MINUTES FOR A MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD IN NEW LAW SCHOOL SEMINAR 022 ON THE 8TH OF AUGUST 2016 AT 1800

Chair: Thomas Greenwell
Minutes: Melanie Stevenson
Attendance: Elizabeth Millar, Ahmed Suhaib, Cameron Nottingham, Melanie Stevenson, Mariam Mohammed (left 7:44pm), Kiriti Mothra, Alexandra Nixon, Rachel Evans, Susan Nelson, Thomas Greenwell, Nick Rowbotham, Lily Matchett, Emmett Gillespie, Brandon Munn, Kevin Dong, Alex Trussell (arrived 6:10pm), Gareth Charles (arrived 6:13pm), Dhaval Shukla (arrived 6:26pm), Rebecca Johnson (arrived 8:42pm)

Staff: John Fell (left 8:10pm)
Guests: Oliver Moore (arrived 6:26pm), Yvonne Hu (left 7:44pm)

★ 1. Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome
The meeting was opened at 6:06pm, with Thomas Greenwell (T. G.) performing an acknowledgement of country.

★ 2. Governance & Declaration of COI

2.1. Apologies
Joshua Preece
Rebecca Johnson
Mike Butler
Karen Cochrane
Reza Kahlaee
Blythe Worthy

2.2. Proxies
Joshua Preece to Melanie Stevenson (2nd preference to Kevin Dong, 3rd preference to Cameron Nottingham, 4th preference to Alex Trussell)

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Rebecca Johnson to Blythe Worthy (2nd preference to Kiriti Mothra, 3rd preference to Mike Butler)

Mike Butler to Kiriti Mothra (2nd preference to Mariam Mohammed, 3rd preference to Blythe Worthy, 4th preference to Rebecca Johnson)

Karen Cochrane to Dhaval Shukla (2nd preference to Mariam Mohammed, 3rd preference to Ahmed Suhaib)

Blythe Worthy to Oliver Moore (2nd preference to Brandon Munn, 3rd preference to Kiriti Mothra)

2.3. Starring of Items

Council is invited to star any agenda items they would like discussed.

Motion [160808-01]: That council approve all unstarred items.

Moved: Cameron Nottingham  Seconded: Ahmed Suhaib

Carried.

2.4. Resignations

Xiao Xu to be replaced by nomination with Maliha Aqueel.

Motion [160808-02]: That council accepts the resignation and accepts Maliha’s nomination.

Moved: Nick Rowbotham  Seconded: Lily Matchett

Carried.

It was noted that SUPRA welcomes Maliha as the newest councillor and looks forward to her continued involvement within the organisation.

3. Minutes and Reports of Meetings

3.1. Minutes of the Previous Month’s Meetings

3.1.1. MEETING OF COUNCIL, 15TH JULY 2016

3.1.2. MEETING OF MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE, 27TH JULY 2016

3.1.3. MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE OF SUPRA, 5TH AUGUST 2016

3.2. Business Arising from the Minutes

4. Officer Reports

4.1. Executive Reports

4.1.1. PRESIDENT

Thomas Greenwell

4.1.2. VICE PRESIDENT

Lily Matchett
Alexandra Nixon

4.1.3. EDUCATION OFFICER

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Ahmed Suhaib

4.1.4. **Treasurer**

Kevin Dong

4.1.5. **Secretary**

Melanie Stevenson
Cameron Nottingham

4.1.6. **Director of Student Publications**

Nick Rowbotham

4.2. **Equity Officer Reports**

4.2.1. **Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Officer**

[Vacant]

4.2.2. **Disabilities Officer**

Gareth Charles (no report submitted)

**Motion [160808-03]:** To move the disabilities officer report to other business to allow Gareth to speak to the report when he enters the room.

**Moved:** Thomas Greenwell
**Carried.**

Gareth Charles (G. C.) spoke that he was disappointed in his progress and wasn’t able to attend some committee meetings and that Marguerite Biasatti attended in his place. He also spoke about recent newsworthy events, such as a mass murder in Japan where the perpetrator gained entry and killed disabled residents in a group home. He expressed his solidarity with these victims. Furthermore, he has also had conversations with George Tam (the disabilities officer with the SRC) about student services, especially how difficult it is to prove a disability to CAPS. They also spoke about special consideration and that the undergraduate collective meets every fortnight. In other news, Gareth also brought up the case of the Monash University lecturer and his wife who were refused Permanent Resident status due to their disabled child. The NTEU has been campaigning on their behalf.

T. G. thanked Gareth for his verbal report and noted that in future, it is best to report on his own activities rather than current events.

**Motion [160808-07]:** To accept Gareth’s report, based on a written report to be submitted to the secretaries by the 12th of August.

**Moved:** Lily Matchett **Seconded:** Nick Rowbotham
**Carried.**

4.2.3. **International Officer**

Dhaval Sanath Shukla

4.2.4. **Queer Officer**

Rachel Evans

4.2.5. **Women’s Officer**

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Mariam Mohammed

4.2.6. **Rural and Regional Officer**

Elizabeth Millar

4.3. **Business Arising from Officer Reports**

4.3.1. **President Question Time**

4.3.2. **Office Bearer Summary**

*Alex Trussell arrived at 6:10pm*

Nick Rowbotham (N. R.) (Director of Student Publications) discussed the Honi Soit contributions and hopefully getting a schedule organised for office bearer and councillor contributions. T. G stated that anyone that is excited about writing for Honi Soit should speak to Nick after the meeting and create a roster. Failing this, Nick will circulate an email to everyone calling for nominations. Council has been put on notice to contact Nick. The publications committee will be called soon to plot out long term plans for Honi Soit. Nick also stated that for next week’s issue, the content needs to get to him within the next day.

*Gareth Charles arrived at 6:13pm*

4.3.3. **Other Business from Reports**

**Motion [160808-04]:** To approve up to $100 on a fortnightly basis until the week of Stuvac for the women’s collective meetings.

Moved: Mariam          Seconded: Kiriti
Carried.

**Motion [160808-05]:** To approve the Women’s officer report

Moved: Gareth          Seconded: Lily
Carried.

**Motion [160808-06]:** To move to the disabilities officer report

Moved: Tom          Seconded: 
Carried.

5. **Verbal Report from Staff Member**

*Oliver Moore, Dhaval Shukla arrived 6:26pm*

John Fell (J. F.) presented the report. Initially, he spoke on behalf of the advocacy team, who have accepted 551 new cases this year (representing a 30% increase) and stated that they were working very diligently. The main topics brought to them were accusations of plagiarism and showing cause. In terms of campaigning, the international travel concession campaign is taking a lot of time, as is the save SCA campaign. The tax help is going well, however, it is disappointing when people would book in and then not keep their appointment. Other than that, a working party for the thesis guide has been established and the relationship with CAPA will be brought up in that agenda item.

As for finances, this is always a tight time of year as the university does not pay SUPRA until the end of September. John cautioned councillors on approving money for events without recognising the implication of which budget these events fall under, and that we

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may need to reconsider the budget if we continue to approve money for events. Ahmed Suhaib (A. H.) stated that equity events come out of the community and engagement budget. John stated that SUPRA currently owes the tax office $69,000 but at the moment we only need to pay $10,000 a month, although the balance is being charged at 9.1% interest. When we are paid on the 1st of October, the rest of this bill will be paid.

Kevin Dong (K. D.) presented the cash flow sheets, stating that we have around $8,000 to work with until the end of September. This may mean having to touch a term deposit and losing $1,200 but this is not the current plan. Cameron Nottingham (C. N.) asked if we would be better off losing the interest on this term deposit if it meant we weren’t being charged at 9.1% from the tax office. J. F. responded stating that it is not cheaper in the short term and that we need to give the bank at least 10 days’ notice to withdraw. K. D. also noted that the budget for stationery and paper had blown out and what was budgeted for the year has already been spent. Each portfolio was presented, stating whether it was over or under budget.

Motion [160808-08]: SUPRA thanks John Fell for his service to the organisation
Moved: Mariam Seconded: Rachel
Carried.

6. Cultural Competence Training for SUPRA Staff and Council

Mariam Mohammed (M. M.) spoke to this item and was seeking feedback to send to the NCCC in regards to the training. In terms of scope, normally the NCCC works with international students who are unaware of the rich Indigenous heritage and culture that Australia has. It was agreed that we should focus on this, but also more broadly on other topics that will affect students that we will see.

T. G. explained that cultural competency training often covers a range of topics, including nationality, religious or cultural origins. C. N. stated that we already have these resources available to us in Sydney and that this would be a costly exercise for a group that rapidly turns over.

Rachel Evans (R. E.) stated that TAFE has cultural training sessions regarding language and history and that it is useful for all councillors to go through this training as we are organising all of these student sectors within our events. Although we do get some training within our degrees, this training can help us organise the student body better. She stated that ally networks go through this. She spoke in favour of the training and ideally this would be performed at instatements.

Lily Matchett (L. M.) spoke in favour of the training, stating that you can never have too much training, especially given that we have a powerful decision to make going ahead with this training and this would allow us to be more sensitive to a number of issues.

Ahmed Suhaib (A. S.) asked if the university could provide this instead of SUPRA.

Melanie Stevenson (M. S.) enquired about the cost, stating that most councillors are culturally competent and asked if this money be better spent elsewhere. T. G. stated that he believed the training would be performed in-kind. He also wished to return to answering the initial questions the NCCC posed.

R. E. stated that if we do not have enough time for this, that some council meeting time should be devoted as we need to know what our constituents are going through. She suggested a 3-hour session.
A. S. said the goal was to become more culturally competent, we wanted a broader scope and to perform this in September. He also spoke in favour of voluntary attendance, although T. G. stated that he would strongly encourage all councillors to attend.

This will be drafted at management committee and the decision will be made at that committee.

Motion [160808-09]: To accept the resolution that these answers will be communicated to the NCCC and another draft will be presented at the management committee.

Moved: Lily Matchett Seconded: Mariam Mohammed
Carried.

★ 7. Opal Card travel concession campaign

Dhaval Shukla (D. S.) recently had a meeting with all NSW CISA representatives and stated that the aim is to get 10,000 by the 27th of August signatures so that Jenny Leong can force a debate in parliament. They are currently at the 4,500 signature mark. UNSW has committed to providing 3,000 signatures. They are considering running a bad press campaign. The lecture schedule has been consulted for lecture bashing, D. S. encouraged all councillors to lecture bash.

Kiriti Mothra (K. M.) asked if the decision making ability lies with the NSW government. D. S. answered yes it does. K. M. enquired about the bad press campaign and who it would be targeting. T. G. explained that bad press is not slander, rather factual statements about organisations. D. S. also explained that in the past the government has management to inflate statistics by using students who are not physically in Australia to answer surveys.

Cameron Nottingham left 7:01pm

R. E. stated this was much better coming from an international student and that they should be present whilst lecture bashing. This will be brought up in the Education committee meeting. A. N. asked if there could be a spreadsheet to provide availability to lecture bash.

Cameron Nottingham returned 7:06pm

K. M. stated that study Australia and study Sydney should be targeted as they promote Australian education in other nations and then wash their hands of the plight of international students once they are in Australia. He also stated that one argument that was used against extending the concession to international students was that any journey after 8 in a week is free, however, this has recently been revoked. A. S. stated that there is a working group meeting next Wednesday.

★ 8. International students information session event

D. S. stated this would be on the 25th of August from 12:30-2:30pm. He had speakers from study NSW, from visa rights Australia, a member of SUPRA staff (SAAO) and also a staff member from rape and domestic violence Australia. They have spoken to the USU, who will be supporting the event financially for catering (although this needs to be approved at a board meeting on Saturday). He also asked for SUPRA to approve $300 should this fall through.

R. E. suggested that Dhaval should attend and present at the meeting, pitching this form as a part of the ongoing campaign to assert the rights of international students. She stated that study NSW are a pro-government organisation and are not going to address what international students need. K. M. expressed his support for the event but suggested
rethinking inviting study NSW. T. G. explained that often organisations such as SUPRA have to work with people that they will then campaign against in the future.

M. S. suggested moving the $300 approval to management committee, after the USU board meeting. K. M. again expressed his displease with study NSW being invited. R. E. suggested someone from the Redfern legal centre or a speaker from the CISA conference.

Gareth Charles left 7:18pm

M. M. was against inviting study NSW and asked if invitations have been sent out yet. They have not.

**Motion [160808-10]:** To extend speaking list 4 more speakers

Moved: Lily Matchet  Seconded:  

Carried.

A. S. stated that if council were to make a decision on who not to invite, they would also need to suggest who to invite, he also suggested that a working group of 4 would be better placed to make this decision.

N. R. echoed the sentiments that this session is more centred around the rights of international students, not as a PR opportunity for an organisation.

Gareth Charles returned 7:22pm

R. E. stated that study NSW at the CISA conference essentially presented a puff piece every time they spoke and suggested Annie Zhang from the SRC (lawyer).

Kiriti Mothra left 7:24pm

★ 9. **Engineer’s coffee evening**

A. S. has spoken with the engineering faculty and wants to focus on 4 faculties (law, medicine, engineering, business) as well as the SCA and to offer counselling to these students.

Kiriti Mothra returned 7:25pm

An engineering coffee event is planned for September with a budget of $100, $500 for all faculties.

Emmet Gillespie (E. G.) asked how they selected the most problematic faculties.

Gareth Charles left 7:26pm

Alex Trussell (A. T.) asked how this information would then be relayed back to faculty.

T. G. explained that senior management reads Honi Soit as this is internal research without having to pay for it.

**Motion [160808-11]:** To approve $100 for the engineer’s coffee afternoon

Moved: Ahmed Suhaib  Seconded: Dhaval Shukla

Carried.

★

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10. **Funding for Indigenous Health Seminars**

K. D. asked the medical students if the teaching within the degree was sufficient. A. T. stated that it wasn’t sufficient. The course is not designed to help us interact with future patients, rather you have to seek out your own interactions. The lectures that are provided are in small lecture theatres (60 seats for 1200 students). A. T. cautioned that if we plug the gap this year, it leaves us open to doing this in the future as well, when really the engagement should be coming from the university itself. He stated that this was not SUPRA’s place and this funding request should be redirected through to the faculty.

D. S. stated that the USU has also been asked and maybe both the USU and SUPRA could split the funding. L. M. said there was potential to run a campaign and drill the university on it.

T. G. expressed mixed feelings and stated that he believes the contribution shouldn’t be purely monetary and should involve a campaign to plug the gap in medical students’ education. If we fund this event, it should be contingent on SUPRA making their weight felt within the faculty so that it can be robustly funded by the university in the future.

C. N. explained the ‘points system’ of the Indigenous teaching and how it caters to the wide variety of students we have (from international students who have never interacted to people from rural backgrounds who are quite versed). He also stated that this event would still run without our money, as money is purely for catering purposes.

*Gareth Charles returned at 7:35pm*

Alexandra Nixon (A. N.) stated we should contribute perhaps partially monetary, but mostly in lobbying faculty. She understood how wrong this ‘field work’ approach to learning is a deep rooted systemic issue with faculty. She also expressed her support for the event, as it is important in filling in gaps in international students’ educations.

C. N. stated that the faculty is performing a massive course overhaul and has already received a number of complaints, mostly brought forward by our own advocacy team (Sydney University Medical Society). However, he also stated that due to the major overhaul, there is little restructuring occurring at the moment.

R. E. is keen to endorse the event even if we don’t send any money, put it in eGrad, as a whole bunch of people would be keen to come along, including all health disciplines.

**Motion [160808-12]:** To endorse this event and give them a call expressing solidarity and to give $200, with membership forms and the travel concession petition being distributed at the event.

Moved: Rachel Evans 
Seconded: Lily Matchett

Carried.

11. **CAPA Payment & relationship**

*Mariam Mohammed, Yvonne Hu left at 7:44pm*

**Explanation of CAPA**

T. G. explained that CAPA is our peak body on national scale, we pay a $26,000 affiliation fee, and recently they haven’t been doing job as adequately as possible. They tend towards soft lobbying. They are not well resourced, contributions from student associations needed for funding. We are the 2nd or 3rd largest contributor, behind Melbourne and Monash.

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D. S. stated that we are the largest contributor. Oliver Moore (O. M.) stated that CAPA will be bankrupt without SUPRA’s contribution. K. M. asked why membership is different for each university; this is based on the number of postgraduate students.

C. N. stated CAPA originally came out of SUPRA and in the past they have had effective lobbying (youth allowance for Masters programmes, welfare support for domestic students).

R. E. recently attended an SGM with 36 people, stating there is no other way to meet your equivalent office bearers at other universities without CAPA.

**Speaking list**

**Motion [160808-13]**: To reduce speaking time to 60 seconds

Moved: Cameron  Seconded: 

Carried.

R. E. explained where the money went: 1 staffer, the president is paid full time wage, OBs are paid minimally, organisers are paid minimally, liberal party on offensive that we have a national body, can change nature of body.

K. D. asked what do they do for us. R. E. replied press releases, campaigns, going to Canberra and having pull. K. M. stated this was an opportunity to rebuild CAPA, make it more activism orientated and as a platform to further activism on campus. N. R. was hesitant to defund, as peak bodies are good and we don’t have the resources for national campaigns. He also stated they have not done a press release since May, and not been in the media since February. He suggested making demands if we do affiliate.

A. T. asked what framework we have to make demands and make those changes, he also asked what is the definition of a peak body, stating that surely national campaigns can be organised by working with other universities. T. G. explained that CAPA takes SUPRA’s mandate on a national level and that we can intervene on the conference floor and have our representatives elected.

D. S. suggested negotiating how much our affiliation fee is, given that $26,000 is a lot of money. T. G. explained that interventions require motivated activists independent of costs but that it might be possible for us to negotiate.

Brandon Munn (B. M.) asked if other universities were as annoyed at CAPA as us. D. S. stated 3 universities have not paid currently. K. D. stated we can’t pay them until late September anyway. R. E. suggested inviting the general secretary to plead their case to SUPRA council and we should consider hosting the CAPA conference at USyd.

**Motion [160808-14]**: Invite President and general secretary of CAPA to September council meeting and allow them time to speak and relevant to student life at the university, making it clear that we are withholding funding until after then.

Moved: Rachel Evans  Seconded: Lily Matchett

Carried.

**12. Working group for Level 1 SUPRA Space**

A. S. stated there would be 3 meetings before next council. This Friday 2pm is first meeting. He will send out email, share ideas and is open to suggestions.

T. G. asked if staff can make a contribution as it is their workspace.

The deadline is before the September council meeting.

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13. **Radical Sex and Consent Week**

This is occurring on the 30th, 31st August, 1st September and has been pitched to the USU. One event is sex ed 102 – sexual education in a multicultural society, focusing on those cultures where sex ed is traditionally poorly taught. This will also aid in domestic students understanding how international students form their views. The plan is for Elizabeth Millar to be the facilitator for the panel. One student will talk about sex ed, CAPS will talk about consent and 1 professor will speak about cross cultural communication. The only problem at the moment is that it is scheduled on a Thursday, when all four of the organising members are in class, this can either be moved or run by someone else. L. M. volunteered.

14. **Postgraduate Education Action Collective**

_John Fell left 8:10pm_

_Gareth Charles returned 8:11pm_

A. S. spoke about needing people from each faculty as a point of representation and to make them part of the network, he asked for details of anyone councillors thought would be interested.

R. E. spoke about the government being in caretaker mode and that welfare cuts and fee deregulation are on hiatus at the moment, but that this is a good time to reconvene the forces. NUS is holding a national day of action on August the 24th. She was disappointed they didn’t have any international students on the last platform and she would like a request from PEAC to NUS to include an international student to reflect the concession card campaign.

T. G. explained that the arts faculty will be sorted soon. A. S. also spoke to the importance of getting representatives from each faculty elected to the academic boards. K. M. asked what the purpose of PEAC was, was it a network for bringing in people to discuss education in general or more specific issues?

15. **Rainbow campus/wedding update**

This is happening next Tuesday, invites have been sent to senior levels of management. The problem is that the university will not sign on because they do not formally support marriage equality. They also will not change trans student’s names. There will be a photo with SUPRA President after this council meeting. The event itself will be entirely vegan and environmentally sustainable. Hopefully SUPRA councillors will hold the SUPRA flag behind the couples.

16. **SCA Update**

Susan Nelson (S. N.) expressed her thanks for the printing SUPRA did for the SCA and also for organising the activist training day. She stated that it was a win to keep SCA within USyd and avoid the merger with UNSW. There will be a campaign on the 17th of August (beginning at Rozelle and moving to Camperdown). There will also be a town hall meeting on the 20th of August. She also stated that the BVA (Bachelor of Visual Arts) has been taken out of the UAC guide.

**Motion [160808-15]**: SUPRA endorses the rally to save SCA on 17th August and expresses council’s support of the SCA and opposition to the university’s plan to move SCA to Camperdown. SUPRA maintains that the campaign is called SCA stay campaign. SUPRA calls for SCA to stay at Rozelle and reinstate the BVA for 2017 enrolments at
Rozelle site. SUPRA calls on all postgraduate students to down their tools and attend the rally.

Moved: Susan  
Seconded: Alex  
Carried.

Cameron Nottingham abstained

17. Black lives matter endorsement

R. E. stated that there were 3 rallies in the last week and SUPRA wasn’t in the position to endorse these as we hadn’t met. She wants us to be able to endorse on a snap decision (in this day and age with technology). A. N. stated that policy committee will discuss this.

Motion [160808-16]: To endorse all black lives matter rallies and actions for the duration of the next month, commencing at the closure of this meeting

Moved: Rachel  
Seconded: Lily  
Carried.

18. Constitutional Amendments

T. G. asked councillors to flag the clauses causing contention (all the changed clauses are in yellow). At last count, there were 9 potential constitutional crises. He will ask the previous returning officer about changes to voting reform.

Gareth Charles, Alexandra Nixon left 8:32pm

K. M. asked about the clause regarding the President not holding more than one office. T. G. interjected that this was just a rewording. K. M. continued, asking if this should be extended to all office bearers. T. G. expressed strong support that an equity officer should be also able to hold another office bearer position. However, T. G. also lamented that the 35 hours a week that the President is given a stipend for is nowhere near the amount of work done, and doesn’t take into account the emotional labour. As a result, he believes a person wouldn’t be able to hold two executive positions.

K. M. stated that there are potentially 23 councillors for 5 executive and the DSP place and that there are a substantial number of councillors to fill vacancies, expressing his support for decentralising power and not letting it all occur in one place.

T. G. posed the question on whether the centralisation of power outweighs the capacity and ability of the executive to have a broad representative from equity groups. He also stated that equity officers are the only places truly set aside for those groups.

Alexandra Nixon returned 8:35pm

It was stated that international students elected to council may not have the capacity to fill office whereas the international officer can take an office and contribute further to the organisation.

C. N. expressed his disagreement with reducing the women’s places from 12 to 8 and T. G. explained that this is a debate to be deferred to policy committee on Friday, and the women’s and queer officers will also have a discussion.

Gareth Charles returned 8:38pm

L. M. explained that in other organisations the elections run by the autonomous groups isn’t always respected.

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18.1. Changes to organizational structure (Rebecca Johnson)
This will be discussed at policy committee.

19. Other Business
D. S. enquired about the Indigenous officer portfolio. T. G. explained that he will call the election next week. D. S. asked about a liaison officer and T. G. stated he would rather have an acting officer (given that we have members of council that are Indigenous).

K. M. stated that some faculties don’t get printing allowances and that required textbooks are now only sold by private providers. He also lamented the proposed merging of the faculties, reducing the power of professors to organise seminars and conferences. A fact sheet could be a good way to go about this, and R. E. suggested inviting someone from the NTEU to speak. These will be taken to education committee.

Rebecca Johnson arrived 8:42pm
Meeting closed at 8:45pm