

# PRC Meeting #7 Minutes

20 November 2015, 3pm, PARSA Office Boardroom

## Attending:

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## Apologies

Zaheer Jayhoon

Michelle Sebesfi

## Quorum

- Meeting began with 8 attendees (meeting quorum), meeting reached 11 attendees.
- Some questions were raised regarding whether proxies are allowed at PRC meetings. The President (Chris W) informed the PRC that, based on legal advice from Michael Curtotti, proxies are not allowed at PRC meetings with the regulations in their current format.

## Previous Minutes

- Uploaded to website, no objections to meeting #6 minutes.
- New format of minutes to be decided at the upcoming PARSA retreat.
- Chris W brought up a complaint that was made by a member of the public interceding at the previous PRC meeting with regards to a friend of that member of the public. The member of the public encouraged the PRC, in particular the PARSA Executive, to address the problem his friend was facing, regarding under-payment as a PhD tutor.
  - Chris W investigated for the member of the public. The response he received was that the payment level described by the member of the public was within University Award and HR regulations.
  - All agreed the HR policy should be clearer. General agreement that pay rates for PhD students are a topic of concern. The member of the public was encouraged to contact the NTEU (although that member of the public was not present).

## President's Report

- Expressed dissatisfaction at the difference in staff hours allocated to ANUSA and PARSA.
  - Particularly in the context of the SSAF negotiations.
- Expressed concern that officers were not providing reports to a consistent enough standard.
  - This was particularly concerning in light of the number of absentees at the present meeting, with only two apologies.
- "Last Lecture" - it was well attended by students. Ran well and went well. Good feedback.
- "Office Manager" position for PARSA
  - Staff member found and now in negotiation re salary and hours.
  - 4 days per week of part thereof.
  - To be supplemented by student administrators.
  - Overall 50 applicants.
    - 11 interviews over two rounds.
    - Extensive consideration undertaken
    - Candidate is a former Student Union official from the United States and Scotland, having worked with the Scottish NUS.
  - Regarding the "admin" aspect of the role.

- part of the role will inevitably involve admin, including manning the front desk and office material and supplies.
- An Officer raised concerns about the role and what the person is going to do.
  - The Officer was on the interview panel tasked with choosing a candidate, and the issue of administration was raised by the candidate at interview.
  - The Officer raised concerns about the workload of other staff members, particularly the Student Engagement Staff Member (Campus Life Officer?) .
  - The Officer said PARSA should consider recruiting a part time administration assistant, although budgeting or hours required needed to be determined.
- The Australian Research Forum
  - President gave a presentation and answered some questions with regards
  - A new plan will now go into a consultation phase for review for the future of research degrees.
  - These close on the 23rd of December 2015.

### **Treasurer's Report**

- November
  - \$45,203 surplus at end of year
  - Reached our target spending range
  - Treasurer's schedule 2 due at the end of the month (November).
    - This is an account of expenses for SSAF accountability purposes.
    - Research training program
      - PhD students want to do something (an event) over the holiday break, as they are often left feeling isolated in Canberra in the summer months.
      - This may be close to Christmas, any event may eat into the established surplus.
    - Other ways to spend the surplus were discussed.
      - Emergency grants over the break, equity grants?
  - Officer payments conclude on the 1st week of December.

### **Officers Reports**

- Women's Officer
  - Quiet for the month of November.
  - Joint safety app, lots of work.
  - Steering Committee meeting to deal with O-Week
  - Women's week is the 8th of March 2016.
  - Women's officer would like PRC involvement with Women's Week.
  - Chris W agrees to discuss it at the retreat.
- Equity Officer
  - Not much happens, exams
  - To plan for the next year, start from S1 2016.
  - Equity Committee next week, wants to wait to see what happens.
- Social Officer
  - Exams, not much on
  - Post grads feel a bit left out at this time of year
  - Still doing events, movies day planned for Boxing Day

- O-Week, need to get it up and running soon.
  - O-Week Committee Important
- Education Officer
  - Crawford event on the coming Tuesday.
  - 27 November
  - But quite due to exams.
- General Secretary
  - SAFF, negotiations, documents etc.
  - Term Limit changes, reports and other matters
  - Handover work (including materials for the process)
  - Staff recruitment and interviews
  - Officer reports.

### **Election Changes**

- The General Secretary, Chris Orchard, proceeded to recap what has been discussed thus far
  - It is proposed the date of the election is moved from the current top of year dates, May, to instead hold the election in August, to better align with the calendar year.
  - To do this, a simple majority of the PRC is required to move the election 3 months forward.
    - This is provided for in the PARSA electoral regulations. He cited the already circulated report outline the changes and the pros/cons.
    - The General Secretary also tabled and shared an email from a member of the public outlining their personal views on the matter.
      - These views were against the change.
      - Retorts by Chris O were provided in the document circulated. The concerns were circulated prior to the PRC meeting.
  - The meeting has quorum, and as such a vote at the time would be a binding PRC decision.
  - However the General Secretary thought the numbers were too low to establish a mandate for change, and was reluctant to go to vote.
  - However it was pointed out that no changes can be made to the election regulation within 3 months of the date of the next election (currently May 25th). As such it was proposed that a vote be taken presently, with the EXPRESS NOTIFICATION that it MAY BE OVERTURNED at the next PRC meeting, should the PRC so choose.
    - To reiterate, the PRC wished to make it clear, to anyone reading these minutes or enquiring as to the vote, that any decision taken could be overturned by the PRC at the next PRC meeting, which is scheduled for the first week of Semester 2016.
  - This is to avoid a situation where institutional inertia renders the changes impossible. It was agreed it is better to vote now than to let the changes fizzle out, to allow a decision to be made at the next PRC meetings.
  - VOTE: A vote was taken to approve the proposed changes outlined above, to move the election to August next year (via amendment of the PARSA electoral regulations).
    - YES: 7
    - NO: 1
    - Abstentions: 3

- Vote in favour of change.
- SUBJECT TO THE EXPRESS UNDERSTANDING IT IS TO BE FULLY ADDRESSED AT THE NEXT PRC MEETING WHEN MORE PRC MEMBERS ARE PRESENT AT THE PRC MEETING, TO BE HELD IN THE FIRST WEEK OF SEMESTER, OR EARLIER AS REQUIRED WITHIN THE CONSTITUTIONAL GUIDELINES.

### **Other Business**

- Council of Postgraduate Student Associations (CAPA)
  - Chris W wants to go to the conference as a non-voting member.
  - Unanimous vote in favour of sending send Chris W to the conference.
- Women's Officer
  - Organisational Risk
    - Encouraged PRC to consider a subcommittee to analyse risk. Suggested General Secretary to establish and run it.
    - Further investigation needed. Also suggested a governance committee also, unclear about who should run it.
    - President points out the heavy workload, lack of PRC engagement with governance already, and the administration requirements of such a committee.
  - Branded Week Discussion
    - Proposes PRC draws on 3 FTE branded week, Officer wants to discuss which Weeks will have Directors, and where any staff are allocated.
    - Officer requests banded weeks added to the agenda for the PARSA retreat.
- Alyssa Shaw - Request for PARSA to fund trip to the Australian Progressive Fellowship Conference in Perth.
  - This motion was withdrawn.
  - Request: with support from the President, Alyssa asked for PARSA to front \$2000 for this training opportunity, attending in her capacity as Women's Officer. Due to SEEF timing and program acceptance timing, a SEEF application prior to the training was not possible. No late applications are accepted to SEEF, despite inquiries. Alyssa would apply to the next round and repay the amount should the application be successful.

After discussion and concerns raised by members in regards to the uncertainty around the SEEF grant being approved, and the possible cost to PARSA, Alyssa withdrew the request.

**Meeting closed at 17:15.**

**Minutes by Christopher Orchard (GenSec) - 0439567704 - u5456381@anu.edu.au**