

UNION COUNCIL MINUTES

From the 1st Ordinary Meeting of the
113th UQ Union Council, 2024

5:30 PM
Thursday Feb 1st, 2024 **Holt**
Room
UQ Union Complex, St. Lucia

a) Welcome

Union Secretary Alex Smock declared the meeting open at 6:29 PM and acknowledged the traditional owners and custodians of the land, paying respect to their elders' past, present, and emerging, and extended the respects to the aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people present at the meeting. Alex Smock informed the council that he would be chairing the proceedings till the election of the council Chair later in the meeting.

b) Credentials:

The following were present

Councillors	Student Executives and Officers	Observers
Samuel Wong	Angus McRae	Sam Adams
Grace Dowdle	Alex Smock	Emma Goodwin
Bryce Muir	TJ Reupena-Polataivao	Michael Walker
Kate Beahan	Jeryn Chang	Bradley
Will sim	Jordy Duffey	
Asha Coles	Jaafar Jabur	
John An	Skye Taylor	
Ryan McDonald	Laura Nolan	
Kaine Kennedy	Louisa McCarthy	
Ankur Ganvir	Sophy Barlow	
Nohmle Putuka	Yash Koppula	
Felix McCoy	Hanshao (Alston) Zhang	
Zandro Lagman	Errol Phuah	
Liu Liu (Lareina)	Dylan Thomas	
	Hugh O'Donnell	
	Ahmed Abdulmunem	

Apologies and Leave:

The following proxies were received:

c) Resignations

Union Secretary Alex Smock informed the council that the resignation of PACE officer was received last week, and a response is awaited from the Returning Officer for the proceedings to fill the casual vacancy for the PACE office role.

A procedural motion was put to change the order of Agenda.

It was moved

TO CHANGE THE ORDER OF THE AGENDA FOR THE MEETING

COUNCIL 113/01

WONG/ADAMS

CARRIED

d) Requests for starring/approval or noting of the items not starred *en bloc*

Ella Gutteridge starred the President's report.

Asha Coles starred VP Student Rights Report

Michael Walker starred Postgraduate officers report.

It was moved

TO ACCEPT ALL REPORTS EN BLOC EXCEPT THOSE STARRED

COUNCIL 113/02

MACDONALD/ADAMS

CARRIED

President's Report:

Ella Gutteridge appreciated the tone and stance of the President in his report and queried on the stance of the University in the Union Complex Redevelopment negotiations.

President Angus McRae updated the council on the proposed reconstruction of the union Complex area and raised concerns on the couched language used in proposals suggesting

some of the buildings in the redeveloped Union complex to be used by students in general which in fact means by the University.

The President further informed the council that his unequivocal position has been that the redeveloped Union Complex should be completely occupied and run by the UQ Union and that it is non-negotiable. He further raised concerns on the varying timelines and lack of clarity. He highlighted for the council that while the two major agreements with the University in relation to funding for the Union are due to expire by the end of year and up for discussion, the University unjustly insists on the decant of the union spaces around April with no clarity or confirmation about safeguarding the future interests of the Union and the students. The President reiterated to the Council that the Union stance will be that the decant will happen when the students feel comfortable, and the Union is assured that its interests are adequately addressed and protected.

In response to Ella's query on the preservation of historical features of the Union, the president mentioned that the façade of the forum will be retained, the mural will be moved and when the architectural plans are presented to the Union, the council will be informed accordingly. The President highlighted that some things that have not considered the accessibility issues in the redesign plans and is being discussed with the architect team.

Michael walker queried the President on whether all the structures will be demolished/rebuilt, or some will be retained. The President replied that outlets that will currently be retained are part of ongoing discussions and the rest will be rebuilt or redesigned in a phased manner.

Michael Walker queried on the Union structure going forward with the resignation of Glenda Jacobs. The president replied that there is an ongoing discussion, with staff and student executives involved, as it is part of Enterprise Agreement of the Union to have change consultation with staff, and an appropriate recommendation will be made through those consultations.

Asha Coles queried on the report of VP Student Rights mentioning fighting the University on student issues and how it looks contradictory, when the student executives met the VC and discussed working in a collaborative manner. VP Student Rights Jordy Duffey mentioned that any key issue that disproportionately affects students will be addressed, advocated for and represented by the VP Student rights, and that it is not necessarily the intent to work with the University.

Treasurer Tapenaga Reupena Jr. mentioned that a discussion with VC is what made her note the issues of students such as safety of students at Gatton, lack of key infrastructure etc. TJ highlighted for the members that such moves can happen only in a collaborative approach and not protests alone. He stressed for the members that the change of policies and procedures does require a collaborative approach, working on key issues like safety of students at Gatton, paid internships etc among many other things.

The President clarified for the members that it is about finding the balancing between fighting with the University on doing right and working with them where common ground could be found. And that in the discussions with Vice-Chancellor, key issues that affect the students

were brought to the notice of the University. The President highlighted that doing nothing but agitate as well as doing nothing but photo ops, neither approach is right now is the stance of the Union.

Laura Nolan stressed that it is not about individual meet and greet or meetings that is the issue, but that the first thing done for the year being orientation and photo op is contrary to Union values.

Sam Adams mentioned that the term collaborate always brings the dread for the Union and University considering the historical precedent and that the main focus shouldn't be quibbling but rather on gathering student support and voice.

e) Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous Meeting

It was moved

THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE 2022 UQU COUNCIL AGM BE ACCEPTED AND CONFIRMED

COUNCIL 113/ 03

ADAMS/ LEE

CARRIED

It was moved

THAT THE MINUTES FROM THE NOVEMBER EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF THE 112TH UQ UNION COUNCIL BE ACCEPTED AND CONFIRMED

COUNCIL 113/04

/TJ

CARRIED

Union Secretary's Report:

Union Secretary Alex Smock noted that this is a huge year for the Union, with some extraordinary challenges ahead along with big opportunities. Alex thanked the councillors and students who are involving themselves with the Union this year. He informed the members unlike in certain previous administrations of the Council, active involvement in the Union council by students across political spectrums is welcomed and Union will always be available to help, facilitate and support the students, and that any misuse or voting against student interests will be discouraged. Alex highlighted for the members that the councillors are eyes and ears of what goes on in different schools and faculties, and the Student Executive always welcomes the input of and working together with the members of the Council.

Alex further informed the Council that the Incorporation process for the Union is being tracked and duly followed up with, board matters proposal is being currently considered to have a session for the Councillors.

Postgraduate Officer Report:

Postgraduate officer Yash Koppula mentioned that the major projects this year will be bursaries, focus on addressing the needs of the parent students, to ensure postgraduate students are very much part of the community, there will be a career advisory for the postgraduate community, some events running throughout the year for networking, professional capabilities enhancement and welfare among other things.

It was moved

TO ACCEPT ALL REPORTS EXCEPT STARRED EN BLOC

COUNCIL 113/05

JABUR/ROWE

CARRIED

f) Business arising from the Minutes of the previous meeting

None

g) Matters Arising from Reports of Elected Officers

None

h) Question Time

Question Time was declared open at 7:13 PM

Michael Walker queried on whether reports can be sent earlier to the councillors and the Union Secretary mentioned that it will be taken under notice and try ensured in the future.

Question Time was declared open at 7:15 PM

i) Reports of Union Bodies

Nil.

j) General Business

UQU stands against the growing racism against Indigenous people and refugees

Motion mover Will Sim mentioned that the UQU should consider removing Australian and Queensland flags from the Union buildings due to reducing interest or demand from the students, and that the Union should note the growing racism in Australia. He further mentioned that statements such as from Peter Dutton resulting in divisive atmosphere, and

anti-aboriginal push across the Australia especially with the No campaign during the voice referendum and that the Union should stand up against it.

Motion seconder Fletcher spoke further saying that stance against Woolworths by peter Dutton is deflecting from actual issues like cost-of-living crisis, only to garner votes. While on the other hand, in Queensland, two more youth detention centres are being opened, immigration to the country is being reduced, and the environment in the country is completely pushing politics to the right and that the Union should take a stance.

Ella Gutteridge mentioned that there is a shift in the society and a lot of the members belonging to the labour party, more voices should be heard.

Treasurer TJ mentioned that having lived in the electorate of Dixon, the increase in rhetoric has been seen and felt, any rise in the right-wing politics and views, especially towards first nations has led to bad ending and should be caught out and actioned by every Union in the country.

APS HDR President Richard Lee spoke in favour of the motion, saying that the Union should be actively advocating against the rise of racism in the country and urged the councillors to support the aboriginal and Torres strait islanders and their issues in the country.

TJ further mentioned that the Australian flag also represents the fallen soldiers of the ANZAC wars as well as various battles that led and protected the freedoms of the Australians today. TJ highlighted that while the flag might represent some misguided values and views to some right-wing politicians, the difference between patriotism and nationalism should be understood and respected.

Sam Adam spoke in favour of the motion and mentioned that while appreciating the views of TJ, he said that it should be noted that ANZACS were destroyed by the very flag.

Will Sim mentioned that the flag represents child deaths, racism, suppression of views and rights.

Michael Walker proposed an amendment to the motion to strike out the part stating burning down of the Australian flag.

It was moved

TO AMEND THE MOTION TO REMOVE THE REFERENCES TO BURNING DOWN OF THE AUSTRALIAN FLAG.

COUNCIL 113/06

WALKER/RHYS

CARRIED

It was moved

THAT THE UQU AFFIRMS ITS SUPPORT OF INDIGENOUS AND REFUGEE RIGHTS AND CONDEMNS THE DISGUSTING RACISM AND CULTURE WAR BEING WHIPPED UP BY PETER DUTTON AND THE LNP

COUNCIL 113/07

WITHEY/SIM

CARRIED

UQU calls out the Labor Governments' response to recent climate disasters and flooding

Jess Abbo spoke about the proposed motion stating that Queensland is facing more severe weather events, cyclones, and heatwaves. And that incompetency of the state government in dealing with the fossil fuel companies as well as in the response mechanisms along with lack of adequate support for the affected population is exacerbating the risks.

Laura Nolan mentioned that the recent responses of the Queensland government during natural disasters is condemnable as such natural disasters are becoming more and more frequent.

TJ mentioned that real climate action and justice is a priority for them and that it is an absolute shame the continuing policies of the labour government in enabling the coal mines and fossil fuel companies, exploiting the wealth of the country for the benefit of very few, and that the labour government should be condemned.

Dylan Thomas mentioned that in steven miles premiership, increased projections for targets for climate emissions have been initiated even though it's not enough, but the fixation of labour government on curtailing the cost-of-living crisis even if it means more coal mines, should be reconsidered.

It was moved

THAT THE UQU CONDEMNS THE RESPONSE OF THE STATE AND FEDERAL LABOR GOVERNMENT TO RECENT CLIMATE DISASTERS AS INADEQUATE. WE DEMAND MORE SUPPORT BE GIVEN TO WORKERS AFFECTED BY THESE EVENTS, SUCH AS INCREASED SUPPORT PAYMENTS, PREVENTING INSURANCE COMPANIES FROM HIKING UP FEES AND MORE FUNDING TO EMERGENCY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

COUNCIL 113/08

ABBO/NOLAN

CARRIED

UQU stands in solidarity statement with Argentinian workers and students

Asha Coles spoke about the proposed motion, mentioning that the far right government recently elected in Argentina, is implementing policies that are affecting the workers and their rights, and in resistance there have been massive protests and movements by people fighting for their rights. Asha highlighted that is is an inspiration for Unions worldwide, especially like for UQU in its approach against University or others whose views and policies affect student interests.

Kennedy spoke further on the current Argentinian government deliberately curtailing the rights, and in the protests which, students are playing a major role, and should be the source of inspiration for student unions like UQU.

Tj agreed with the premise of the motion stating that any rise in neo liberalism, capitalism and nationalism is something everyone should stand against, and that the student Unions should work together, collaborating with student Unions all the way in Argentina.

Sam Adams mentioned the videos recently seen from the Latin American countries, where the rise in right wing neoliberal leaders affecting the working class people, the very people who make the country work. Hence such should be widely and rightly condemned.

It was moved

THAT THE UQU POSTS A SOLIDARITY STATEMENT EXPRESSING ITS SUPPORT FOR THE STRIKERS AND ACTIVISTS IN ARGENTINA

COUNCIL 113/09

COLES/KENNEDY

CARRIED

k) ELECTIONS

Union Secretary Alex Smock informed the council that that returning officer is not here for the proceedings and explained to the members on the procedure to be followed for the elections to be had and the appropriate voting methods.

Alex informed the members that the first election would be for the role of the Chair of the Council and invited nominations for Council chair.

Michael Walker nominated himself and Rhys seconded the nomination.

TJ nominated Cara Rowe and Jordy Duffey seconded the nomination, which was accepted by Cara Rowe

The Union Secretary read out the C21 detailing the process of election of Council Chair.

Michael Walker introduced himself to the Council mentioning that he is nominating himself to ensure the council is not represented and/or run by one group alone, and detailed his experience and understanding of the council, constitution and work as part of C&S committee.

Cara Rowe introduced herself, detailing her role as Union Secretary in 2022, and generally described the role of the Council chair in running the council proceedings smoothly and how her extensive knowledge of the Council regulations and orders is beneficial, and that she would stick to the standing orders in the proceedings of the council if chosen as the Chair. And highlighted the fact that there has been no female chair in the last decade at the Council and that if representation is important to the members along with institutional knowledge, they should vote for her.

Jeremy queried if Council meetings are run and held on time this year and Cara replied that it can be ensured.

Michael mentioned that he understands the importance of Council meetings running on time and finishing in an orderly manner and that he will proactively ensure that.

Sam Adams queried Michael on his reasoning as to voting for him to ensure only one group is not represented and Michael clarified that the intent is to have diverse range of views on the council and that everyone gets a fair voice in the proceedings of the council.

Appeals from decisions of Union bodies

CPA Appeal

Emma Goodwin spoke on the appeal against UQ Country Pubs Appreciation Society motion, saying that for the reasons of near identical attendance lists at an Inaugural General Meeting as well as the discrepancies in the details of consecutive inaugural general meetings, the affiliation of the UQ Country Pubs Appreciation society should be overturned.

The Chair noted for the Council that it is better to discuss and vote on the appeals separately for the sake of clarity.

Ryan Macdonald, secretary of the country club appreciation society spoke against this appeal, saying that, this council ruled during the change in definition of academic and clear days, and mentioned that he had sought advice of VP campus culture on this matter, and that membership lists are different.

Jeremy queried on if the LNA councillors agreed with the removal of country club appreciation society, what does that mean for the second appeal as it is part of the same argument, and Emma Goodwin replied that rules should be adhered to in every instance .

Ryan mentioned that the discrepancies in the signature order and look of the appeal should be clarified. Emma replied that it has been raised with the signatories and clarified with them accordingly.

Sam Adams mentioned that the spirit of the rule in question is a group of people should not make another club to make money and that the attempt has been busted in this instance.

The Chair then invited the members to vote on the appeal.

It was moved

THAT THE AFFILIATION OF THE UQ COUNTRY PUBS APPRECIATION SOCIETY WITH THE UQU BE OVERTURNED

COUNCIL 113/12

NOT CARRIED

LNA appeal

Emma Goodwin spoke on the proposed appeal stating to the members that, as shared with the members in the appeal, the LNA was created closely mirroring the name as well as objectives of LNC, and Emma mentioned that LNC is already in existence. She highlighted that the word club and association don't give any connotation as to distinct identity and students were not given a chance to speak on this issue. Emma Goodwin mentioned that it is only fair this LNA is not allowed to come into existence.

Emma Goodwin further quoted the regulations that she believes favour of her argument and mentioned that the Council can revisit and restart the process following due procedures if it desires to do so.

Ryan McDonald spoke against the appeal stating that, instead of going round in circles, and that if two labor clubs can be on campus, and two LNP clubs can exist on campus too.

There was a procedural motion that the motion be put.

It was moved

THAT THE AFFILIATION OF THE UQ LIBERAL NATIONAL ASSOCIATION WITH
THE UQU BE OVERTURNED

COUNCIL 113/13

CARRIED

There being no other business, the meeting was closed at 8:38 PM

CONFIRMED