

Monash Student Council
9/19

CONFIRMED MINUTES

Meeting 9/19 of the Monash Student Council is to be held in the Conference Room at 1:00PM on Friday the 8th of August 2019.

Meeting opens 1:02PM

1. Attendance

President	Henry Fox	(Chair)
Treasurer:	Helena Kalfas	
Secretary:	Jett Fogarty	Proxy to Jo Friedman
Education (Public Affairs):	David Power	
Education (Academic Affairs):	Cherie Fung	
Activities:	Parker Brown	
CLA:	Shannon Brown	
Welfare:	James McDonald	
Indigenous:	Jessica Bennett	Absent
Environment & Social Justice:	Santino Raftellis	
Women's:	Saskia Day	
Queer:	Ed King-Cain	Proxy to Peter Bui
Disabilities & Carers:	Magdalena Kozlowski	Absent
People of Colour:	Minh Tran	Proxy to Susheena Subramaniam
MUISS:	Ayush Tarway	Apology
MAPS:	Rebecca Doyle-Walker	Apology
Clubs & Societies:	Joshua Hanegbi	Proxy to Bahe Balamaheswaran
Radio Monash:	Thomas Lindgerwood	

General Representative:	Hadi Saab	Minutes
General Representative:	Sophia Tan	Proxy to Declan Dempster
General Representative:	Ayushi Panjwani	Proxy to Josh Pelach
General Representative:	Louise Blair-West	Proxy to Jesse French
General Representative:	Marie Iliadis	Apology
Observers:	Beth Jackson Oscar Sterner Robert Bowman	

2. Acknowledgment of traditional owners of land

This MSC acknowledges and pays respect to the people of the Kulin nations as the original and ongoing owners and custodians of this land. The MSA commits itself to actively fight alongside Indigenous peoples for reconciliation and justice for all Indigenous Australians.

3. Confirmation of Agenda Order

Confirmed

4. Office Bearer and Divisional Reports

Education (Academic Affairs)

Education (Public Affairs)

Welfare

Environment and Social Justice

Queer

Indigenous

Disabilities and Carers

People of Colour

Lots Wife

Henry explains this motion should be deferred so everyone has time to properly read these as they had not been entirely circulated before the MSC.

Motion #2: Office Bearer and Divisional Reports

That this MSC accepts all submitted office bearer and divisional reports en bloc.

Moved: Seconded:
For:
Against:
Abstentions:
MOTION DEFERRED

5. Summary of Executive Financial Motions

Hadi explains that the executive financial motions summary isn't usually completed until the 10th of the month so it has not been distributed to us just yet so we should defer until the next MSC.

Motion #3: Summary of Executive Financial Motions

That this MSC accepts all the summary of executive financial motions.

Moved: Seconded:
For:
Against:
Abstentions:
MOTION DEFERRED

6. MSA Financial Statement

Motion #4: MSA Financial Statement

That this MSC accepts the submitted MSA financial statement

Moved: Seconded:
For:
Against:
Abstentions:
MOTION DEFERRED

6. Election Regulations Amendments

Henry defers the chair to Helena 1:10pm

Henry explains that we were right in that MSC that we were mistaken in using that language and that the executive had liaised with the Queer Department on how to regulate who should vote on that ballot and that this was the wording that was best suited.

Helena defers the chair back to Henry 1:11pm

Helena and Peter echo that it was important that it got changed and encourages this to pass.

Motion #5: Election Regulations Amendments

Preamble:

In MSC 8/19, it was discussed that the Queer Officer ballot papers were required by regulation to include transphobic and exclusionary language. This amendment seeks to remove all such language and update our regulations to use more inclusive and accurate terminology.

Amending directives:

That this MSC amends Section 35.3.3.1 of the Election Regulations to read:

“The segment on the second page to vote for Queer Officer must have in writing either above or below the ballot that says “Please only vote in this ballot if you identify as or with any part of the LGBTQIA+ acronym”

Moved: Helena Kalfas

Seconded: Peter Bui

For: 16

Against: 0

Abstentions: 0

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. Education (Public Affairs) Officer Confidential

Deferred

Motion #6: Education (Public Affairs) Officer Caretaker

Moved: David Power

Seconded:

For:

Against:

Abstentions:

MOTION DEFERRED

Jesse French leaves the room 1:13pm

Jesse French enters 1:14pm

David Powers enters 1:14pm

8. General Business

Procedural motion moved through the chair to accept into general business motion#7

PROCEDURAL MOTION CARRIED

David received the motion from the UMSU Queer Department this morning and was asked to move it in solidarity with UMSU. David explains there has been a series of events relating to a set of lecturers with transphobic views trying to intimidate members of their queer and womens department over the last 3/4 months that has reached its conclusion by this event by those academic members of staff of Melbourne University. The event itself has no professional ties to the university but is being supported by the people who have historically been connected to particular parts of the university who advance an anti-trans politics. The UMSU Queer Department is thus hosting an anti-rally against transphobia.

While acknowledging from the public event on social media the potential for inherent bias Jo explains that there hasn't been much discussion on this bill in parliament and that this talk is partly about discussing the bill and whether or not it will have any negative impact. Further adding he is cautious that the Monash Student Association should come against a public discussion, and asks if we are against their right to have that discussion in general.

David explains the Victoria womens guild despite being portrayed as an institution is a front organisation for one or two academics at the University of Melbourne who have attempted to hold this as a personal vendetta against trans students.

David further adds that the bill has had consultation with the broader queer community and feminists and gender critical members of the broader academic and political community and the bill itself has been advanced as a best practice by medical professionals and academics for gender affirmation for trans and gender non conforming people. The issue really should be whether the university should be facilitating such a discussion and thus attaching itself to such an event and less about if the discussion should be taking place. As it is portrayed as an open discussion but really it is not an open discussion but rather an event that seeks to gather anti-trans activists in one place and reconfirm their confirmation bias.

Santino recognises while they organisation admits to being a relatively new organisation they have on their site, publicly, a section about sex and gender not being the same and acknowledging we should be challenging gender norm stereotypes and that it seems to actually be in support of trans issues. Further adding he understands that the event is rather centred on this notion of consultation and that they are seeking to engage members of the community that haven't been engaged about what safeguards are in place to safeguard their rights. Thus while agreeing with the spirit of the things being said but it doesn't seem to be reflective in what he understands to be of the event. Further adding that there is no barrier to attending the event and thus members of UMSU who are against this are welcome to attend the event and pose questions to challenge the panel.

David explains that that section of the website only really pays lip service to the differentiation of sex and gender but then seeks to suggest that womens right are exclusively sex based rights which is the underlying onus of the program. The opposition of the bill is rooted in opposition to trans-people and gender non-conforming people to access traditional womens spaces and people being able to change their official gender on documentation without having to undergo medical surgeries.

Helena agrees that conversation and consultation is healthy however even just looking at the event its pretty clear what the tone of event is that it is fear-mongering and is very one sided and already being chaired by someone from the Victoria women's guild which cements that it is going to be biased and not a true open discussion.

David adds that one of the panelists is an academic from the University of Melbourne who is an anti-trans activist spreading publication of transphobic material and has repeatedly used their platform to describe trans women as men and threatened trans students to be taken under disciplinary action to the university for challenging her trans exclusionary language and behaviour. As well as encouraging others to spam the UMSU Queer Department email for their post in support of trans.

Declan questions if the issue is that the event is being held at all or being held in the university

David explains that for the UMSU Queer Department and for UMSU more broadly that the event is being held at Melbourne University and their UoM brand academic prestige is being to legitimise the event.

Declan enquires about the open letter.

Peter explains that UMSU has dealt a lot with transmisogyny and are afraid of two specific academics ant UMSU who share the same sentiments will use this as a platform to spread their views and that is the problem not the overall discussion and especially terrible for UoM students who have already experienced so much transmisogyny.

James adds that it while it is key to show support the event is most likely going to run so we should focus on building something in Monash to specifically combat this and suggests an amendment to the original motion on how to apply this at the MSA Beth adds that it's important to note that she disagrees with what was just said and that the MSA should not take positions that do not directly concern Monash somehow, things that happen at other universities and things that happen in the broader world. Further explaining that she wishes that it happens more often in this MSC that motions about the rights of all of the oppressed and motions that take a left wing position on all sorts of questions. Its important for student unions like trade unions stand up for the rights of the oppressed both in moving motions

that say we support whatever left wing view on whatever question and that the student union take a public stand.

James apologises if what he said was construed as limiting but wanted to add for clarity that the point he was making was that it was not just a show of support but that there was an actual action to come of this by this MSC.

Beth adds another thing that can be added to the motion is the promotion of LGBTIQ+ rights outside of campus such as the religious exemption bill that's being put through parliament. Further going on to explain the exemption and how it is a cover for a right to discriminate and be homophobic for the right of religious freedom while also persecuting muslims thus only be used as a cover to persecute against LGBTIQ+ rights.

Jo agrees that religious exemption bill is horrific but moreover in relation to the current motion, he agrees with what David is saying and that this Womens Victoria guild is a front however does think that University of Melbourne is a bastion of expression and debate and are progressive and can't allow conversations that will end in discrimination and while disagreeing with what is being said in it doesn't disagree in their right to hold this discussion.

Beth explains that we shouldn't always trust managements to always be progressive, universities are corporations and the management of these universities are CEOs who run businesses and stand on the side of the oppressed and regularly people are invited to speak at universities who support all kinds of oppression and all sorts of racism and that people shouldn't take as a presumption that people should stand on the side of the oppressed.

Peter adding on to what Beth said that there has been reports submitted against these staff and nothing has been done to the position they currently hold.

Declan suggests that if we replaced the issue which is not being debated and this was in response to race based rights and was one that was a racist event we would all wholeheartedly condemn it and not want it being run at any university. Further saying that he understands the freedom of speech and that healthy debate is good but the debate on the oppression of people at a place where you don't want people to feel oppressed is something he supports UMSU on.

Peter on behalf of his co-ob reads out their thoughts that if you give a platform for this you support transphobia and putting people into a position of power to discuss it and discussion panels allows transphobes a platform to speak which will be harmful to trans people

Henry defers Chair to Helena 1:46PM

Henry echos a similar sentiment that the idea of free speech is objectively and broadly a good thing but when it is used and provides a platform for people to

proliferate feelings of in many ways to discriminate on the basis of anything to that matter it starts to become problematic. It appears clear to him that the way the event is put forward and described there is a bias towards one side to the debate and say things that are out of kilter with our organisations purpose and we have a responsibility to represent those students and even come out and show our support for those trying to stamp out transphobic views.

Helena defers the chair to Henry 1:48pm

Josh asks if anyone from the other side of the debate has been invited to speak

David replies that no one has.

Parker leaves the room 1:49pm

Declan now holds the vote for Activities and no longer holds the vote for Sophia Tan

Bahe broadly supports the motion and thinks it is quite clear the event has a bias and even just from their public social media posts to see quite clear what side they are on. Bahe then questions what specific projects does the amendment motion refer to, as it is one thing to say you support something but another to engage in activities and actions.

James clarifies he believes it is referring to general projects in support of the Queer Department and projects that purposefully aim to direct the Queer Department in to addressing these focus areas.

David and Peter in agreement explains after Bahe's further questioning of if there is anything being done that there isn't currently any action being undertaken but that it was up to the autonomous decision making of the TIGD cactus and Queer Department to make those decisions about what political projects and MSA more broadly should undertake.

Motion #7: General Business

Preamble:

"In response to the event 'The Future of Sex-Based Rights' being hosted at the University of Melbourne this week, the Monash Student Association reiterates its support for trans and gender diverse students, and condemns transphobia.

We support the rights of trans and gender diverse students to study in a safe and affirming university environment free of gender-based discrimination and transmisogyny.

Trans women are women and thus have the same rights to the safety and solidarity afforded by women's spaces. It is not biological sex that gives these

spaces power and importance - it is the shared experience of being a woman who seeks refuge from a patriarchal society.”

Motion:

That this MSC;

1. condemns any events that undermine the safety of students on our campuses, including the safety of trans and gender non-conforming students, and believes events that promote the idea that trans women are a threat to cis women have no place on any campus.

2. supports the open letter to Duncan Maskell circulated by Equality Australia that requests that the University of Melbourne refuse to host ‘The Future of Sex-Based Rights’ and other similar transphobic or queerphobic events, and commit to a long-term strategy that applies the University’s values to the rights and concerns of transgender and gender non-conforming people.

3. encourages members of the MSC and MSA OBs to sign the open letter circulated by Equality Australia.

4. commits to continuing support to the project of eliminating transphobia on campus carried out by the MSA Queer Department, and the MSA Queer TIGD Caucus.”

Moved: David Power

Seconded: Peter Bui

For: 10

Against: 0

Abstentions: 6

MOTION CARRIED

Beth Jackson has been named

Meeting is closed 1:55pm