**Minutes for the Council Meeting of the Sydney University Postgraduate Representative Association held on** **24th June 2021 at 6:30 PM via Zoom**

**Chair:** Yige Peng (Y.P.)

**Minutes:** Frona Wan (F. W.), Celine Li (C. L.)

**Attendance:** Xinheng Wu (X. W.), Xiner Yuan (X. Y.), Sally Xie (S. X.), Eolande Bao (E. B.), Sihan Liu (S. L.), Zheng Li (Z. L.), Jiayun Li (J. L.), Jiang Li (J. L.), Qinghan Zhang (Q. Z.), Zoey Ding (Z. D.), Di Wang (D. W.), Moxuan Chang (M. C.), Arash Araghi (A. A.), Gemma Lucy Smart (G. S.), Joseph Black (J. B.), Chang Wang (C. W.), Xuning Feng (X. F.), Bryan Xia (B. X.), Kai Yao (K.Y.)

**Staff:** -

**Guests:** Chetan Sahai (C.S.)

# 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.

# Governance & Declaration of COI



## Apologies

Minran Liu (M.L.)， Shuyun Zhu (S.Z.)

## Proxies

## Minran Liu (M.L.) to Xinheng Wu (X.W.)

Shuyun Zhu (S.Z.) to Michael Li (M.L.)

## Starring of Items

Councillors are invited to star any agenda items they would like to discuss.

**Recommendation:** That the Council approves all unstarred items.

## Resignations (if relevant)

Nil

# Minutes and Reports of Meetings

## Minutes of previous month’s meetings

## Council, 27th May 2021

Moved: D.W.

Seconded: J. B.

In favor: 18

Motion approved.

## Business arising from the minutes

Nil

# Officer Reports

* A.A. enquired if the officers could briefly go through their reports. It was suggested to read through the documents beforehand, considered that individual reporting might be time-consuming.
* G.S. also asked if the format of the report (i.e. timesheets) could be changed by placing a summary on top to explain the major issues officers have dealt with. This was agreed by X.W. As discussed before, each equity officer or committee member in the new council should specify their own working items in the updated duty statements.

## Executive Reports

## CO-PRESIDENTS

Minran Liu

Xinheng Wu

## CO-VICE PRESIDENTS

Yuhang(Bryan) Xia

Xiner Yuan

## CO-EDUCATION OFFICERS

Di Wang

Ziyao (Zoey) Ding

## CO-SECRETARIES

Zhuoyuan(Sally) Xie

Shiyu(Eolande) Bao

## CO-TREASURERS

Xuning Feng

Yige Peng

## DIRECTOR OF STUDENT PUBLICATIONS

Qinghan Zhang (Hanna)

Moxuan Chang (Agatha)

## Equity Reports

## ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER OFFICER

## *[Vacant]*

## DISABILITIES OFFICER

Gemma Smart

## CO-INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS

Zheng(Michael) Li

Shuyun(Aaron) Zhu

## QUEER OFFICER

## *[Vacant]*

## CO-WOMEN’S OFFICERS

Junying (Cathy) Chen

Maruge (April) Zhao

## SATELLITE CAMPUS OFFICER

Sihan Liu

Moved: G. S

Seconded: X.W.

In favor: 16

Abstain: 1

Motion approved.

## Business arising from reports

# Reports by Staff Members *[Yet to Receive]*

* We hadn’t received staff reports before the meeting. It was advised to follow up on this issue and make sure they can submit the report on time.
* X.W. mentioned that a motion was carried last year to request for punctuality in staff report submission each month. Executive members in the next Council, e.g. Presidents or Secretaries were suggested to discuss with senior staff members regarding this issue.

# 

# Council to approve providing cultural awareness training to SUPRA Council and Staff members as a part of Safe Communications; Building cultural awareness and safer communications at workplace should be emphasized as a significant topic for the future Council Instatement

**Background:**

The University of Sydney fosters an inclusive campus environment where everyone in the community has the right to feel safe and supported. Student organisations play a solid role in promoting and maintaining this safe and inclusive culture, and in particular, student leaders (councillors and executives) and student supporting staffs hold a duty of care towards their membership.

Due to the increased engagements and communications between students from different cultural backgrounds with SUPRA councillors, volunteers and members, we raise the motion for the council to approve providing the cultural awareness training to SUPRA councillors and staffs (especially student facing roles) for a better service and representation for postgraduate student as a whole.

Cultural awareness training can help SUPRA councillors and staffs be sensitive to the similarities and differences that exist between different cultures and help us use this sensitivity to facilitate effective communication with students from various cultural backgrounds. It can also help understand what SUPRA considers as appropriate or inappropriate behaviour towards people based on their race, ethnicity, age, gender, religion or sexual orientation. Potential topics involved could be a) Cultural competence and racism; b) Mental health first aid; c) Disability awareness and inclusivity, etc.

Cultural awareness training should be delivered by external party (e.g., the university) outside of SUPRA at the beginning of each council term; cultural awareness and safer communications should also be emphasized as a significant topic of future instatement.

X. W. gave a background information about the importance of cultural awareness and safer communication and asked if anyone has any suggestions and comments?

Y. P.: I think this training is essential and will be beneficial to all student representatives and our staffs who need to have frequent communication with students from different cultural backgrounds.

A.A.: I am basically in support of this proposal, but I would like to know which part of the university can provide the training? For example, which department of the university will provide the training?

X. W.: That’s a good question. The university, for example, has started a mental health project and asked student leaders to participate and perform as role models. The university has invited professionals in non-profitable organisations to provide us with some training. In last year, the student Life Stream which is in charge by Susanna has already had experiences in providing a series of modules. Students, councillors, and staffs of SUPRA can have access to these modules on Canvas. I’ve talked with SUPRA staffs, and they are in support of this idea and said that they will reach the university and try to set this module for us.

A.A.: Will the module be free?

X. W.: Yes.

G. S.: I’ve had communication with Francie, and she has experiences of providing a variety of services relates to the wellbeing of students in the university. I think this would be awesome.

Y. P.: Sounds great. Any other comments? If no, who wants to move this motion?

Moved: X. W.

Seconded: G. S.

In favor: 17

(S. X., M. C. didn’t vote)

Motion approved.

# 

# Council to approve that any SUPRA publications should be approved by the President before publishing. This includes Grad Post, and any types of materials sent to university publications (e.g., Student News, HDR News). *[From X.W.]*

**Background:**

In the duty statement of President 04.03:5), it describes that the President shall have final authorisation of all media releases, submissions and publications.

In the Constitution 10.3.2 describes that the President shall have duties and powers as the chairperson and spokesperson of the Council.

To ensure the operations of the Association better align with the Constitution and the duty statement, I raise the motion to explicitly request that any SUPRA publications should be approved by the President before publishing. This includes Grad Post and any materials sent to University Publications (e.g., Student News, HDR News, Staff News). For the Grad Post, this is the current practice that every week admin team will send the draft to the President for approval. The President examines the Grad Post carefully and gives decisions or revisions if needed.

As for the University Publications, for the reputation and the consistency of the operations of the Association, all SUPRA staff and Councillors should keep the same practice as Grad Post.

X. W. presented the background information to all council members.

G. S.: What if the presidents do not agree and say no? Will we check with other councillors?

X. W.: I think the president has no reason to say no to anything that will benefit postgraduate students. I fully understand your concern. This motion is to prevent unpredictable things from happening. For instance, in the last term, after SUPRA council dedicated to enrolling student representatives to sit in the university committee meeting and finished the whole recruitment, one of the SUPRA staffs sent the recruitment information to Student News and caused too many EOI from students after the recruitment period. I know staffs are trying to help us build a better committee for the whole postgraduate community. What I suggest is to build a bridge between staffs and SUPRA councillors, and therefore achieve better communication between councillors and staffs. If there is any disagreement between a councillor and the president, we can set motion by circulation by email and every council can vote. Did I answer the question?

G. S.: Yes, Thank you. I think setting motion by circulation would make the process transparent.

Y. P.: Thank you, Gemma, and Xinheng. As I mentioned, this is a common practice, and it has been included in the Constitution of SUPRA. I personally think it is a good option to ask the whole council to discuss and suggest an item and ensure the consistency of SUPRA decisions. In this way, we can better advocate for the postgraduate cohorts. Who wants to move this motion?

Moved: X. W.

Seconded: D. W.

In favor: 19

Motion approved.

# 

# Council to approve an extra 8,000 AUD for the graduation party to enlarge the capacity of the attendees (from 150 attendees to 200). *[From X.Y.and Y.P.]*

**Background:**

The graduation party reflects a high demand from our student cohorts that the tickets were selling fast; 80 tickets have been sold in the first 24 hours, and 190 tickets have been sold till now. To fulfil the students’ interests, we discussed with the financial manager about increasing the budget by expanding the capacity of this event.

The budget will be used for extra food and drinks for 50 attendees, performers fee for 2 dances and 1 DJ, graduation gifts, balloon wall, glowing letters for USYD 2021, and cameras hiring. The total budget thus increased to 20,625 AUD, which includes contributions from attendees. Please refer to the attached documents in the email for more details.

Y. P. gave basic information on this item.

Y. P.: Due to the latest restriction of Covid-19, we have to postpone the graduation party until further notice. If we check the invoice sent by email to all councillors before the meeting, it can be seen that we have already paid a lot of money, although we got a lot of contribution from postgraduate students. Does anyone want to add something to this item?

A. A.: Can I know when have we allowed the current budget?

Y. P.: In the last council meeting.

A. A.: When will we notify students whether to further postpone?

Y. P.: By far, we are still discussing with staffs and trying to get feedback from students.

The decision should be made no later than this month.

A. A.: Maybe we can leave this for the next Council meeting until we figure out how much we actually need?

X. W.: It is just a budget, and it does not mean that we must use all the budget. For example, the cost for the balloon wall hasn’t been paid yet. Avenue hiring, food and beverages have already been paid. However, if we cannot hold the graduation party owing to force majeure, we can negotiate with service providers, and reduce our spending.

A. A.: Based on my experience, maybe we can postpone the graduation party after wintertime?

D. W: I think we can wait for 1 week for further government updates.

X. W.: If the event happens in the next two weeks, maybe we can do motion by circulation until further notice from the government.

Moved: Y. P

Seconded: D. W.

In favor: 19

Motion approved.



# Any Other Business

* A. A. asked about the voting date of the Satellite campus officer. He mentioned that it was difficult to identify potential candidates because emails were only sent to members who have registered.
* S. L., the returning officer for Satellite campus officer election, replied saying several nominations were received these days. They would set up a zoom waiting room for identity check to make sure they are satellite campus students. Meanwhile this position is only open to SUPRA members, she thinks it is still fair for them to compete as they follow SUPRA. D. W. added that we do not have the rights to send emails to people who are not registered.
* X. W. suggested to promote election of Satellite campus officers by in-person campaign.
* G. S. asked if it is possible to run the campaign for all equity officers. X. W. suggested setting this up as a formal motion for the next council meeting. A. A. and G. S. can run the campaign and contact people who are interested.
* This was agreed by A. A. and G. S.