

**University of Melbourne Student Union**

**Meeting of the Welfare Committee**

**Agenda**

**1 pm Thursday 6th of May**

**Meeting [7](21)**

**Location: Zoom**

1. **Procedural Matters**
   1. Election of Chair

Hue Man moves to elect herself as chair  
Seconded by Allen  
CWD

* 1. Acknowledgement of Indigenous Owners

So acknowledged by Hue Man

* 1. Attendance

Allen, Hue Man, Caroline Nguyen, Thomas Coulter, Yashna Malhotra, Harry Syson, Sophie Nguyen, Michael Dang

* 1. Apologies

Zahra Ataie

* 1. Proxies

Zahra to Michael

* 1. Membership
  2. Adoption of Agenda

Hue Man moves to adopt the agenda from Chair

CWD

1. **Conflict of Interest Declarations**

**NA**

1. **Matters Arising from the Minutes**

**NA**

1. **Correspondence**

**NA**

1. **Office Bearer Report**

Both office bearers speak to their reports. Hue Man notes that she did not submit a report to the previous council, but has been working on expanding the services of Union Mart in preparation for its official launch.

1. **Other Reports**

**NA**

1. **Motions on Notice**
2. **Motions Without Notice**

**8.1 Restocking Union Mart**

**8.2 Healthy and Wellthy Week**

**8.3 Mental Health Campaign**

**8.4 Welfare Breakfasts**

1. **Other Business**
2. **Next Meeting**
3. **Close**

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| **University of Melbourne Student Union**  **Welfare Department Report**  Allen Xiao  **To Students’ Council 7(21)** |

*“April is the cruellest month, breeding/ Lilacs out of the dead land.”-* T.S Eliot

It’s been an intense few weeks for Welfare, with our team helping out at some major events in the past month (and seeing campus life slowly go back to normal). We’re hoping to achieve some normalcy now that in-person activity is returning; in particular, watch this space for our upcoming collaborations and giveaways!

**Key Activities**

**Welfare Collectives** are a go! Hosted online in this semester, with plans to transition to in-person delivery in Semester 2, we are excited to work on this new social space for volunteers on campus. Collectives will take place from 12-1pm, every Wednesday.   
  
We have planned workshops that centre on student welfare concerns in this space; we are discussing ways to cooperate with CAPS on a self-care/mental health-related module. I have also reached out to Trades Hall to arrange a speaker to discuss trade unionism, their relevance to students especially in the context of casualised work, and how to get involved in one.

**Union Mart** has been increasing popular as students feel the mid-semester crunch hitting them! Our blankets have been a sleeper hit\*, and we’ve even received requests for specific cooking supplies. We are always looking to diversify our offerings, so if there’s anything you feel like we could get more of, hit us up and we’ll do our best to accommodate.  
  
\*pun not intentional, I swear.  
  
**Clubs Expo and Clash of Clubs** happened on the first two weeks back from semester. It was refreshing to see clubs face-to-face instead of over Hopin, and as a current/former club executive, it’s a major win for engagement. While I wasn’t able to help out as much as I would have liked, Hue Man, Muskaan, Kalyana and Phoebe did phenomenal work in pulling together a two-week program. Likewise, the volunteer team- many of them first-timers- went above and beyond to ensure the Expo’s success. It’s been a slow start for many departments, but we hope this is a sign of things to come!

**Progress on assigned actions from last report**

1. Organise Welfare Collective as soon as practicable after the mid-sem break. **Completed-** every Wednesday this semester from 12-1pm! We’re only doing online for the time being, although we hope to transition to in-person events as soon as practicable by the end of Semester.
2. Run Committee meeting with Hue Man. **Convened** **on April 22nd.** We approved purchases of additional supplies for Union Mart (the Food and Resource Hub) as well as the Southbank campus. It’s pleasing to see that the demand for our services, despite the unfavourable circumstances, is incredibly high.
3. Continue discussions with University-based stakeholders. **Ongoing.** I am following up with A/Prof Scrinis from the Talking Hunger Project and discussing potential stakeholder meetings over the next month. In unrelated news, we have also been contacted by the Global Learning to distribute Pocket Guides to incoming New Zealand exchange students- a resounding victory for trans-Tasman diplomacy, to be sure.

**Action Points to be completed by next report**

1. Run Committee meeting with Hue Man
2. Further meetings with SSDP and related UMSU personnel for Safer Partying Initiative
3. Continue discussion with University-based stakeholders and/or student representatives for the Talking Hunger Project
4. Finalise bookings and external speakers for Welfare Collective in the coming semester.
5. **Motions Without Notice**

**8.1 Restocking Union Mart**

Motion: to pass up to $1500 from the budget line 'regular projects' to purchase additional food and resources for Union Mart.

Mover: Hue Man

Seconder: Allen

CWD

**8.2 Healthy and Wellthy Week**

Preamble: We are initiating the ‘Healthy and Wellthy Week’, a rebranding of ‘Stress Less Week’ centred around the end of Semester 1. Like previous years, a range of activities will be provided, some in collaboration with other Departments. This year, there will be an additional focus on offering practical support for students beginning their university journey.

Based on the COVID-19 health and safety advice, this will be a combination of online and in-person (if permitted by COVID-19 restrictions) components. It is tentatively planned to start in week 11, and depending on student interest will extend to week 12/SWOTVAC.

Proposed events include, but are not limited to: mental health and sexual health related events, therapy dogs and a bubble tea event.

Motion: to pass up to $2250 from the budget line 'special projects' to pay for in-person and online events for Healthy and Wellthy Week.

Mover: Hue Man

Seconder: Allen

CWD

**8.3 Mental Health Campaign**

Preamble: In a difficult year of transition, the Department is committed to leading a process of reforming the University’s mental health services.

The campaign will aim to improve accessibility and acceptability of existing services, as well as broaden their outreach to particularly support as many students as possible. We will be engaging the University’s Counselling and Psychological Services (CAPS) as well as related organisation such as Beyond Blue, Orygen and Headspace. This will be done in collaboration with UMSU and departments, but also with stakeholders in the broader university community.

Motion: to pass up to $650 from the budget line 'special projects' to pay for consultation and publicity for the mental health campaign

Mover: Hue Man

Seconder: Allen

CWD

Harry: Did you see our motion? We submitted it to your email.

Hue Man: we can discuss the motions on the agenda, or this motion that you have.

Hue Man moves from the Chair to discuss 8.4 Welfare Breakfasts first.

CWD

**8.4 Welfare Breakfasts**

**Preamble**

The UMSU Welfare breakfasts are an extremely important service run by UMSU. Many students rely on this service in order to eat breakfast and have a nutritious start to the day, when they might not have been able to otherwise.

Yet, even in Week 9, the Welfare department is not providing this important service to students, leaving many to start their day at University without breakfast. Indeed, many students are walking around Union House trying to find the free breakfast – something they have relied on in previous years. Multiple Unimelb Love Letter posts have also gone up asking what has happened.

Not only is this service not running, but it has been actively promoted in the Welfare Department’s Pocket Guide for 2021. No wonder students are confused.

While the Union Mart exists, this service is currently very inaccessible for students. There has not been a single post on the UMSU Welfare Facebook page, nothing in an EDM – it has not been advertised anywhere. The only people who know the food is there are those who work in the building.

Additionally, the Union Mart relies on the office being open. The Welfare Officers have not been in the office often enough for students to be able to access it. Indeed, many days the lights are off and the blinds are closed. Even when the Officers are present, the blinds stay closed often while meetings take place inside. How are students supposed to access food from a service that has no advertising and is difficult to even get to?

It is vital that the Welfare Breakfasts are run for students. While in the first couple of weeks of Semester it may not have been possible for this to occur with COVID-19 restrictions, but there is no reason why this cannot occur now. There are plenty of spaces in Union House – the UMSU Kitchen (where breakfasts have been run before) or the Ida Bar where breakfasts can be run. Food can be safely given out, as is standard practice at other UMSU events now.

There was a question posed to the officers earlier in Semester about Welfare Breakfasts, where they said they were looking into it. Money has been allocated in the Welfare budget to this service. At this point, in Week 9 it is vital that this is looked into so the service can run.

**Platform**

* Welfare Committee recognises the importance of the Welfare Breakfast for students.
* Welfare Committee notes that in Week 9, this service should be running.

**Action**

Directs the Welfare Officers to investigate starting breakfasts and provide a written report to the next meeting of this Committee and the next regular meeting of Students’ Council.

Mover: Sophie Nguyen

Seconder: Harry Syson

Sophie speaks to her moving rights. She notes that the Welfare Department have stated why breakfasts cannot be run, but Council has not seen this. While it is difficult to organise these events, there are other spaces that can run breakfasts, like Ida Bar or the Kitchen. It’s week 9, the current state of Union Mart isn’t good enough.

Harry speaks to his seconding rights. Agrees with Sophie that the current amount of work being done is insufficient.

Hue Man: I just want to say, I find these suggestions personally insulting. We have put in an entire semester’s work to stock Union Mart. Students walk in here every day and take from our shelves. We have always encouraged discussion in Committee, and if there are questions about what we are doing you can always ask in the Committee chat, instead of condemning us here.

Sophie: I apologise for those comments Hue Man. I get the hard work you have put in and don’t mean to personally attack you. We just wanted an answer as to why Welfare Breakfasts remain an issue.

Allen clarifies the nature of the COVID restrictions in common Union House spaces. For example, the UH Kitchen storage is limited and unhygienic. Hard to find spaces suited for the high traffic of a breakfast.

Thomas: There are financial difficulties doing both breakfasts and the Union Mart simultaneously. Our budget is limited and the OBs are doing as best as they can.

Caroline: The OBs are going through a hard time this semester. I think it’s amazing what they have managed to do something like Union Mart despite the restrictions still in place.

Yashna: I agree with Caroline, there’s been a lot of effort invested into Union Mart this year.

Sophie: I get those points. To respond to Thomas, there are issues with how the Department is running these services, I just think they could be improved.

Hue Man: Thank you for raising these concerns with us.

Procedural to move to a vote from the chair  
CWD

Vote on motion 8.4 Welfare Breakfasts

Thomas, Yashna, Caroline, Michael vote against

Motion failed

**10. Next Meeting**

1. **Close**