**City University London Students’ Union**

**General Meeting**

Thursday 4th February 2016

The Great Hall

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting.

**In attendance:**

**Chair** Siyoung Kim (Chair of Union Council)

**Officers**  Issy Cooke (SU President) (IC)

 Umar Chaudhery (SU Vice President Education) (UC)

 Yusuf Ahmad (SU Vice President Activities and Development) (YA)

**Apologies:**

No apologies were received.

**1. Introduction**

The Chair welcomed those in attendance, highlighted the Union’s policies on ‘safe space’ and conduct, stated the agenda for the meeting and explained the methods of participating.

Approximately 60 attendees were present.

**2. Student Proposals**

The Chair noted the order in which proposals would be debated would be determined by a random draw.

**1st Policy: Designated Smoking Areas**

Proposers noted that the SU should lobby the University to have smoking away from campus. Observations came from the floor that the University does not have space to provide smoking areas and that the grounds are controlled by the local council who can produce smoking fines. Proposers summarised the health risks. The policy was overwhelmingly **carried**.

**2nd Policy: The Right to Organise an Event Facilitating Students to Observe and Celebrate Friday (Jumu'ah, the holy day for Muslims)**

Proposers noted that the SU should allow Faith Societies to book rooms for Friday Prayer, between 12 and 12.30pm to allow Muslim Students to pray; for the University to recognise Friday Prayer and Faith Societies to be treated like other SU societies. Opponents argued that University should be a place free from ideology, faith and political ideas – that religion is important, but belongs at home and not in the institution. Proposers argued that faith can be practised as long as you are not putting anyone out. Opponents argued that if allow Friday Prayer bookings, that there should be bookings for all faiths. Proposers argued that this motion is specifically for Muslim Students and it is not against other faiths and that they can submit motions for their faiths. Observations came from the floor that this was the 3rd motion of its kind to come to a SU meeting. The policy was overwhelmingly **carried**.

**3rd Policy: Fairness and Transparency for Research Student Teachers**

Proposers noted that PhD students play a vital role in teaching Undergraduates, in marking their work and preparing lessons but they are not paid to teach – it is a condition of their scholarships to do 100 hours unpaid teaching. They do not have a say when they teach, no choice in materials and have no contracts and need more control. As a result, they can be stressed and overworked meaning Undergraduates may receive lesser quality teaching. Comments from the floor said that people who have studentships do not have written contracts for teaching. The policy was **carried** by 100% of the vote.

**3. Questions to Officers**

**3a) President’s Report**

**The SU President reported that she has been working on:**

* **Strategy – The SU is setting their 3 year strategy in summer**
* **Segmentation – finding out who students are to provide relevant services to them**
* **SU History Project**
* **Friday Prayer – from September Great Hall will be a facility from 12-2pm**
* **Elections**
* **Radio Station**
* **SU Audit**
* **Gender Neutral Toilets**
* **Mental Health Awareness Day – 3rd March**
* **LGBT History Month – Union/University**
* **Relationship with CASS and Schools**
* **Tait Level 1 Space**

**VP Education’s Report**

**The VP Education reported that he has been working on:**

* **Promoting and leading on Learning Enhancement Awards**
* **Programme Reps – December meeting to engage support needs; developing Liberation support**
* **Programme Reps Briefing for Schools – Trialling with School of Health**
* **PG Engagement – support for graduate tutors; Postgrad Forum; Increase funds available for training and teaching**
* **Lecture Capture**
* **Anonymous Marking – changing policy from opt-in to opt-out**

**VP Activities and Development**

**The VP Activities and Development reported that he has been working on:**

* **RAG WEEK/One World Week**
* **Back to Uni Week – New Societies Fair; Back to Uni Party**
* **Planning Student Activities Awards – 1st April**
* **Rainbow Laces campaign about LGBT inclusion in support with LGBT Officer for LGBT History Month**
* **Halal Food Certificates**
* **Sports Awards – helping coordinate**

**3b) Questions to Officers**

**The AGM motion to lobby in opposing PREVENT – what has happened since then?**

* IC working with NUS – coming to do something
* Law School – know your rights session
* IC challenging University on it – via University Council
* IC sit on Prevent Group to look at Guidelines
* Union will not engage with Prevent
* IC put motion to NUS Conference
* Will put out statement after meeting with the policy’s proposers
* Will need to see what Prevent means when it is enacted

**Will Yusuf be able to organise another InterSoc friendly football event?**

* Yusuf will look into this – potentially for March after reading weeks
* Will invite more societies and have event raise money for charity

**For Umar – has there been any progress from the issues raised in the PG Forum?**

* Has been waiting for this motion to pass – so can use as evidence to argue for change to structure in the Graduate School
* Organising a ‘Wash-Up Event’ with the Graduate School staff members to explain proposal and what students want to see out of teaching
* Encouraged people to run for Graduate School Officer

**With regards to PREVENT, there is currently ambiguity in the non-recognised status of PhDs as students and staff. Will they have to comply as they have no contracts?**

* No-one really knows – hoping that in any PREVENT training, there will be an option to go through scenarios
* Will know when further guidelines are produced
* Hopefully will not include PhD students

**What updates are there on the Prayer Room?**

**New Prayer Rooms**

* Tait Level 1 – faith area, SU, café
* Discussed at Islamic Faith Discussion Group
* All students feed in
* Will be better space and facilities

**Current Prayer Rooms**

* Prayer Rooms will be available in Great Hall as of September – as soon as Tait Level 1 has free rooms, these can be used for Prayer Rooms

**A previous motion about how representation of Students’ Faith policy – has anything been done about that?**

* Formal complaints process has been put in place
* Ongoing issue – if students have further issues, must let IC know as more complaints received and more evidence collected, the more can be done

**Said earlier that spaces not wanted can be re-used as Friday Prayer space – can students of faith get spaces that aren’t desired by anyone else?**

* Limited spaces on campus – no societies are allowed to book spaces before 4 on campus
* University investing money and committing to build Prayer Room for students of faith

**Until Friday Prayer can start happening in the Great Hall, what is the interim situation?**

* IC has meeting next week with Faith Societies, Chaplaincy and University to set out terms and then commit to terms

**Has there been any progress with Student Media**

* Have received £5000 from Santander to set up radio station
* Live broadcast station or streaming online – currently consulting companies for quotes
* No fixed timeline as yet but working to continue
* Looking to get everything ready

**4. Notices:**

**UC encouraged participants to run for Election in the SU Elections – nominations close 4pm on 9th February**

**UC encourage participants to nominate academic and professional staff for a Learning Enhancement Award – nominations close 26th February**

**5. Conclusion of the Meeting**

The Chair confirmed the end of business and thanked everyone for attending. The meeting was closed at 7.09pm.