompson departed from the meeting at 6:33pm.]

DC 047/09 RESOLVED that the Report of the Development Officers be accepted.

Angela Evans / Stephanie D'Souza

6. OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair advised that the Debates Dinner would be held 7pm 7 April in the Holme Refectory, with guest speaker The Hon. Virginia Bell. He advised that he would be in touch soon regarding costs.

[Mr. Douglas Thompson returned to the meeting at 6:34pm.]

The Chair asked what the capacity of the Refectory was.

The Director Student Programmes advised that it seated between 200 and 240 people.

7. **NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Committee will be held at 5:00pm on Thursday 16 April 2009 in The Reading Room, Holme Building.

8. **CLOSE OF MEETING**

With no other business to be attended to the Chair declared the meeting closed at 6:36pm.