Minutes of a meeting of the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association Council to be held in SNH 3001 on the 8TH of May 2018 at 6:00PM

Chair: Mariam Mohammed
Minutes: Oliver Moore
Attendance: Rachel Evans, Julia McConnochie, Nic Avery, Jessie Zhang, Sam Bassett, James Leeder, Karishma Menon, Dean Lovett, Samay Sabharwal, Kiriti Mortha, Luoning Dong, Patrick Cook, Cathy Eatock (arrived 6:38pm)
Staff: TBC
Guests: Geena George, Sanda Buol, Weihong Liang

1. Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome
We acknowledge the Gadigal people of the Eora Nation as the traditional custodians of the land. We acknowledge that the land upon which we meet is stolen land, and that sovereignty was never ceded. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, and extend those respects to all First Nations persons here. This always was, and always will be, Aboriginal land.

2. Governance & Declaration of COI
   2.1. Apologies
   Marguerite Biassetti
   Mike Butler
   Jennifer Nicholson
   Yang Fu
   Manisha Reza Paul
   Jeevan Jagnam
   Eila Vinwyn
   Daniella Eassey
2.2. Proxies

Marguerite Biassetti proxies to Mariam Mohammed (1st, Kiriti Mortha 2nd)
Mike Butler proxies to Cathy Eaton (1st, Kiriti Mortha 2nd, Natasha Chaudhary 3rd)
Jennifer Nicholson proxies to Oliver Moore (1st)
Yang Fu proxies to Dean Lovett (1st, Samay Sabharwal 2nd, Luoning Dong 3rd)
Manisha Reza Paul proxies to Karashima Rajan Menon (1st)
Jeevan Jagannath proxies to Oliver Moore (1st)
Elia Vinwyn proxies to Rachel Evans (1st, Nic Avery 2nd, Oliver Moore 3rd)
Daniella Eassey proxies to Luoning Dong (1st, Bec Johnson 2nd)
Natasha Chaudhary proxies to Luoning Dong (1st, Bec Johnson 2nd)
Jessie Zhang proxies to Nic Avery (1st)
Riya Brahma proxies to Karashima Menon (1st)
Jocelyn Drakakis proxies to Dean Lovett (1st, Samay Sabharwal 2nd, Luoning Dong 3rd)
Bec Johnson proxies to Samay Sabharwal

2.3. Starring of Items

Council is invited to star any agenda items they would like discussed.
Recommendation: That the Council approves all unstarred items.

2.4. Resignations (if relevant)

[180508-1]: approve all unstarred items
Moved: Dean Seconded: Kiriti
Motion carried.

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3. Minutes and Reports of Meetings

3.1. Minutes of the previous month’s meeting

3.1.1. Meeting of Council, 12th April 2018

At 4.3.2.1 there is a sentence to be changed to “floor has been taken from them”.

3.1.2. Meeting of Management Committee, 27th April 2018

3.1.2.1 ManCom’s recommendation regarding CAPA affiliation fee

ManCom discussed affiliating with CAPA. We want to affiliate and pay the full affiliation fee.

[180508-2]: To approve CAPA’s affiliation fees for this year
Moved: Kiriti Seconded: Dean
Motion carried.

3.2. Business arising from the minutes
4. Officer Reports

4.1. Executive Reports

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4.1.1. PRESIDENT
Mariam Mohammed [report received late]
Kiriti Mortha [report received late]

Rachel Evans (R.E.) notes that in an article written for Pulp there was a disclosure that there was $44000 spent in 2017-2018 and then $20000 spent in 2018 on legal fees. She asks how this money was spent and approved. She is concerned that council was not told about these expenses. She notes that there is a pro bono lawyer who they can use.

[180508-3]: that the presidents produce a report on the spending of this money and account for the expenditure
Moved: Rachel Seconded: Nic
Motion failed.

[180508-4a]: that the presidents not spend any more council money without speaking to Council.
Moved: Rachel Seconded: Nic
Motion failed.

[180508-4b]: that the council approve $5000 for the legal fees for harassment they have received in their office
Moved: Samay Seconded: Dean
Motion carried.

Mariam Mohammed (M.M.) notes that the SUPRA council year is not the same as our financial year which is why some of these expenses do not align. She notes that some of this would have been done in the previous council term. She believes that this will be discussed later in item 9 so there will not be much discussion on this. Kiriti Mortha (K.M.) notes that this is not Council money, it’s SUPRA money, this is student money. This money has not been paid yet and will come to management committee when it needs to be paid. James Leeder (J.L.) asks about the current funding has not yet been paid. He questions whether we have contracted the service we need to pay it legally, should we not be pre-approving the money. M.M. notes that we approved up to $5000 in council money to be spent on contracting legal advice. Management committee also approved some money, which would add up to the total.

[180508-5]: To approve the president’s report
Moved: Dean Seconded: Samay
Motion approved.

4.1.2. VICE PRESIDENT
4.1.3. EDUCATION OFFICER
Rachel Evans
R.E. notes that there have been a lot of campaigns running in the last little while.

Procedural: To move item 14 to now
Moved: Ollie
Motion carried.

Procedural: To include item 15 in part of the Education officer report
Moved: Rachel
Motion failed.

[180508-6]: To approve the report
Moved: James    Seconded: Julia
Motion carried.

4.1.4. TREASURER
Luoning Dong

4.1.5. SECRETARY
Oliver Moore

4.1.6. DIRECTOR OF STUDENT PUBLICATIONS
Vacant

4.2. Equity Reports

1.1.1. ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER OFFICER
Cathy Eatock [no report received]

ACTION: Defer to ManCom
An email was sent by Cathy and was read by K.M.

Dear SUPRA Councillors
I understand Rachel Evans raised concerns at the lack of written up reports from the Indigenous Equity Officer position at the last Council meeting.

While I have regularly provided detailed verbal accounts of my work and I have clearly exceeded the required duties of the position, the sheer heavy load and extremely hostile environment with which I have had to undertake this work, has inhibited the written drafting of these reports now attached. I also note that this substantial amount of work was undertaken without assistance form staff despite requests for assistance, and without significant assistance from fellow Councillors, though I had tried to organise for Mike Butler to support this work, his contribution as an Indigenous Councillor was severely limited though decisions of SUPRA.
Accordingly the volume of work required and the ongoing impact of attacks, outlined at the previous Council meeting in March, is the reason these written reports are late. However, I acknowledge the need for documented reports so attach all my reports up to and including January 2017. These have taken some time to compile so I was unable to complete Feb, March & April. However, I will provide a verbal report on these months this evening as they have been significantly quieter periods. Though I have progressed a few key areas worth reporting on.

I also note that my pay has not been paid consistently since October 2017 due to unresolved issues around the payment of late invoices so the matter of my receiving my pay is not relevant, though I consider given I have clearly undertaken the work, above and beyond that required by the position of Indigenous Equity Officer, I believe I should be paid these wages once that financial query has been resolved.

Accordingly, please refer to the attached monthly reports, some of which have previously been submitted. If there are any queries regarding any aspect of these reports I am happy to respond to those at the next Council Meeting. Any further outstanding Reports will be submitted prior to that June meeting.

Yours Faithfully
Cathy Eatock

Nic Avery (N.A.) thanks K.M. for reading this out. He thinks it’s concerning that these issues have been raised. However he notes an issue with the initial concern is misplaced, there was an issue raised about a number of positions where reports were not submitted to council.

1.1.2. DISABILITIES OFFICER
Marguerite Biassetti

1.1.3. INTERNATIONAL OFFICER
Samay Sabharwal [no report received]

S.S. notes that he has not claimed money as there has not been a lot of work in this portfolio. He is looking to hand over to the successor. He has seen a lot of growth in this portfolio over the last year. He also notes that the International Student Taskforce has been a great position for doing work and have a report coming out later this year.

**ACTION:** The presidents to distribute this report when it is received.

[180508-7]: To approve this report

**Moved:** Dean **Seconded:** Kiriti

Motion carried.
1.1.4. QUEER OFFICER

Oliver Moore

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1.1.5. WOMEN’S OFFICER

Natasha Chaudhary [no report received]

M.M. notes that Natasha has been liaising with student support services to draft a policy on sexual assault. There is no information about a timeline for this issue. She has been working on a year long anti racism campaign with Safer Communities.

ACTION: Defer to management committee

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1.1.6. SATTELITE CAMPUS OFFICER

Vacant

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1.2. 4.3 Motion from reports

[180508-8]: Approve leave of absence for Mariam Mohammed as Co-President from 1st – 20th June for academic purposes, save for meeting commitments already made.

Moved: Mariam Mohammed    Seconded: Kiriti Mortha

Motion carried.

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5. Staff Report

A report from staff was included in the council pack.

[180508-9]: To thank staff for their work

Moved: Ollie    Seconded: Pat

Motion carried.

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6. Appointment of Auditor

K.M. notes that every year at the AGM an Auditor is approved after being recommended by council. We’ve been using Charles Pitt who has been our auditor for a number of years.

[180508-10]: To recommend to the AGM that we appoint Charles Pitt as the auditor for the next financial year.

Moved: Kiriti    Seconded: Samay

Motion carried.
7. Partial financial support to attend the 9th Annual National Disability Summit - Monday 20 to Tuesday 21 August, 2018

In the role of Disability Officer, it is important to attend conferences in regard to disability support.
CAPA should be able to pay for conference registration, flights and transfers and per diem.
I am requesting financial support for accommodation due to my degree of disability.
The cheapest safe and clean accommodation that is close to the conference venue is at present about $160.00 per night at a discounted rate - Four points. All told about 480.65 for three nights - Sunday, Monday and Tuesday.

[180508-11]: To approve $490 for the Disability Officer to attend the 9th Annual National Disability Summit.
Moved: Dean Seconded: Patrick
Motion carried.

8. Wine and Cheese in June

Luoning Dong (L.D.) really wants to have one more wine and cheese in June as there were only three in this semester. This is just a small amount of money that we have available. We have used $3500 additional expenses on the printing. She notes that we have external printing companies for some things so this is a huge expense. M.M. asks if they have thought of any dates or a budget. L.D. suggests the Friday of week 13, the last day of semester. N.A. will commend the motion. He is confused about the inclusion of the printing in this matter. There was an email about overuse of printers earlier in this year, however there would need to be some more discussion about this, as student campaigns need to print flyers and posters. He notes that if we’re spending over the budget we should change the budget. M.M. notes that this comes from the finance manager not the presidents. S.S. notes that we shouldn’t be printing excessively as it’s bad for the environment. He notes that its important to student campaigns but not to students themselves. He suggests use of social media campaigns. K.M. agrees with having another wine and cheese. He understands that spending on something not related to students we can spend money on things that are directly related to me. He notes that a lot of printing is done to benefit outside organisations, not just SUPRA. He notes that it’s important to know how much we’re spending. L.D. notes that we can’t change the budget to sacrifice student initiatives money. She notes that she wanted to bring this up at a previous council meeting but there was a lack of quorum. M.M. notes that this would be at June 8. R.E. thinks we should have another wine and cheese, however notes that leaflets and posters are a crucial part of SUPRA’s work. And that there was an endorsement of campaigns at the SUPRA meetings. She notes that the community consultation budget hasn’t been spent, so there might be a way to send some unspent funds in the portfolio into the printing budget. Cathy Eatock (C.E.) asks how much is actually being spent on printing, so this is a fundamental way of getting information out to students, so would support students in general.

[180508-12]: to approve $1000 to have a wine and cheese on June 8
Moved: Luoning Seconded: Samay
Motion carried.

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9. **Student organisations need to stay in student hands**
N.A. read the following statement.

**Preamble**

Student organisations are entrusted with the task of representing student interests. The interests of students are increasingly out of line with the corporate model of governance followed by universities. This is the case in Australia where universities are paying senior executives high salaries, merging faculties, cutting staff, increasing casualisation of the university workforce, charging exorbitant fees to international students, pushing for fee deregulation and cutting funding to student information services. This context means student-led organisations are more important than ever. Though cooperation between student unions and university administration is warranted when it serves student interests, such cooperation must never compromise the student body’s independence.

Inviting the university administration to take control of the governance of these organisations is a betrayal of student interests.

Presidents Mariam Mohammed and Kiriti Mortha’s call for the University to investigate and intervene in the governance of our association endangers the position of the students we represent. It will directly interfere with the quality and conditions of our education. It can only be expected university management will use their new position, if attained, to quell dissent against policies harmful to students. It is particularly worrying given the history of student unions being subsumed by university managements in the Voluntary Student Unionism era.

Problems within student organisations must be resolved by students. The fact that council was not consulted prior to the presidents’ decision to approach University management is deeply undemocratic. All questions of governance should either be addressed by the present and incoming elected student representatives on council or brought to the Annual General Meeting where members can address them. There is no reason to believe an unelected University administration would make these decisions better than a fully informed and democratically organised student body.

The presidents’ actions are a breach of trust of the students we represent. They are a betrayal of all our interests and endanger the quality and conditions of postgraduate education at the University of Sydney.

**[180508-13]: SUPRA council condemns all moves by student-led organisations to allow university management intervention into their conduct.**

**Moved:** Nicholas Avery  **Seconded:** Rachel Evans

**Motion failed.** Nic Avery and Rachel Evans voted for this motion. Dean Lovett voted against this motion.
SUPRA council directs the presidents, Mariam Mohammed and Kiriti Mortha, to retract their request for SUPRA to be investigated by the University of Sydney Senate.

Moved: Nicholas Avery  Seconded: Rachel Evans

Motion failed.

that SUPRA council directs the presidents to further emphasise on their previous request to be investigated by the Senate.

Moved: Samay  Seconded: Dean

Motion carried.

SUPRA council directs the presidents, Mariam Mohammed and Kiriti Mortha, to affirm their commitment to the staff Enterprise Agreement and the availability of grievance processes to assure staff have safe working environments.

Moved: Nicholas Avery  Seconded: Rachel Evans

Motion failed.

SUPRA members who endorse these motions:

Nicholas Avery, Master of Political Economy (Coursework), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Rachel Evans, Master of Research, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Jason Ray, Master of Occupational Therapy, Faculty of Health Sciences
Geena George, Masters of Social Work (Qualifying), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Phillippa Murphy-Haste, Masters of Work (Qualifying), Faculty of Art and Social Sciences
Oliver Mispelhorn, Master of Political Economy (Coursework), Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Sam Bassett, Doctor of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine
Oliver Moore, Doctor of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
James Leeder, Doctor of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine
Julia McConnochie, Master of Development Studies, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Rafi Alam, Doctor of Philosophy, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences
Matilda Surtees, Doctor of Medicine, Faculty of Medicine
M.M. notes that the Council was made aware of this at the last council meeting and gave the presidents permission to resolve this in the way they see fit. She says that what SUPRA is asking for is an independent governance review that would pinpoint where problematic areas are. They want to be aware of councillors not being made to feel comfortable in SUPRA spaces, and the isolation of people of colour within the SUPRA offices. They want a separate independent organisation to do this, as Melbourne did last year. This cost $100,000 and they are asking the university to pay this money and the SUPRA Council will then be able to act on the recommendations. The only thing this achieves is transparency. The recommendations from the report undertaken under the previous council were not undertaken. M.M. states that the biggest reason to do this is that we are engaging more and more people of colour, however when you are failing to provide a safe space for people of colour there is an issue. The quality of advocacy is diluted as there is a greater workload explaining the issues of racial bias. The last three women’s officers have resigned mid-term due to the racial bias and the effort required to be in this position. It would be not this council but the future council of SUPRA who would act on any recommendations of this report. K.M. notes that he has always said that you’re welcome to speak to him about them. He notes that there is only one person on this list who asked for more information. This report speaks about zero consultation however there was no consultation to this. He asks people to consider that racial oppression takes place even in progressive spaces. He notes that there is a lot of spin in this document. He notes that there are systematic problems in SUPRA that are exploited to give hostility to minorities. He notes that currently SUPRA is not welcoming and he has faced exclusion in these spaces. He notes that there are complaints from people who use their casework services. James Leeder (J.L.) notes that he is sorry to hear about the extent of the exclusion people are facing. In those cases he would support increased sensitivity and cultural training. It might also be worth looking into the grievance procedures. He notes that that a review in line with what GSA put forward is not in the interest of solving racial bias. This instead proposed to give the university much more power over the organisation. He is also unsure as to how this would be independent if the university paid for it. He has great concerns about this review in its current form. K.M. notes that the root cause of some of this is that the grievance procedures have been misused and have been taken out of context. There has not been a grievance meeting that they have been made aware of in the current term. He notes that there is too great a position of power for the president to determine how the grievance process is put forward. Also once the independent organisation recommendations are put forward, these are never acted upon. This is why the grievance and governance review are tied together. R.E. commends the motion, and its worried around statements about asking management to step in. She has studied the Macquarie and UTS cases.
where the postgrad organisations were wiped out. She notes that there are a large number of students who would like to be organised against the corporate agenda. She notes that she went through cultural competency training in late 2016. It would be good to have this training. She notes that as the motion says she would like them to retract their offer to management. M.M. notes that in terms of the grievance procedures as they stand, while on paper we are the employers of the staff, while the councillors do not have that protection. She notes that these protections are similar to what they’d have in a large corporation, however there is not a space within these protections for Councillors to take grievances against staff. She notes that the Presidents did performance development reviews, a staff member said they did not want to do this with them, and then the staff member said that they would not like to be involved in an interview with another woman of colour. She notes that people of colour who are office bearers do not feel comfortable in the SUPRA space. They found a huge number of letters of complaint from students and from NATSIPA from the last year. She thinks it is important that SUPRA conduct this in a transparent manner. D.L. notes that he was discriminated against him at his gym, and one of the things that really hurts to bring back up is recounting their pain and hurt. He notes that people not of their communities should not have to recount their trauma to people not of their community. P.C. notes that the issue here seems to be about the grievance procedures, he does not believe that there is an appropriate need for the university to step in. M.M. notes that the president is also the general manager of the association, however this means that sometimes people will be using the office for political gain. She notes that every couple of years the presidency falls into bad hands and there is an issue. This is due to the consolidation of power in a small space. The Enterprise Agreement was signed onto without any legal council, which means not much can be done about this until 2020 when the new EA is negotiated. SUPRA has gone past the threshold where one person can just run everything, this needs to be run by one apolitical person separate to the presidents. P.C. asks why they think the university will continue to act in our interests. M.M. states that this would be an independent review. C.E. notes that when she first came to her position she was inundated by complaints, she also faced some tension due to the history of Mike Butler. She notes that she does not have a computer she can use. She notes that she was not involved in the development of this strategy. She thinks that there is a problem with the toxicity in SUPRA. She thinks everyone shares some responsibility for this and notes that in the real world there is no value in having a real adversarial approach. She notes that people need to treat each other with respect. She also notes that the report on the incident with Mike Butler was not distributed. She does not believe that the training that has occurred has been sufficient. She notes that this is outside the purview of this council. However she notes that a previous president trashed the treaty event and stalled at a critical time in the development of the event. A non-indigenous person going to an indigenous organisation and trashing an individual is damaging and toxic. She has found this year particularly challenging in the way she has been made aware of the human character. J.L. thanks C.E. and D.L. for sharing. He thinks it’s all our hopes that SUPRA can be a body that can be working for students rights. He sees there as being grievances for students and councillors which need to be resolved. As the EA is valid until 2020 it is unclear how this investigation would be effective. Regarding the management issues, there has been some conversation with the SRC and other SUPRA members about the need for a full time office manager who reports to the president but has a good degree of autonomy. He believes that there are quite a few ways this can be
resolved. He thinks we should withdraw asking management in the time being as there is opportunity for us to discuss these within this council and that we should perhaps have to put some money towards. There are a range of different people or firms that we could have a conversation with about the best way to move forward. He has been following the GSA restructure and does not believe that a similar restructure would not resolve any of the problems that SUPRA has. We think this should be in the hands of the incoming council. Given the amount of money the university will spend they would want change, additionally, there’s a question of where this money will come from. R.E. thinks instances of racial discrimination and other discrimination need to be recorded and noted down. She notes that SUPRA can hold its head up high on the work we’ve done in a range of communities. She thinks we should not be bringing in management to do this work. She thinks a review will not help, however she notes the experience of staff is crucial to the running of the organisation and the running of the workplace. She finds the arguments given for going to management are not convincing. M.M. thinks that solving this internally is very optimistic, as last year she was asked to apologise to three white men. There is no purview for us to dictate to the next council how they can resolve this work. None of us can address this because it is a systemic issue. She notes that we must always honour the EA. They cannot make sure that the next council will honour any decision we make to have an internal change. K.M. agrees with C.E. and would like to second what M.M. stated, he does not have faith that internal processes are going to be followed. He notes that just then R.E. validated D.L.’s experiences but not his. He notes that motion three is not relevant as they must follow the EA. Processes for differences of opinion on the EA are built into the document. In terms of the governance review he agrees that using the structure of the SRC could be useful. He notes that there is a clause that changes can be made through a resolution from Council and then through a WCC. R.E. notes that NATSIPA has not endorsed the review or passed any internal motions regarding SUPRA. She would like to know what their definition of racial discrimination is. M.M. will not be sitting here and recounting her experiences of racial discrimination.

**Procedural:** Move to item 12

**Moved:** Ollie

**Motion carried.**

★ 10. Rebrand update and completion

★ 11. HDR Equity position

★ 12. Request for Support: Camden postgrad catch-up $600

**ACTION:** Direct the students enquiries to the newly elected satellite campus officer.

C.E. suggests we fund this in addition to referring them to the new officer. She notes that this is a student body that needs more effort to be made.
[180508-16]: to approve $600 for Camden campus postgrad catch up.
Moved: Ollie  Seconded: James
Motion carried.

13. Electoral Arbiter

14. International Students Need Travel Concessions

“NSW is the only state in Australia that does not offer its international students concession prices on travel. It is also the largest recruiter of international students in Australia - currently home to 300,000 students. University of Sydney has a large number of international students studying here, including study abroad and postgrad programs. We contribute to University of Sydney, Sydney and NSW both economically and culturally.

We should not have to pay higher travel fees simply because of our country of birth. A new International Students Need Concession Cards petition has been drawn up by international students at Bankstown campus of WSU and the SCC (Student Council) at Bankstown is leading the campaign.

The petition simply asks that international students be treated equally under the travel laws of NSW. It has already garnered a good deal of support from USyd students - (600 for OWeek). A recent stall in Parramatta received an overwhelming response as well.

The message is clear - domestic and international students alike support concession cards for international students. We know the individual universities cannot change the laws. That’s up to NSW transport.

The Vice-Chancellor at Western Sydney University is in favour of the campaign. We hope Sydney University and other universities around Sydney will come out publicly in support of our campaign. The universities’ backing will help draw attention to the issue from the government and help facilitate lasting change.”

Geena George (G.G.) read this statement. M.M. notes that the university has already signed on. She also notes that the endorsement of the campaign was signed onto a few meetings ago. She also notes that all the international students across the uni are working on a single committee. G.G. notes that they have had talks with Panda etc. M.M. notes that there is an autonomous group of international students working on this campaign already. She asks if this is in consultation. R.E. says that lots of international students have signed the petition. The SRC passed a motion signing on to the campaign. She commends the motion. She notes that there was not quorum the last time a student came to endorse this. Samay Sabhwarwal (S.S.) notes that there were previously 10000 signatures however they were lost. There was an issue with CISA as they did not contribute the signatures. He recommends consolidating. He suggests they hire an international student to design the stickers. Dean Lovett (D.L.) would like to clarify that the stickers should not be used to deface public property.
[180508-17]: That SUPRA join the Sydney University SRC in endorsing the international student concession card campaign.

Moved: Pat Seconded: James
Motion carried.

[180508-18]: That SUPRA spend $1000 on stickers for the campaign. That we ask an international student to design a sticker (one person, 4 hours or so of labour).

Moved: Jessie Seconded: Samay
Motion carried.

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15. Motion to endorse and provide support to the #DisarmUnis national project

Preamble

#DisarmUnis is a new national project to demilitarise our universities. It seeks to expose the links between universities and the military industry in:

a. where universities invest their money;
b. the partnerships they make with arms companies; and
c. the presence of heads of military companies in university governance.

The basic philosophy is that there is a conflict of interest between universities that are supposed to be concerned with social justice, human rights and learning and the military industry that profits from the destruction of human lives, communities and the environment.

Whilst there is a long history of local projects of demilitarisation at different university campuses (for instance Lockout Lockheed Martin from the University of Melbourne), most recently this campaign got off the ground at the University of Sydney when Lara Sonnenschein from the SRC launched a series of FOIs exposing the University’s links with a number of weapons companies (see http://honisoit.com/2018/03/usyd-tied-to-arms-industry/). Most notably, this research exposed the fact that Chancellor Belinda Hutchinson is the chairperson of weapons company Thales Australia, which is a supplier of weapons to the Australian Defense Force. Last year, USyd signed an MOU with Thales so the two can collaborate more closely over the next five years. The report also exposed that Sydney University has more than $4 million invested in international arms manufacturing companies.

From Lara’s efforts, there is a lot of energy to create a national network of local campaigns working to demilitarise universities. The first move is to launch FOIs at all Australian Universities, following Lara’s example, and to compile this information in a national report. The aim is to have this report ready to be launched by the start of semester 2, this year.

This is a critical time for SUPRA to provide support.

With an endorsement of the project, we can lend our institutional backing to it, meaning that it will receive greater media attention (there are similar endorsements being sought at universities across the country, in peace and environment groups, and at the National Tertiary Education Union).
There is also the opportunity for us to co-author the report. This would entail providing more ongoing support, and for office bearers and publications and administration staff lending support as necessary.

In order to have the report ready for the start of semester two, it is necessary to have the FOI requests submitted by the end of next week. For all of the Australian universities, at least $1200 is required (each request costs around $30). This is a critical time for the campaign, and money needs to go to funding the report as soon as possible. A bank account is being created as we speak. We had the first national meeting just last night.

There is a lot of a momentum and energy in this project. It is occurring during a time when the federal government is engaging in the biggest investment in defense since the Second World War, and when the Turnbull government has just last year slashed $2.2 billion from higher education. (Note the resonance with the National Union of Students’ Books not Bombs campaign.)

As Lara wrote in her article, “It’s time to revive the anti-war sentiment of the 60s on our campuses. The University must divest from corporations like Honeywell, and instead fund research which improves lives, rather than destroys them. So while universities might be strengthening their ties, it is we students who hold the collective power to sever them and disarm USyd.”

**Motions**

1. That SUPRA Council endorse the project of demilitarisation at the University of Sydney.
2. That SUPRA Council endorse the #DisarmUnis national project.
3. That SUPRA Council provide $200 in funding to the national FOI project for #DisarmUnis.

**Moved:** Julia McConnachie  
**Seconded:** Nicholas Avery

This item was not discussed.

### 16. Other Business

**[180508-19]:** That SUPRA endorse the snap action on Wednesday 1pm at Bankstown Hospital to support Omid.  
**Moved:** Rachel  
**Seconded:** Nic  
**Motion carried.**

C.E. would like to note that the AGM is coming up, she’d like to invite Uncle Mark to come give the Welcome to Country, he gave one last year. K.M. notes that he was there at one of the general meetings last year to give a Welcome to Country and someone asked him to stop. N.A. notes that he was using his position to advocate for Mike Butler. R.E. notes that there was a lot of editorialising by him at that meeting.

**[180508-20]:** to invite Uncle Mark back to give a welcome to country.  
**Moved:** Cathy  
**Seconded:** Kiriti  
**Motion carried.**
Meeting closed at 8:12pm.