

Council Minutes

5th Week Hilary Term 2014

5th Week Council took place at 5.30pm on Wednesday 19th February 2014 at Bernard Sunley Lecture Theatre St Catherine's College.

If you have any questions about OUSU Council, you should feel free to contact the Chair, Charlie Baker, at chair@ousu.org

- a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- b. Matters Arising from the Minutes
- c. Ratifications in Council
- d. Elections in Council
- e. Reports from the Sabbatical Officers
- f. Reports from the Executive Officers who wish to make reports
- g. Questions to Members of the Executive
- h. Passage of Motions Nem Con
- i. Motions of No Confidence or Censure
- j. First Readings of Motions to Amend the Constitution
 1. First Reading of Motion to Amend Bye-Laws
 2. Bringing Already Approved Bye-Laws into Effect
 3. First Reading of Motion to Amend General Regulations
 4. First Reading of Motion to Make Election Regulations (Referenda etc.)
- k. Emergency Motions
 5. Motion to NUS Conference on Sell-Off of Student Loans
- l. Motions Authorising Capital Expenditure
 6. No HeterOx
- m. Other Motions
 7. Electoral Review Group
 8. Returning Officer's Report on the MT13 Statutory Elections
- n. Any Other Business

a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting

There were no issues raised with the minutes.

b. Matters Arising from the Minutes

None

c. Ratifications in Council

None

d. Elections in Council

By-Elections for the Part-Time Executive

Academic Affairs Campaigns Officer - The two candidates, Sam Bumby (Balliol) and Mirela Ivanova (Wadham), came forward for a hust. Each candidate had two minutes to speak.

Sam Bumby - Explained he is a 2nd year history and politics student. Explained the two main aims he wants to achieve if elected. Firstly believes that the issues of library opening hours need to be addressed - student opinion is needed on this and will compile a survey to find out what they want. Secondly want to expand online lecture provisions and focus on the system of recording online lectures - really want to raise awareness of how this works for students. Sat on JCR committee for two years, first as Charities Officer, currently as Access and Admissions Officer.

Mirela Ivanova - Explained she is a 2nd year historian. Currently Divisional Rep for the humanities and Wadam's Academic and Careers Officer. Through these positions she has discovered two key issues to be addressed by Academic Affairs Campaign Officer. Firstly, it is currently hard to find a suitable system for student representation - want to make method of appointment and role of representatives clear. Secondly will address issues with current complaints procedure - very sporadic and difficult to chase up outcome of complaints. Need a transparent process.

Nick Cooper (St. Johns) - Questioned role's intended remit: facilitating common room officers or lobbying the university?

Mirela - OUSU sits right between the two. Can work on both without just focusing on one or the other.

Sam - Expressed that key aim is reaching out to and listening to students.

Sarah Pine (Wadham) - Currently a significant gender gap, for example men are more likely to receive a first. Asked what can be done about this.

Sam - Work with college reps and sabs in order to address the issues and locate where the gender gaps are. Questionnaire to students to gain their views and insight.

Mirela - Responded that the problem needs identifying - will look at curriculum to see where the issues are. Will work on this with OUSU support and hold forums to focus on it.

James (Brasenose) - Representation in departments and divisions invisible compared to colleges.

Mirela - Explains representation needs to be very visible on the web and intend to work on this.

Sam - Intends to raise awareness of processes available to students, as they need to know who their reps are.

Mirela Ivanova was elected - 31 votes to 20 (1 RON)

Other Elections in Council

2 Positions for Steering Committee - no nominations

1 Position on Scrutiny Committee - no nominations

1 Position for Budget Sub Committee - no nominations

3 Positions for Complaints Committee - no nominations

1 Positions for Internal Affairs Committee - no nominations

e. Reports from the Sabbatical Officers

Sarah Pine (Wadham) - Discussed It Happens Here. Last week a Women Against Rape talk was held with the same amount of chairs as people. Also mentioned FemJam! -Attended this with Oxford students and gained a lot from it, really great experience. Requested that members Council come and discuss this if they wish.

Rachel Pickering (Hertford) - The Alternative Prospectus was sent off today. Other than this the one key thing to mention is The Student Led Teaching Awards - here to recognize excellence. A new category has been added this year to show the amazing work that non-academics are doing. Members of Council encouraged to nominate.

Charlotte Hendy (Pembroke) - Highlight the big changes in University regarding

suspended status students and aims to get the ball rolling pushing these changes through colleges. There is an information and equipping evening on Tuesday 7th week. Council members encouraged to attend.

Garlen Lo (Wolfson) - Reminded mature students or anyone who knows any mature students to go/promote the mature students' campaign page.

Dan Tomlinson (University) - Reminded council of upcoming fashion show and encouraged attendance. Promoted the selection of our new charities in the cross-campus ballot taking place Wednesday and Thursday Week 6. Hoping for an increase on the 4% turnout of previous year. Finally gave a reminder about the Living Wage Campaign and the first ever University meeting about this happening on Thursday 7th Week.

f. Reports from the Executive Officers who wish to make reports

Eden Tanner (St Johns) - Filled in Council on a Consent Workshop Information Session. Approximately ten people in attendance with a 90-minute discussion about what they are and what they involve. Having achieved this, advice and support can now be provided.

g. Questions to Members of the Executive

None

h. Passage of Motions Nem Con

Motion 8 - Returning Officer's Report on the MT13 Statutory Elections - Passed

OUSU Council Notes:

1. Election Regulation 4.5(a) mandates the Returning Officer to submit a report to Council on any Direct Election.
2. The report of Nick Cooper, ex-Returning Officer, on the Statutory Annual Elections that occurred in Michaelmas Term 2013, the activities of the Electoral Review Group and recommendations for changes to electoral practice and the Election Regulations (Appendix 7).

OUSU Council Believes:

1. It is important for elections to be conducted fairly and properly.

OUSU Council Resolves:

1. To receive the Returning Officer's report.

Proposed by: Nick Cooper (St John's)

Seconded by: Alex Walker (Wadham)

Motion passed Nem Con

j. First Readings of Motions to Amend the Constitution

1. First Reading of Motion to Amend Bye-Laws

OUSU Council Notes:

1. Its previous decisions to make Bye-Laws, Election Regulations (for Direct Elections), and General Regulations, all of which are required by the governance arrangements introduced in 2010 when OUSU became an incorporated charity.
2. The commentary of Internal Affairs Committee (Appendix 1).

OUSU Council Believes:

1. The time is now right to begin the process of updating the 2012 Bye-Laws to ensure that they continue to provide a sound legal basis for OUSU's work.

OUSU Council Resolves:

1. In the exercise of its powers under Article 59 of OUSU's constitution, and in accordance with Bye-Laws 4.3 to 4.6 of the Bye-Laws approved by Council on 9th May 2012 (the "2012 Bye- Laws"), to give a First Reading to the proposal now before Council to amend the 2012 Bye- Laws (Appendix 2).

Proposed by: Nick Cooper (St John's)

Seconded by: James Blythe (Brasenose)

Nick Cooper (St Johns) - Four motions to run through which will all enable OUSU to do lots differently. If everyone is content, these may be put through quickly. The first motion is a few minor changes to the bye-laws which will change the

speed at which things can be changed and ensure that it does not have to happen in 7th Week. Similar changes will be made to General Regulations. Another change will involve re-introducing the rule that only women can vote in a motion of no confidence in the VP Women and only graduates can vote in a motion of no confidence in the VP Graduates. (This would also apply to the relevant elects)

Dan Tomlinson (University) - Checks to establish if the questions to be taken now are for just this motion or for all four.

Nick - Confirms just for this motion.

AMMENDMENT RECEIVED (prior to Council)

Amendment to Motion 1 (First Reading of Motion to Amend Bye-Laws)

In Schedule 1, Paragraph 5 to the draft Bye-Laws (Appendix 2), replace “self-identifies as a woman” with “self-identifies, wholly or partially, as a woman or as transfeminine”.

Proposed: Eden Tanner (St John’s)

Seconded: Sarah Pine (Wadham)

Eden Tanner (Wadham) - Explains that she recently attended a trans awareness workshop and viewed the amendment of bye-laws as an opportune moment to amend the definition of woman.

Anya Metzger (Wadham) - Questioned the practical point of this, with regards the official documentation not matching self-identity.

Eden - Explained that this would not be an issue. Students need to be made aware that they just need to contact us with an email explaining the situation.

Chris Pike (St Edmund Hall) - Asked if the changes affect who can vote in Council?

Nick - Stated that it only amends who can vote in a referendum.

Dan Tomlinson (University) - Questions how someone can identify as partially transfeminine?

Eden - Provided explanation of gender fluidity and stressed that identity will be respected and represented as individuals wish.

Motion passed with no opposition.

2. Bringing Already Approved Bye-Laws into Effect

OUSU Council Notes:

1. Its previous decisions to make Bye-Laws, Election Regulations (for Direct Elections), and General Regulations, all of which are required by the governance arrangements introduced in 2010 when OUSU became an incorporated charity.
2. That not all the Bye-Laws approved by Council on 9th May 2012 (" the 2012 Bye-Laws ") are yet operative.

OUSU Council Believes:

1. The time is now right to bring into effect all remaining Bye-Laws to ensure that they continue to provide a sound legal basis for OUSU's work.

OUSU Council Resolves:

1. In the exercise of its powers under Bye-Law 4.14 of the 2012 Bye-Laws, to bring into immediate effect all remaining 2012 Bye-Laws, namely Bye-Laws 6.1 to 6.5, 7.1 to 7.5, 10.3 and 10.4, 15.4, 16.4, 19.1, 28.1, 29.1, and 31.1 (Appendix 3).

Proposed by: Nick Cooper (St John's)

Seconded by: James Blythe (Brasenose)

Nick Cooper (St Johns) - Explained that this motion has been agreed to in Council and that the Bye-Laws now need to be brought into effect.

Motion passed with no opposition.

3. First Reading of Motion to Amend General Regulations

OUSU Council Notes:

1. Its previous decisions to make Bye-Laws, Election Regulations (for Direct Elections), and General Regulations, all of which are required by the governance arrangements introduced in 2010 when OUSU became an incorporated charity.
2. That the remits ('Job Descriptions') for OUSU's officers have not been revised for some time to bring them into line with current demands.
3. The commentary of Internal Affairs Committee (Appendix 1).

OUSU Council Believes:

1. That new provision should be made in General Regulations for strengthening the process whereby Council sets officers' remits.

OUSU Council Resolves:

1. In the exercise of its powers under Bye-Laws 3.1 and 3.2 of the 2012 Bye-Laws, and in accordance with Bye-Laws 4.3, 4.8 and 4.9, to give a First Reading to the proposal now before Council to amend General Regulations 2013 (Appendix 4).

Proposed by: Nick Cooper (St John's)

Seconded by: James Blythe (Brasenose)

Nick Cooper (St Johns) - Explained motion, stating that remit for sabs is currently unclear. The new provision would give Council the power to set the remit with a two third vote.

Dan Tomlinson (University) - Checks to confirm that Council has not set a remit yet but will do so soon.

Nick - Believes that this will happen in Trinity term.

Motion passed with no opposition.

4. First Reading of Motion to Make Election Regulations (Referenda etc.)

OUSU Council Notes:

1. Its previous decisions to make Bye-Laws, Election Regulations (for Direct Elections), and General Regulations, all of which are required by the governance arrangements introduced in 2010 when OUSU became an incorporated charity.
2. Its decision of 5th June 2013 to hold a referendum in or before Trinity Term 2014 to determine whether OUSU should renew its affiliation to the National Union of Students for the Academic Year 2014-2015.

3. The commentary of Internal Affairs Committee (Appendix 1).

OUSU Council Believes:

1. That the current provisions for holding referenda in Rules and Standing Orders are no longer fit for purpose, and that new Regulations are required for the affiliation referendum next Term.

OUSU Council Resolves:

1. In the exercise of its powers under Bye-Laws 3.3 and 3.4 of the 2012 Bye-Laws, and in accordance with Bye-Laws 4.3, 4.10 and 4.11, to give a First Reading to the proposal now before Council to make Election Regulations (Referenda etc.) 2014 (Appendix 5).

Proposed by: James Blythe (Brasenose)

Seconded by: Nick Cooper (St John's)

James Blythe (Brasenose) - Communicated that this should be regulated rather than left open to debate. There would be two official campaigns, one for yes and one for no. Everyone but the RO and deputies could vote.

AMMENDMENT RECEIVED (prior to Council)

Amendment to Motion 4 (First Reading of Motion to make Election Regulations (Referenda etc.))

In the draft Election Regulations (Referenda etc.) (Appendix 5), to insert after Regulation 19.4:

19.5 The following applies to campaign material.

- (a) In this Regulation, campaign material means any physical means of
 - (i) promoting an Official Campaign, or
 - (ii) discouraging Student Members from voting for the other Official Campaign,and includes flyers, posters, banners and websites.
- (b) Where an Official Campaign intends to use campaign material, the Campaign Leader must not procure it

- (i) at no cost, or
 - (ii) for a cost lower than that which Student Members generally would incur for the same material.
- (c) The cost of producing any campaign material must be included in the limit referred to in Regulation 19.1.

and to renumber the existing Regulation 19.5 to 19.6.

Proposed: Jack Matthews (University)

Seconded: William Neaverson (Christ Church)

Nick - Accepting amendment as friendly.

Motion passed with no opposition.

k. Emergency Motions

5. Motion to NUS Conference on sell-off of student loans

Council Notes:

1. The sell-off of the student loanbook:
 - a. The government has recently sold off £890m of student loans to a debt management consortium for £160m.
 - b. David Willetts, Universities Minister, has announced plans to sell-off the rest of the loanbook, and has confirmed that students' terms and conditions can be changed.
 - c. A similar loanbook sell-off in New Zealand in 2012, saw interest rates on repayment for existing borrowers raised from 10% to 12%.
 - d. Early Day Motion 542: Sale of Student Loans, has been put down in Parliament to oppose the plans to privatise student loans, with 50 MPs signed up so far.
2. OUSU Council has previously supported the Week of Action against this sell-

off, in which over 50 campuses took part.

3. In January, the NUS National Executive Council resolved, 'To support and promote the national week of action to stop the privatisation of student debt'.

Council Believes:

1. That the sell-off of student loans has the potential to adversely affect students' financial situations through higher debts.
2. That despite pressure from the student movement, NUS and individual students' unions, the government are unlikely to drop the policy without further action.
3. That NUS, as our national union, should be at the forefront of campaigns to prevent the sell-off of student loans.

Council Resolves:

1. To submit the following Ordinary Motion to NUS Conference 2014 in the Higher Education Zone:

Motion to NUS Conference 2014:

NUS Believes

1. George Osborne has announced in his autumn statement that the government intends to sell off its 1998-2012 student loans.
2. David Willetts, Universities Minister, has confirmed that students' terms and conditions can be changed, as reported by the *Guardian*.
3. A similar loanbook sell-off in New Zealand in 2012, saw interest rates on repayment for existing borrowers raised from 10% to 12%.
4. That the sell-off of student loans has the potential to adversely affect students' financial situations through higher debts.
5. Early Day Motion 542: Sale of Student Loans, has been put down in Parliament to oppose the plans to privatise student loans, with 50 MPs signed up so far.
6. Toni Pearce, NUS President, has previously said the sell-off was 'extremely concerning' as it would see 'the public subsidising a private company making a profit from public debt'.

7. In January, the NUS National Executive Council resolved, 'To support and promote the national week of action to stop the privatisation of student debt'.
8. The NUS National Executive were right to support grassroots action against the sell-off, but more political pressure is needed to prevent the sell-off.
9. NUS should campaign against this policy and build a movement against it until the government ceases the selling-off of student loans.

NUS Resolves 1. To hold a national demonstration in the autumn, opposing the sell-off, using NUS resources to

contact individual constituent members and encouraging them to attend.

2. To encourage student unions to write to their MPs, asking them to sign Early Day Motion 542: Sale of Student Loans.

3. To continue to oppose the loanbook sell-off and support demonstrations against this where possible.

Proposed by: James Elliott, St Edmund Hall

Seconded by: Louis Trupp, Brasenose College

James Elliot (St Edmund Hall) - Explained that the government packing up student loans and packing them off to companies means increasing post-graduation interest rates. Students will consequently face higher debt. This motion is essentially for NUS to continue support against this policy.

Will Neaverson (Christ Church) - Requests clarification on the relevance of 1.c) under Council notes.

James - Government have two options when selling loans, one is a synthetic hedge fund, and the other is changing interest rates. It is unclear which option they will take so it is viewed as a potential risk.

Motion passed without opposition.

I. Motions Authorising Capital Expenditure

6. No HeterOx

OUSU Council Notes:

1. No HeterOx is a new publication, founded by Oxford students, that seeks to create a space for queer and trans people to discuss matters relating to their lives and the LGBTQ movement.

2. No HeterOx already has a large number of submissions and the No HeterOx Facebook group already has over 290 members.

3. The publication has so far received £100 of funding from Wadham SU and a further £100 from University College JCR but requires further funding for the publication of the first and subsequent issues.

OUSU Council Believes:

1. That OUSU is a strong supporter of LGBTQ students and the movement in general, as demonstrated by the existence of the OUSU LGBTQ Campaign and efforts such as the successful campaign for the removal of sub fusc gender restrictions.

2. That No HeterOx would provide a unique space for students to voice their concerns, praise and personal experiences relating to the LGBTQ movement.

3. That the publication would benefit the student body at large by providing an educational and entertaining perspective on a minority that is often misunderstood.

OUSU Council Resolves: 1. To donate £200 of the Discretionary Campaigns Budget to No HeterOx.

Proposed by: Daniel Templeton (St. Catherine's College)

Seconded by: Otamere Guobadia (University College)

Daniel Templeton (St Catherine's) - Discussed the LBGTO current budget and funding for No HeterOx , and explained that they have come to Council to request a £200 funding from the discretionary budget.

Otamere Guobadia (University) - Read out numerous quotations from the publication, demonstrating the issues that would be covered by No HeterOx.

Emily Tamkin (St Antonys) - Asked how it will be distributed?

Otamere - Free, will be available online.

Will Obeney (Regents Park) - Why go through the SU rather than JCRs?

Otamere - Explained they are and have been to JCRs but need funding.

Will Obeney (Regents Park) - Questioned if the name is meant to exclude heteros?

Otamere - Stated that this is not the case and explains that the name is meant to be a subversion of no-homo but all are very welcome.

Patrick Ferguson (Mansfield) - Asked If this a one off

Otamere - Yes, all motions passed now are a one off.

Daniel Turner (Balliol) - Asked how much is left in the discretionary budget?

Charlie Baker (St Catherine's) - £1475

Motion passes with no opposition

m. Other Motions

7. Electoral Review Group

OUSU Council Notes:

1. The Statutory Annual Elections in 6th week, Michaelmas Term 2013.
2. That an Electoral Review Group was set up in 7th week Council of Michaelmas Term 2013 to review electoral practices and the Election Regulations, with a mandate to report back to this meeting of Council.
3. That the Electoral Review Group has sought submissions from students, considered these submissions and produced recommendations accordingly (Appendix 6).

OUSU Council Believes: 1. It is important for elections to be conducted fairly and properly.

OUSU Council Resolves:

1. To note the recommendations of the Electoral Review Group.
2. To discuss the recommendations of the Electoral Review Group immediately after the passing of this motion for an amount of time deemed appropriate by the Chair.
3. To mandate the Electoral Review Group, based on the Group's recommendations and the discussion in Council, to bring draft changes to the Election Regulations to the meeting of Council in 7th week of this Term, and a final draft copy to Council no later than 3rd week of Trinity Term 2014.

Proposed by: Nick Cooper (St John's)

Seconded by: James Blythe (Brasenose)

Nick Cooper (St John's) - In 7th Week MT13, it was agreed that an electoral review group would be set up. There have since been three meetings and lots of discussion. This is now an opportunity to find out what Council thinks about various issues. There are four unresolved points that have come out of the discussions on which the group want to obtain the opinions of Council. The plan is to pass the motion then have a chat about these points.

Motion passed with no opposition.

James Blythe (Brasenose) - The first point concerns whether there any specific changes to/thoughts about hustings that could be considered.

Rachel Jeal (Lincoln) - Comments that husts are often poorly attended and suggests getting in touch with colleges as a group.

Nick - OUSU centrally exports into common rooms. Would be a problem due to central meets etc.

Anya Metzger (Wadham) - Following a point about Welfare team, comments that she wouldn't like to use and exploit welfare for hustings.

Robert Jeffery (Burton) - Explained that it didn't work at welfare. People turned up, ate the food and left within 5 minutes.

Kath Nicholls (New College) - Stated Husts are too long and asked if there are ways to make them shorter or split them.

Eden Tanner (Wadham) - Plus one deliberation hustings very well attended. A great idea and way to expand.

Mirela Ivanova (Wadham) - Suggested themed hustings where societies could be invited.

Nick Cooper (St John's) - Second issue to be raised - currently you are permitted to run as part time execs, NUS delegates and student trustees all in one go. There is a potential conflict of interest here, particularly between execs and trustees - if in both it is potentially problematic.

Robert Jeffery (Merton) - Remind us of who the trustees are.

Nick - Lists trustees

James Blythe (Brasenose) - Straw poll on the question - do you think there is a potential problem with this as a conflict of interest?

Straw Poll:

Yes - 26

No - 2

Abstain - 5

James Blythe (Brasenose) - Introduced the third issue regarding slates - considered reducing the number of slates from 5 to 3 however many think that this would be anti-democratic.

Nick Cooper (ST John's) - Another straw poll taken - If you vote yes, we will propose changes that mean if you run in a team you could only have three people.

Straw Poll:

Yes - 28

No - 1

Abstain - 8

Nick Cooper (St John's) - The fourth issue for consideration is regarding manifestos. Asked for any thoughts on guidance with manifestos?

Kat Connolly (Trinity) - Comments that candidates should be able to use whatever manifesto they want. If it is ridiculous/really long then surely that's up to them.

Rachel Pickering (Hertford) Recommend that acronyms are always explained in manifestos.