

University of Melbourne Student Union
Meeting of the Disabilities Committee
UNCONFIRMED Meeting Minutes
4 pm Wednesday 6th January
Meeting [2](21) (petitioned)
Location: Zoom

1. Procedural Matters

1.1 Election of Chair

Motion 1: That Lindsay Tupper-Creed be elected Chair
Mover: Lindsay Tupper-Creed Second: Surabhi Mishra
CARRIED, Naomi Smith abstains

1.2 Acknowledgement of Indigenous Owners

Lindsay Tupper-Creed: We acknowledge that this meeting takes place on the land of the Wurundjeri people of the Kulin Nation and we honour and pay respects to their elders past, present and emerging.

1.3 Attendance

Rachel Kirby, Naomi Smith, Sarina Narula, Surabhi Mishra, Lindsay Tupper-Creed (Disabilities Officer), Brigit Frances (Disabilities Officer), Clea Porteous Borthwick (Disabilities Council Representative)

1.4 Apologies

Poom Sangruang

1.5 Proxies

Rachel Kirby appointed proxy for Poom Sangruang

1.6 Membership

1.7 Adoption of Agenda

Motion 2: That the Agenda as presented be adopted
Mover: Chair
CARRIED WITHOUT DISSENT

2. Conflict of Interest Declarations

3. Matters Arising from the Minutes

4. Correspondence

**University of Melbourne Student Union
Disabilities Department Report
Brigit Doyle
To Student's Council 2(21)
4th of January 2021**

Actions Completed

We received a handover from Srishti which included discussions around collectives and possible collaborations between the two departments: womens and disabilities.

The books from Booktopia have been purchased as passed by the committee at the previous meeting. However some books will not be coming for a while due to some stock issues. The first aid equipment has not been brought and will not due to some issues with not having first aid personnel available at all times to help students.

Actions to be Completed

We have worked to consolidate and solidify our ideas for events and have started to work out a proposed budget for each event, as well as other relevant departments and people to work with. One of these is looking at the mentorship program which was discussed last meeting. I have spoken to some people about the program who have experiences in this area, and I have decided that there needs to be a clear purpose and structure so that all participants can benefit from the program. With a few themes running through and having a session dedicated to each of these topics as well as a social event. We are also looking at running some mental health training, I have reached out to the CAPS department to start to investigate whether they will run a mental health first aid course for our department. We are in communications with some other departments about what collaborations they would like to run with the Disabilities department.

I have also been looking at ways to increase the visibility of the department, one of which is utilising merchandise to create a sense of community within the department and further exposure throughout the university.

We will be finalising the budget in the coming weeks before submitting to the budget council, along with finalising events for semester one, creating an event calendar, and developing an O-Week program for both online and in-person events.

**University of Melbourne Student Union
Disabilities Department Report
Lindsay Tupper-Creed
To Student's Council 2(21)
4th of January 2021**

Actions Completed

The Disabilities Committee completed its first meeting on the 8th of December, where we were able to reflect on the close of the year. We passed approvals for the restocking of various items relevant to the disabilities space and an expansion of the Auslan classes project due to an excess of demand. Due to finance difficulties within UMSU, some of the smaller expenditures will have to be delayed into 2021.

Both Brigit & I have completed the basic induction and handover process and are continuing to develop plans for this year. We are thankful to the previous office bearers for their unending support through this period.

Actions to be Completed

Further implementation of the Auslan classes program has been on hold over this Christmas shutdown period and will need further work.

The Christmas shutdown period has been an opportunity for us to reflect on how the disabilities department reaches people. We intend to take these ideas to our committee for further discussion and feedback, some of which will occur at our January meeting on Wednesday the 6th.

For media, I would like to pursue building richer content into the website and social media platforms we have at our disposal (I was particularly impressed with how the Queer department uses its website effectively to communicate with its audience).

For events, I would like to pursue, in collaboration with my fellow officer, running a series of workshops that address how disability can affect different aspects of life (particularly careers and areas of study).

We have discussed running a series of theme weeks centred around a particular disability or issue. This would provide an opportunity to draw attention to and discuss a breadth of different issues beyond the bounds of the private environment of collectives.

5. Office Bearer's Reports

Question from Clea regarding O-week during Covid.

Lindsay answers that we have yet to receive an update following government changes in regulations. Referred to arrangements as they appeared during the start of December.

6. Other Reports

7. Motions on Notice

Preamble: Merchandise provides an opportunity to share the work of an artist with disabilities, as well as branding and advertising for the department. For student's, merchandise can also be useful and a way to share pride in their community.

7.1 Development of Merchandise for Semester 1 2021

Motion 3: To develop a merchandise item featuring the artwork of a disabled artist about disabilities to be distributed to students with disabilities, with a target release date of during the first semester.

Mover: Lindsay

Seconder: Alex Chung

CARRIED WITHOUT DISSENT

Alex Chung joins in at 4:32 PM

Naomi Smith leaves at 4:37 PM

Suggestions:

Clea - incorporate spoons into design to signify energy

Lindsay - create a less loud design to be for general use

Brigit - something practical, like a water bottle, bookmark, t-shirt (more expensive)

Sura - collaboration with other departments (particularly queer and womens)

Alex - suggests theme of inclusion and diversity (also raises disability pride)

Clea - do two items, one loud and proud, one chill

Rachel - items that can be worn multiple ways, such as a pin

Clea - suggests running a poll

Lindsay - do two designs for the same item

Clea - suggests welcome packs

Sarina - a list of services available to all students and to students with disabilities in and outside the department

Notes:

Lindsay - UMSU is only allowing one merch item per semester per department

Alex - concerned that t-shirts are inaccessible

Clea - sees wearables as an opportunity to be empowering

Alex - suggests wearable as an important priority

Rachel - suggests waiting to reach more people for semester 2, and planning for a smaller item with more scale. Using semester 1 to do a large item that targets less people

Sura - voices support for water bottles

Rachel - two designs is only effective if done at the same time, but would be interesting

Questions:

Rachel - do we intend to pay artists?

Brigit answers yes.

Preamble: An effective office bearer is one that is mindful of, and communicates with, all parts of the community. Office bearers should set aside time to receive input from the department.

7.2 Office Bearer Open Hours

Motion 4: That the disabilities office bearers each are directed to apportion time at least once fortnightly inside semester, and once monthly outside semester, to be available for any matters any members of the department may wish to discuss. Additionally, that they will make every effort be available beyond this as needed.

Mover: Lindsay

Seconder: Alex

CARRIED WITHOUT DISSENT

7.3 Motion to Adopt Formal Position of Opposing Any Form of Compulsory Treatment in Victoria and Australia

Motion 5:

That the UMSU Disabilities Committee adopts a formal position of opposing any form of compulsory and/or involuntary treatment in Victoria and Australia;

That the UMSU Disabilities Committee adopts a formal position of full and unequivocal support for the UN [Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities \(CRPD\)](#), it's [Optional Protocol](#) and the [General Comments, Statements](#) and [jurisprudence](#) of the Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (including but not limited to the all the sections set out in the attached document titled 'Research on CRPD');

That the UMSU Disabilities Committee strongly encourages all NUS Delegates from UMSU to propose the motions listed above as official positions of the National Union of Students (NUS);

That the UMSU Disabilities Committee reaches out to our postgraduate and faculty partners so that these positions may be adopted by Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations (CAPA) and the National Tertiary Education Union (NTEU);

Addendum: That the UMSU Disabilities Committee strongly encourages the UMSU Students Rights Department and Legal Department to assertively advocate for and represent students under compulsory treatment

Mover: Alex

Seconder: Brigit

Supporting information:

On compulsory treatment in Victoria:

- Alex Chung, [Psychiatric Oppression Under Victoria's Mental Health Laws Mad in America](#), 18-10-2020
- Prof Lisa Brophy, Royal Commission Witness Statement: https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/hdp.au.prod.app.vic-rcvmhs.files/9615/9114/2748/Brophy_Lisa.pdf
- A/Prof Anna Arstein-Kerslake, Royal Commission Witness Statement: https://s3.ap-southeast-2.amazonaws.com/hdp.au.prod.app.vic-rcvmhs.files/7415/7128/6613/Arstein-Kerslake_Anna.pdf
- Dr Chris Maylea (Alternative Law Journal): <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1037969X17710622>

On the deleterious effects of neuroleptics:

- MindFreedom International Forced Drugging Defence Package:
<https://mindfreedom.org/wp-content/uploads/attachments/ForcedDruggingDefensePkg.pdf>

Clea Porteous Borthwick leaves at 4:56 PM

8. Motions Without Notice

9. Other Business

9.1 Roles, Responsibilities and Expectations of all Members of the Disabilities Committee

Within the Disabilities Department, we treat one another with care and respect during and outside of our meetings. Everyone's voice is valued and everyone is entitled to have a say in the management of this department. No one should be made to feel intimidated or feel that they are not able to voice their concerns. It is the responsibility of all members to ensure that all decisions being made are done in the best interest of the members of UMSU and adhere to the UMSU Constitution.

Voting members are to miss no more than three in-semester committees in a row or in total. Not meeting this requirement will result in removal from the committee.

The Disabilities Office Bearers are responsible for organising no less than one monthly meeting outside of semester, and fortnightly meetings, during the semester.

9.2 Discussion Topic: Collectives – What should we run and how?

Running collectives forms an essential part of the work of the department. Part of this is ensuring the collectives are safe, inclusive, and sustainable programs that help serve the community. The beginning of each year presents an opportunity to consider which collectives are best to run in the upcoming year, and how best they can be run to meet their objectives.

Examples of collectives that have been run in the past:

- Disabilities & Mental Health/Wellness Collective
- Disabilities & Queer Collective
- Disabilities & PoC Collective

Lindsay: also mentioned some collectives were planned but not last year, such as arts collective

Brigit: raises a vision of multi-mode collective – alternate weekly with online and in person

Brigit: states we have been in contact with POC and Queer

Notes:

(Back to mental health issues comes under the Disabilities)

- Specific Mental Health Collective (specifically for people with mental health issues) and General Disabilities Collective (for everyone generally involved with the dept)
- We run the risk of running too many collectives, but specific collectives may help with relatability and help people more
- We need to focus our collectives on inclusivity where people are not afraid to walk in because of unawareness

On how to run collectives – with regards to POC, queer collectives:

- Bring in specialists – different people running different collectives, instead of one person running all. For inter sectional collective – one person from disability and one from the other department

9.3 Discussion Topic: Disability Theme Weeks

The office bearers would like to raise the idea of running “disability theme weeks”. The nebulous idea being to have a series of weeks where a particular disability or issue is chosen to be highlighted. This could include discussions, collective involvement, workshops with relevant speakers and facilitators, social media campaigns, publishing personal stories, discussions, tips & tricks, etc.

We would like to get the departments feedback and develop this into something we can deliver!

- Will be run with a focus on social media

Issue raised that we need to ensure people are respectful. General discussion around where this line is and how to best facilitate.

Alex Chung leaves at 5:28 PM

Meeting Loses Quorum at 5:28 PM

Meeting Closed at 5:28 PM

9.4 Reminder: Budget Suggestions

Budget council is upcoming! Anyone who is seeking to have a discussion with office bearers prior to submission of a budget proposal is encouraged to reach out as soon as possible.

9.5 Ongoing Input: Workshop Ideas

As office bearers, we are looking at running a series of workshops aimed at how disabilities affect particular areas. Of particular interest is running workshops around careers and for different faculties.

For careers, we would like to open discussion around how disability affects work, the expectations and rights in the workplace, and provide support to help students best present their own unique skills.

For faculties, we would like to dedicate time to specific issues that are relevant in key areas but may be underrepresented in the general conversation around disabilities. This could be an opportunity to explore how some areas can best bring out individual strengths.

10. Next Meeting

4pm, Tuesday the 3rd of February 2021 (3/2/21).

11. Close