



SYDNEY UNIVERSITY LAW SOCIETY INC.
ABN 49 844 560 526

Minutes of Executive Meeting held on 11 October 2021
Chair: Wendy Hu
Minute taker: Alison Chen

Meeting opened 9:10pm

Present:

Wendy Hu	President
Sinem Kirk	Vice President (Education)
Cameron Jordan	Vice President (Careers)
Tiana Dumonovsky	Treasurer
Alison Chen	Secretary
Gretel Wilson	Sponsorship Director
Caroline Xu	Competitions Director
Onor Nottle	Socials Director
Georgia Watson	Socials Director
Sofia Mendes	Campus Director
Calvin Kwong	Sports Director
Justin Lai	Publications Director
Sissi Xi Chen	International Student Officer
Eden McSheffrey	Equity Officer
Nora Takriti	Women's Officer
Bru Hammer	Queer Officer
Mahmoud Al Rifai	Ethnocultural Officer
Arasa Hardie	Design Director

Absent:

Nathan Allen	First Nations Officer
Sarah Purvis	Marketing Director

Apologies:

Sophia Semmler	Vice President (Social Justice)
Felix Wood	Competitions Director



MINUTES

1 Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed attendees to the meeting and Gretel delivered an acknowledgement of country. Apologies were received from Sophia and Felix.

2 Procedural matters

Motion: That the minutes from 4 October 2021 be approved.

Moved: Wendy Hu

Seconded: Mahmoud Al Rifai

The motion was carried unanimously with zero abstentions.

3 Last week updates/shoutouts

- Subject Selection Panel - Sinem
- Out, Loud and Proud panel - Bru
- Rainbow Client Interviewing - Bru
- Competitions Quarter Finals - Caroline and Felix
- Wellbeing Week designs, Student Support Services Handbook, Journal - Arasa
- Socials - planning for SULLS social events in December - Onor and Georgia

4 What's on this week

No events this week.

5 Constitutional Reform Committee

Wendy outlined some of the constitutional amendments under consideration by the Constitutional Reform Committee.

Election Expression of Interest (EOI) System

The Committee proposed that EOIs for all elected Executive positions should be open for the first 7 days of the election period. From day 8, EOIs would remain open only for nominations for President and published on a rolling basis, and prospective candidates would be permitted to submit an EOI for President even if they have submitted an EOI for other Executive positions. Sofia inquired regarding the incentive for prospective candidates to submit EOIs for non-Presidential positions under this new system. Wendy responded that a culture should be developed over time whereby members put forward an EOI for all positions. This has already started to occur for Senior Executive positions post-2018.

Eden asked about the rationale for this proposal. Wendy responded that the proposal would allow interested members to make a more informed decision as to whether they run for the position of President as it is often a matter of relativity. Members may not be able to accurately gauge their desire to nominate until they can assess the field.



Alison also clarified that under the new system, EOIs could be submitted for all exec positions, rather than just the Senior Executive positions. Wendy stated that the new system would hopefully normalise a culture of submitting EOIs and the revised system is beneficial as it shortens the election period as well.

Appointed positions

The Committee proposed introducing Constitutional amendments to mandate the elected Executive to publish reasons for the selection of particular candidates for Appointed positions and for all Executive positions in the event that the election is uncontested.

Sinem approved of the proposal. Eden asked what would occur if a candidate was chosen on more vague grounds, for example if 'team fit' was prioritised in choosing a candidate over someone with more qualifications. Wendy clarified that this was not designed to be a merits review process, but rather this proposal is designed to make reasons known for selection of particular candidates and promote accountability. Sofia suggested that greater promotion was needed regarding the fact that presidential EOIs are non-binding to encourage more candidates to nominate for President. Wendy agreed that the messaging surrounding Presidential EOIs could be improved.

Candidates Information Evening

The Committee suggested that there should be greater promotion of the Candidates Information Evening. Sofia suggested that in future years, Instagram posts could be published outlining each Executive positions' roles and responsibilities.

Concurrent positions as SULLS Executive and executive positions on USU, SRC and SUPRA

This was a continuation of the discussion from the Executive meeting held on 4 October 2021.

Onor did not support the proposed amendment as she believed it that SULLS should not prejudice a candidate's capacity and time management skills should they hold concurrent positions and the vast majority of societies do not have similar arrangements in place. In addition, organisations such as the USU would have conflict of interest management strategies. Onor sought clarification as to whether this ban would be imposed on Executive members who campaigned for other elections as well. Wendy clarified that the provisions would not bar Executive members campaigning for a position for another body, but only those who are successfully elected to another position. She agreed with Onor's points and noted that the Committee is concerned about using the SULLS position as one of influence and power to improve election prospects for other positions.

Mahmoud argued that SULLS should mostly be concerned about whether an Executive member is doing their role well rather than the motive behind being on the Executive. He noted that people using social capital to get elected is inevitable due to the nature of student politics and that organisations such as the USU have conflict management strategies.

Sissi noted concerns that people would seek a SULLS elective position for 'CV stacking' purposes, and stated that rather than imposing a ban, the condition could be framed narrowly as an affirmative action requirement.



Eden stated that it is difficult to understand the rationale of the proposal when taken outside the sphere of conflicts of interest and that it would put an unreasonable fetter on members who wished to be part of the Executive. He also stated that in the circumstances, there is no productive way to determine whether someone is joining the Executive for a particular purpose. Cameron agreed.

Sinem noted that the Constitution already sets out each person's duties and that the only priority of the SULLS Executive should be student wellbeing and advancing student concerns. She argued that if Executive members are abiding by their duties in the Constitution, then they should not be judged on their political views. Wendy replied, noting that it was desirable to promote a culture that SULLS is seen as an independent body.

Eden emphasised that everyone who joins the Executive chooses to become a director of a registered charity and therefore needs to abide by their directors duties and make decisions based on what is best for the society. Additionally, he noted that the potential political influence of Executive members does not override the directors duties and obligations outlined in the Constitution.

Sofia noted that the main concern seems to surround conflicts of interest. She suggested that this could be resolved by publishing an up-to-date list of conflicts in EOIs, on the website, and in Hearsay. She also noted that although SULLS is mostly apolitical, there may be some political issues which the Executive needs to consider.

Arasa stated that 'CV stacking' should not be the biggest reason why these conditions should be imposed, and that when putting bars on members, SULLS needs to weigh up the impact of prohibitions against the problem it purportedly tries to solve. Justin also noted that judging 'CV stacking' may not be productive, and that it is unlikely that a student politics faction will instruct every single decision of an Executive member.

Onor stated that it is unfair to assume that those who are involved in SULLS and involved in politics are politically motivated in seeking election to the SULLS Executive. Mahmoud was concerned that the proposal could exacerbate the problem it was attempting to solve as it could reduce engagement with political beliefs and social issues, and some matters which SULLS deals with are inherently political.

6 Executive handovers

Cameron asked whether there was a way to mandating Executive handovers and how they are conducted, as the lack of handover from some members of the previous SULLS Executive to this year's Executive led to inefficiencies and avoidable mistakes being made. Alison noted that some members of the 2020 Executive informally discussed putting a handover requirement in the Constitution, but this was rejected and it was later suggested that this could be included in the Bylaws.



Gretel stated that some handovers needed to be finessed more, particularly with portfolios that deal with sensitive information such as sponsorship. Eden agreed and noted that the Equity portfolio could also benefit, and that it could be put into the Bylaws. Caroline also expressed support for mandating a handover process.

7 Socials Wellbeing Officer Roster

Georgia noted that they are looking for Executive members to be Wellbeing Officers at upcoming socials events, including Law Carnival and Law Ball. Alison noted that the USU now requires at least three safety officers who have received Mental Health First Aid training to be present at major events.

Eden asked about COVID-19 vaccine requirements for SULLS events. The Socials Directors said they would provide an answer at a later date depending on the government advice and venue requirements.

8 Student Leadership Training Co-Design Project

Alison informed the Executive that she had been contacted by Angelina Gu, the Secretary of the Sydney University Arts Society, regarding the Student Leadership Training Co-Design Project Student Feedback Survey and requested that all Executive members fill out the survey as soon as possible.

9 Life & Uni: Resilience, Burnout & Wellbeing Panel

Sofia noted that as part of wellbeing week, SULLS is holding a panel entitled 'Life & Uni: Resilience, Burnout and Wellbeing' and is looking for more panellists to speak. Calvin informed that there will also be a daily takeover of the SULLS Instagram by representatives from different sponsor firms.

10 Competitions Updates

Caroline provided an update on the Competitions Portfolio, noting that the SULLS Multilateral Client Interviewing Competition is currently seeking experienced judges to judge rounds of the competition and a new negotiations/mediation competition with the National University of Singapore next year.

Meeting closed: **10:37pm**