

# Council Minutes

## 5<sup>th</sup> Week Trinity Term 2015

5<sup>th</sup> Week Council took place at 5:30pm at St Hilda's College, Jacqueline Du Pre Music Building.

If you have any questions about OUSU Council, please feel free to contact the Chair, Nick Cooper, at [chair@ousu.ox.ac.uk](mailto:chair@ousu.ox.ac.uk).

- a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting
- b. Matters Arising from the Minutes
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- d. Elections in Council
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- f. Reports from the Executive Officers and the Divisional Board  
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- k. Motions to amend Bye-Laws, General Regulations or Election Regulations
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  7. Accessibility of Online Media for Disabled Students
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  9. Free our Wednesday afternoons
  10. Annual Quality Review
  11. OSSL Code of Conduct Policy renewal
  12. Early letting Policy renewal
  13. Timing of Council renewal
- n. Any other business
  1. Impact Report

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#### **a. Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

No issues were raised with the minutes.

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#### **b. Matters Arising from the Minutes**

No matters arising from the minutes.

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### c. Ratifications in Council

No ratifications in Council.

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### d. Elections in Council

**2 Positions for the Language Centre Committee** – Sara Ng (Keble) and Jill Boggs (Linacre) nominated.

Joe Smith – Explained that there was a vacant undergraduate position and a vacant graduate position on the Language Centre Committee, and there was a candidate for each, they would run in two separate elections.

Hust requested.

Joe Smith (Somerville) Reported that neither candidate was present and read out each manifesto:

Sara – “The University Language Centre is a fantastic resource for all members of the university. I would like to continue the good work that has been done so far, and make improvements in the following areas:

1. **Financial Support.** Provision for those learning a new language as part of their studies or research is excellent, but more could be done to help those doing so out of personal interests, or looking to work overseas after graduation. Some colleges offer financial help for language learning – but not all do, and not on the same terms. This is important, because costs can run quite high: £105 for a full academic year of classes, textbooks not inclusive.
2. **Secondhand Textbooks.** Textbooks aren't necessarily cheap, either. The one I use for Mandarin classes, for example, cost £43. While a forum dedicated to selling used textbooks has been set up on WebLearn, not many people seem to be aware that it exists. In any case, it's basically defunct – the last listing was from more than 6 months ago. Making its existence known through a series of publicity measures is therefore something that I would like to do.”

Jill – “I would like to represent graduate students as the OUSU representative on the Language Centre Committee. I will outline four qualities that make me an ideal candidate for this position.

(1) I have extensive experience in language instruction; I was a career language educator for 13 years prior to beginning my doctoral programme. This experience has provided me with a deep understanding of the teaching of languages. (2) My doctoral thesis research is in the field of second language education, which means I am familiar with relevant literature on the subject and would be able to contribute meaningfully to committee discussions. (3) I am a teaching assistant at the Department of Education for a postgraduate course designed for experienced language teachers, so I have experience helping language teachers develop their knowledge and skills. (4) I have experience learning languages as an adult, which gives me a deep understanding of the challenges of language learning from a student's perspective. For example, I have learnt Korean to imperfect fluency, and have studied other languages, one at

the Language Centre, to various levels of proficiency (Spanish, Portuguese, French). I've also taken language classes just for the experience of learning about the language (Latin, Mandarin). I feel I have much to contribute on the Language Centre Committee and would value the opportunity to represent my language-learning peers.”

Sara – 45

RON - 0

SBV - 1

**Sara Ng was elected.**

Jill - 45

RON - 0

SBV – 1

**Jill Boggs was elected.**

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## **e. Reports from the Sabbatical Officers**

Ruth Meredith (Brasenose) – Reported that it has been a great two weeks for charity and community related stuff, as Oxford City Council had backed down on their attempt to criminalise rough sleeping, following the great work of the On Your Doorstep campaign. Added that the second piece of great news is that the university has decided to ban investments in coal and tar sands, which although definitely a first step, it is a really really important one.

Anna Bradshaw (Wadham) – Welcomed Sam, the new Student Parents and Carers Officer, who was unable to attend, but is already in the process of induction. Urged people to get in touch with him at [parentsandcarers@ousu.ox.ac.uk](mailto:parentsandcarers@ousu.ox.ac.uk) with any thoughts on provisions for parents. Flagged that she is doing a lot of support work with specific people over the coming weeks, around consent workshops, harassment policy, and baby changing facilities.

Chris Pike (St Edmund) – Raised two key notices, firstly drawing attention to the accessibility form for council, a way in which anyone can anonymously submit their accessibility requests for council, and secondly, advertised an event for all disabled student reps and LGBTQ reps in colleges, and urged people to get in touch if they are not aware of this.

Louis Trup (Brasenose) – Stated that he has been helping out with divestment a lot over the last two weeks, as well as meeting with candidates for the vice-chancellorship. Informed council that he cannot tell council who has applied, but that the university decision on the new VC would be released the following day in an email that will go to all students. Added that he wanted to mention elections for sabbatical jobs, reminding council of the referendum which had taken place in which students voted for us to move the election timing to Hilary. Explained that the University have not yet agreed to this and need time to consult, and that consequently the next set of elections would

still be taking place in Michaelmas 2015, with the first Hilary elections in Hilary 2017. Informed council that the current sabs and part time executive would be staying around after council to talk to those that might be interested in running for their roles.

Jack Matthews (University) – Reported that a major thing that has been taking up a considerable amount of his time is the analysis of all the student barometer data, which is now available as personalised reports for every single common room, postgraduate and undergraduate, and every single course in the university. Informed people that this is a very useful tool for going into common rooms seeking to make change happen, as it really highlights with clear data where the issues are, and also enable you to show where you are comparatively with other colleges.

James Blythe (Brasenose) – Advertised the Teaching Awards, which would be taking place the following night, and would be celebrating the amazing teaching at Oxford. Noted that he has been working on the review of Wycliffe Hall, but would be returning to this point on a motion later in the agenda.

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## **f. Reports from the Executive Officers and Divisional Board Officers who wish to make reports**

Aliya Yule (Wadham) – Reported that WomCam have started a Campaign called 5<sup>th</sup> Week Free, which aims to get away from normalising mental illness, through their use for example, of the term '5<sup>th</sup> week blues' and the idea that depression and anxiety are usual and OK in university. Asking people to tweet fun pictures of them doing nice things for themselves. Added that WomCam are showing a screening of Pariah, which is a black lesbian coming of age film and invited people to come along for a chilled out evening.

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## **g. Questions to members of the Executive and the Divisional Board Representatives**

Marina Lambrakis (St John's) – Asked to hear what the div reps are up to, considering that there are seven of them, yet only three reports.

Julien Coyne (Brasenose) – Responded that they are one of the people who has reported.

Kristina Carney (St John's) – Recognised that she had not sent any reports this term, and that she had not attended any departmental meetings this term, explaining that she had been very busy. Noted that during the last meeting she did hold, she spoke to departmental reps about the fact that the divisional reps don't seem to have a place in OUSU. Sated that she doesn't know if OUSU, in particular JCR reps, are particularly concerned about what is going on in graduate humanities life.

Hilary Chow (Kellogg) – Responded that he has never missed a report to council.

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## **h. Emergency motions**

1. OUSU stands in solidarity with Oxford University student, Sondos Asem

**Council Notes:**

1. That on 16 May 2015, Oxford University student Sondos Asem was sentenced to death in absentia in Egypt, as part of a mass trial where over 100 others were also sentenced.
2. That Sondos Asem worked as a foreign media coordinator for past Egyptian president Mohamed Morsi, who was also sentenced to death, along with a number of his aides and other public figures.
3. That the decision is under appeal and the death sentence is subject to non-binding ratification by the grand mufti.
4. That Sondos Asem is safe, currently residing in the United Kingdom and reading for a Master of Public Policy at the University.

**OUSU Believes:**

1. That the right to participate in civil society and politics is a fundamental human right.
2. That the death penalty is deplorable in all cases.

**OUSU Resolves:**

1. To stand in solidarity with Sondos Asem and to condemn this sentence.
2. To call on Egyptian authorities to revise this decision, uphold due process and the rule of law, and to protect the political and legal rights of all Egyptians.
3. To mandate the President to write to the Egyptian Ambassador to the United Kingdom, to express this resolution.
4. To request the National Union of Students to take note of this resolution and to consider similar action.

**Proposed:** Sarah Kemeny (Balliol)

**Seconded:** Sondos Asem (Somerville)

Sarah Kemeny (Balliol) – Thanked council for considering this as an emergency motion and stated that she is here today for Sondos, a student at the University, who on the May 16<sup>th</sup> was sentenced to death in Egypt. Stated that it is very clear that this sentencing was politically motivated, and that the trial did not follow process. Noted that Amnesty International as condemned the trials and the way in which the trials and sentences were handed out. Reported that it was a mass trial, that the sentence was in absentia as Sondos was not in attendance, and that it seems very clear that her sentence is due for her work for the previous Egyptian president. Explained that this motion asks council to stand in solidarity with Sondos, to condemn this decision and to call on Egyptian authorities to revise their decision.

**Motion passed with no opposition.**

2. Ravi Zacharias International Ministries

*This is an emergency motion as it relates to a confidential paper on the agenda for the University Education Committee, which was published after the motions deadline for Council.*

**Council Notes:**

1. The existence of Ravi Zacharias International Ministries (RZIM), an evangelical Christian organization, and its outputs.<sup>1</sup>
2. That Wycliffe Hall, a permanent private hall (PPH) of the University, has Ravi Zacharias, the founder of RZIM, as a Senior Research Fellow, and has a broader series of intimate connections with RZIM, particularly through their collaboration on the work of the Oxford Centre for Christian Apologetics.<sup>2</sup>
3. That the Permanent Private Hall Supervisory Committee has recently reviewed Wycliffe Hall.
4. That the Vice-President (Access & Academic Affairs) is the student representative on the PPH Supervisory Committee.

#### **Council Believes:**

1. That it is inappropriate for the University to appear to be closely associated with and be perceived to hold in a position of high esteem a person with the views and record of publications, of Ravi Zacharias.
2. That such an association of esteem is problematic for, and could even be seen to contradict, the University's commitment to equality and to diversity.<sup>3</sup>
3. That while Wycliffe Hall continues to hold Mr Zacharias in such a position of high esteem, the University should find clear ways to indicate to potential students that this particular hall is closely associated with a man with whom the wider University is not in sympathy.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. To mandate the Vice-President (Access & Academic Affairs) and Vice-President (Graduates) to make clear to the University's Education Committee OUSU's concern about the association of the collegiate University with Ravi Zacharias and Ravi Zacharias International Ministries.
2. That OUSU should campaign for the University to require (if possible, otherwise strongly encourage) Wycliffe Hall to distance itself publicly from the positions taken by Ravi Zacharias.

**Proposed:** James Blythe (Brasenose)

**Seconded:** Chris Pike (St Edmund Hall)

James Blythe (Brasenose) – Apologised for the short notice of the motion, and explained that due to confidentiality policies, he had to first establish with the University what he could and couldn't talk about. Informed council that he represents students on the PPH Advisory

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<sup>1</sup> The RZIM website: <http://www.rzim.eu>. Two good YouTube videos for a sense: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u9-DhpZUwcM>. (Content Note: homophobia, misogyny); <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RLmCUPgM9PU> (CN: Islamophobia).

<sup>2</sup> Ravi Zacharias on Wycliffe Hall: <http://www.wycliffehall.org.uk/fellows-of-wycliffe-hall>.

<sup>2</sup> Ravi Zacharias on Wycliffe Hall: <http://www.wycliffehall.org.uk/fellows-of-wycliffe-hall>.

<sup>3</sup> The University's Equality Policy provides for an inclusive environment, which 'promotes equality, values diversity and maintains a working, learning and social environment in which the rights and dignity of all its staff and students are respected.'<sup>1</sup> Obtained from <https://www.admin.ox.ac.uk/eop/sexualorientation/> on Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

Committee, and that for the last few years the University has been engaged in reviewing Wycliffe Hall. Stated that the first review never been published and remains confidential, which makes it difficult for him to talk about it. Added that a further review this year has shown that it has with great teaching and learning, and that we should be proud to have it as a part of the University. Informed council that he felt concerned, and that the committee report looks at, the question of Wycliffe Hall's association with their only senior research fellow, Ravi Zacharias. Noted the videos attached to the motions, which show views that he believes present the potential for Ravi Zacharias, having a position of pre-eminence and clear esteem in Wycliffe Hall, to make LGBT students, and Muslim students to feel unable to fulfill what is their right in the university equality policy, which is to feel welcome as learners, to feel valued, and to feel protected. Stated that he consequently feels that OUSU ought to encourage the University to encourage Wycliffe to make clear that in this particular case, that is not the position of all, that any student is welcome, that a wide range of views are welcome, and to encourage Wycliffe to make clear that it does not as a body endorse this positions. Stated that it is about how students in Wycliffe are affected by these views, and that he would rather prioritise the rights of students who make come to Wycliffe and feel unwelcome or unsafe, rather than his right to use his position to espouse his views. Recognised that this is not an easy balance, as freedom of religion and freedom of sexuality is difficult to balance in modern society, however noted that we should put the rights of those that we are here to represent first.

Luke (Mansfield) – Asked why this came up in this report, rather than the previous report.

James – Answered that he is regrettably unable to speak about what is in either report, which is not a situation that he wants to be in. Noted that the last report remained confidential because of the serious nature of the concerns raised about Wycliffe, but that most of these have now been addressed.

Kuba Stawiski (Merton) – Asked for an example of Ravi Zacharias' views.

James – Gave a content note for homophobia, misogyny and islamophobia as these are the issues that he is concerned about. Reported that he hears in the videos statements that refer to gay people as abhorrent, refer to women as the servants of men, and refer to the prophet Muhammad in a way that he would not want to repeat. Recognised that he could have come with a list of quotes, but stated that the overall manner in the videos was problematic.

Tara Nicola (St Anne's) – Asked if in the report was there any mention of specific students who had been made to feel unwelcome.

James – Answered that there was not, but that his view was that Wycliffe wanted to move in a direction which broadened the range of students which they took on. Added that this is about the potential, and if he thought that any individual student had been threatened, this would not be something for council to debate. Explained that he is taking a view as a representative of what could happen if this continues.

Chris Casson (St Catherine's) – Asked James what his feelings would be to add in an amendment that referred to the views of Ravi Zacharias in resolves 1, as the problematic association.

James – Responded that he would accept 'some of the views' as friendly.

Josh (Merton) -Asked if the videos are problematic to James due to tone or content.

James – Responded that the content alone is sufficient to make students with certain protected characteristics feel insecure, but that the tone is what is very horrible and aggressive.

Peter Elliott (St John's) – Asked if we can make a fair judgment considering the limited information we are being given due to confidentiality. Added that Ravi Zacharias will probably defend his views from a theological position which is academically held, and that he is not convinced that it is the case that if we have theology on the syllabus in an academic institution, whether we can actually say that we are going to distance ourselves from someone because of their academic views. Added that Ravi Zacharias has spoken at the UN, who form our human rights.

Josh (Merton) – Commented that having watched the videos, the context is very clear at the beginning that Ravi Zacharias is extremely sensitive with the issues. Stated that OUSU policy that seeks to promote an inclusive environment, in which the views of all staff and students are respected, and that no one is treated less favourably on the grounds of religion or belief.

**Amendment received:**

Add the words "the homophobic, misogynistic and islamophobic views of" to resolves 1, so it reads '...the association of the collegiate University with...'

**Proposed:** Chris Casson (St Catherine's)

**Seconded:** James Blythe (Brasenose)

Objection received.

Peter Elliott – Objected , stating that it is not clear to say that Ravi's views are homophobic, misogynistic and islamophobic, and that he would be more supportive of an amendment that states that they may be construed as these things.

Chris Pike – Accepted that not everyone has seen the videos, but stated that James has told us about some of the comments made, and the line relating to gay men was very clearly homophobic, not potentially construed as such, and saying what Ravi said about women is misogynistic, it is not potentially misogynistic. Added that there is no doubt that the views of this

man are homophobic, are misogynistic and are islamophobic.

Samuel (Merton) – Asked to speak about resolves two, as we do not want to distance ourselves from all of the views of Ravi Zacharias.

Christina St Clair (St John's) – Suggested they are referred to as the perceived views.

Not agreement in the room.

Move to vote on amendment.

For – 47

Against – 3

Abstain – 5

**Amendment passed.**

Jack Matthews (University) – Added clarity to a previous point made, stating that if one were to go to Companies House, you would find that Ravi Zacharias International Ministries (RZIM), provides residential teaching, and it is because of this association that Ravi is a teaching fellow. Stated that he is not here through academic merit, but because of association with the company. Explained that such an association is not necessarily a bad thing, however he urged council to separate this instance from for example, a research fellow working in a lab who holds these views but does not bring them into work. Reiterated that this is a man who is associated with Wycliffe, purely because of the views that he holds and has espoused. Asked if we would remain silent if such views were expressed by the Vice-Chancellor.

**Amendment received:**

To alter Resolves 2:

“...distance itself publicly from these positions, as outlined in Resolves 1 taken by Ravi Zacharias.”

**Proposed:** Anna Bradshaw (Wadham)

**Seconded:** James Blythe (Brasenose)

Louis Trup (Brasenose) – Commented in response to an earlier statement that suggested that this is not our place, and urged that it absolutely is, as we are here to represent the students of Oxford, and should take a stand, whichever way it may be, on how Oxford should be run.

Henry (Wadham) – Stated that the LGBTQ Campaign would violently oppose it if this motion fell, as these are the exact views that make LGBTQ people feel incredibly unsafe.

Move to vote.

Objected.

Chris Pike – Stated that people have made up their minds on this, and further debate but will achieve nothing other than being incredibly upsetting to people.

Peter Elliott (St John's) – Argued that we would be moving to vote on a lack of knowledge and argued that we need to be absolute certain on the points made about how Ravi is in position, as it could be libellous if inaccurate

Vote on move to vote:

For – 44

Against – 7

Abstain – 2

Move to vote.

James – Argued that this is about whether we should or should not be concerned by the presence of somebody who so immoderately and clearly and publicly and persistently espouses the views that have the potential to make many of our students feel uncomfortable.

Merton student – Argued that this motion discriminates against Ravi based on religious beliefs and that he wanted to check the video as he does not think that the words James has quoted were said.

Vote:

For – 46

Against – 6

Abstain - 9

**Motion passed.**

3. Sub fusc (Content Note: misgendering)

**Council Notes:**

1. The results of the referendums on academic dress (“academic dress” being *sub fusc*, gowns and mortarboards).
2. The [Regulations on academic dress](#), which provide for a range of options and the power of the Proctors to grant dispensation upon “reasonable grounds”.

3. That students granted dispensation have to take examinations in their Colleges instead, and that space limitations probably prevent mass dispensation.
4. Reports that University staff have questioned people's sub fusc choices, despite the rules being gender neutral since 2012.

**Council Believes:**

1. That the results of the referendums (to maintain compulsory academic dress) should be respected as the majority view of students.
2. That whether individual students support it or not, it is important to reduce any negative effects of compulsory academic dress as much as possible.

**Council Resolves:**

1. To mandate the Vice President (Access & Academic Affairs) to:
  - a. request as soon as possible that the Proctors' Office ensure all staff enforcing the Regulations are aware of the Regulations as currently in force, and the importance of their gender neutrality;
  - b. request that the Proctors provide clearer, non-exhaustive guidance of what constitutes "reasonable grounds" in the Regulations;
  - c. ensure that mental health is considered as potential reasonable grounds;
  - d. request that the University and Colleges make the procedure for seeking dispensation clearer to students.
2. To mandate the President to communicate to all students early in every Michaelmas Term (or, if possible, before term begins), the range of clothing permitted by the Regulations and the Proctors' power of dispensation.
3. To make Notes 2 and 3, Believes 1 and 2, and Resolves 2 Council Policy.

**Proposed:** Nick Cooper (St John's)

**Seconded:** Eden Tanner (St John's)

Nick Cooper (St John's) – Acknowledged that around 75% of students voted in favour of compulsory sub fusc, yet that still means that 25% of students did not vote for this, and this motion aims to make the process easier for them, mandating James to make sure that the proctors office make all staff aware that sub fusc is now gender neutral, to make sure there is guidance on how you can be exempt from the rules, and the make students aware of the clothing permitted and the proctors' power of dispensation.

Aliya Yule (Wadham) – Reminded people in council to also make others aware that sub fusc is gender neutral, and to never question the sub fusc which others choose to wear

**Motion passed with no opposition.**

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## **i. Passage of motions without discussion**

### 7. Accessibility of Online Media for Disabled Students

#### **Council Notes:**

1. Online media, including social media, online images, and videos, are an extremely effective way to reach students; and
2. There can significant barriers to access online media for disabled students, particularly those with sensory impairments.

#### **Council Believes:**

1. The OUSU central website and social media presence has many positive accessibility features, but improvements could be made;
2. Disabled people deserve the same access to all aspects of society as the non-disabled;
3. One of the first steps to advocating for disabled students to the university is to be as inclusive ourselves as possible.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. To mandate each OUSU exec member and OUSU campaign to caption and provide a easily accessible text transcript for any OUSU-related video they help create;
2. To mandate the Disabled Students Officer contact the OUSU campaigns to encourage them to make their online media accessible and provide information about how to do it by 7<sup>th</sup> week Trinity.
3. To mandate the Disabled Students Officer give a brief report on how to make online media accessible to 7<sup>th</sup> week Council.
4. To make Believes 2 and 3 and Resolves 1 OUSU Policy.

**Proposed:** Lindsay Lee (Wadham)

**Seconded:** Rachel Kolb (St. John's)

### 8. Providing easy access to accessibility information for OUSU events

#### **Council Notes:**

1. It can be difficult for disabled people to access the information they need to fully participate in events; and
2. Disabled people may require simple adjustments to fully participate in events.

#### **Council Believes:**

1. Disabled people deserve the same access to all aspects of society as the non-disabled; and
2. One of the first steps to advocating for disabled students to the university is to be as inclusive ourselves as possible.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. To mandate each OUSU exec member and OUSU campaign to include for all events two points of contact (e.g. email and telephone) to request accessibility information or adjustments;

2. To advocate for a set-aside accessibility fund during the next funding cycle to help pay for adjustments disabled students need to attend events; and
3. To have the Disabled Students Officer contact the OUSU campaigns to encourage them to make their events accessible and provide information about how to do it by 7<sup>th</sup> week Trinity.
4. To make Believes 1 and 2 and Resolves 1 OUSU Policy.

**Proposed:** Lindsay Lee (Wadham)

**Seconded:** Hannah Prescott (Linacre)

## 10. Annual Quality Review

### **Council Notes:**

1. The Annual Quality Review is a new project being run by OUSU to monitor the quality of teaching and learning within the University, and the effectiveness of student representation structures.
2. In future years, the Annual Quality Report will be the mechanism by which OUSU reports on how the University is progressing with respect to the Higher Education Review, but as this has not happened yet, this year's Report is a reflection on quality assurance in Oxford in 2014/5.

### **Council Believes:**

1. That working to enhance the quality of teaching and learning at the University is a fundamental role of OUSU

### **Council Resolves:**

2. To endorse the Annual Quality Review 2014/15 (Appendix 4)

**Proposed:** Jack Matthews (University)

**Seconded:** James Blythe (Brasenose)

## 11. OSSL (the trading subsidiary company of OUSU) Code of Conduct Policy renewal

### **Council Believes:**

1. That by selling advertising space to companies, we risk endorsing their practices.
2. That attempts to make the University invest ethically are undermined if OUSU's own investments are not ethical, and if it relies financially upon advertising revenue from unethical companies.

### **Council Resolves:**

1. That OSSL/OUSU under the advice of OUSU Council will adhere to the following code of conduct:

#### **1. Advertising Space**

- a. OSSL/OUSU will not sell advertising space to companies or organizations that have been proven to take away the rights of the individual, or to manufacturers of torture

equipment or other equipment that is used in the violation of human rights.

b. OSSL/OUSU will not sell advertising space to businesses that derive more than 10% of their profits from the manufacture, sale, licensed production, or brokerage of armaments

c. OSSL/OUSU will preference businesses that take a pro-active stance on the environmental impact of their own activities

## **2. Investments**

a. In the event that OUSU/OSSL needs to invest money, OUSU/OSSL will take into account OUSU Council policy applying to University investments, and, when appropriate, consult with OUSU campaigns.

## **3. Miscellaneous decisions**

a. On occasion, OSSL/OUSU will make decisions with regard to specific companies involving ethical issues not explicitly included in this ethical policy. These decisions should be taken with the involvement of the relevant member(s) of the Sab team, and OSSL/OUSU staff input.

**Proposed:** Ruth Meredith (Brasenose)

**Seconded:** Louis Trup (Brasenose)

## 12. Early letting Policy renewal

### **Council Notes:**

1. Its policy on early lease and student living out which passed in Hilary Term 2012, and is therefore due to lapse at the end of this term.
2. That most estate agents in Oxford release their lists of student houses very early, usually during Michaelmas Term.
3. That in some cases students end up in heavy competition over private housing within a very short space of time, even resulting in queues out of the doors at estate agents.
4. The failure of the current Vice-President (Welfare & Equal Opportunities) to do anything productive on this issue, for which he apologises.

### **Council Believes:**

1. That early release of student housing lists creates unnecessary pressure on students to find housemates and understand how to go about leasing a house, often when they are incredibly new to the university.
2. That this pressure can result in students' renting houses which are not ideal for them, as they have not had chance to compare prices, locations, facilities etc.
3. That early release can result in very few private rented houses being available later in the year, meaning that students must decide very early on whether or not they wish to live out, and cannot properly prepare for unforeseen circumstances over the rest of the year.

4. That estate agents did not traditionally release their student letting lists so early and it should not be necessary for them to do so.
5. That it is better for students if student rented accommodation lists are released later and more gradually so that housing remains available later in the year.
6. That OUSU should consider supporting students who live out in private rented accommodation to be as big a priority as supporting students who live in college accommodation (as it does currently through help with rent negotiation).

**Council Resolves:**

1. To make Believes 5 and Believes 6 Council policy.
2. To mandate the Vice-President (Welfare & Equal Opportunities) and the Rent & Accommodation Officer to:
  - a. Work to make students aware that they do not need to rent so early in the year when the lists just come out, both so that students feel informed and therefore less pressured, and so that properties are taken up more gradually, e.g. through a 'Don't Rent Yet' campaign.
  - b. Work with estate agents and others to offer positive incentives for estate agents to release their lists later and more gradually, e.g. by giving those agents access to a housing fair.

**Proposed by:** Chris Pike (St Edmund)

**Seconded by:** Danny Waldman (St John's)

13. Timing of Council renewal

**Council Notes:**

1. In 3rd Week Trinity Term 2009, Council passed policy on the Timing of Council resolving "To not hold OUSU Council between the hours of 9am-5pm, Monday - Friday."
2. That this policy was reaffirmed in Hilary Term of 2012.
3. That many students, mainly scientists and graduates, have commitments that would prevent them from attend OUSU Council were it to be held between the hours of 9am-5pm, Monday – Friday.
4. That this policy is once again due to lapse this term.

**Council Believes:**

1. That OUSU Council should be as accessible as possible to the students of our University.
2. That every student has a right to have their voice heard at OUSU Council.
3. That, as stated in the motion passed in Hilary Term 2012, the honourable quest to understand how life evolved should not prevent a student from saving a good piece of policy from lapsing.

**Council Resolves:**

1. To retain the policy passed in Trinity Term 2009, and in Hilary Term 2012.
2. To not hold OUSU Council between the hours of 9am-5pm, Monday – Friday.

**Proposed:** Jack Matthews (University)

**Seconded:** Eden Tanner (St. Johns)

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## **j. Motions of No Confidence or censure**

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## **k. Motions to amend Bye-Laws, General Regulations or Election Regulations**

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### 4. Amendments to General Regulations

#### **Council Notes:**

1. Appendix 1 written by Internal Affairs Committee to summarise the proposed amendments.
2. The rolling governance review conducted over the past two years.
3. The Bye-Law changes passed in 1st week TT15 and the need for consequential amendments to the General Regulations.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. To give a first reading to the changes to the General Regulations outlined in Appendix 2.

**Proposed:** Louis Trup (Brasenose)

**Seconded:** Chris Pike (St Edmund)

### 5. Amendments to Election Regulations

#### **Council Notes:**

1. Appendix 1 written by Internal Affairs Committee to summarise the proposed amendments.
2. The rolling governance review conducted over the past two years.
3. The recommendations of the Election and Referendum Review Group (ERRG) reported to 5<sup>th</sup> week council Hilary Term 2015.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. To give a first reading to the changes to the General Regulations outlined in Appendix 3.

**Proposed:** Louis Trup (Brasenose)

**Seconded:** Chris Pike (St Edmund)

Louis Trup (Brasenose) Spoke on motions 4 and 5 together, explaining that they are our third tier of governance. Flagged key points as the addition of a Graduate LGBTQ Officer, changes to Steering Committee so that the chair does not have to chair ad hoc meetings if not appropriate, the timing of statutory elections, recommendations from the Electoral and Referendum Review Group, including the addition of RON to trustee and delegate additions. Highlighted that changes are listed in the appendix.

**Motions 4 and 5 passed with no opposition.**

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## I. Motions authorising expenditure

### 6. The 'Oxford Feminist Zine Fair'

#### **Council Notes:**

1. The 'Oxford Feminist Zine Fair' is a not-for-profit event organised to give people in Oxford access to zines written by and for women at lower prices and without the postage cost, organised by St Catz student Lulu Williams and Balliol student Ruby Breward.
2. That the event will be hosted at Freud, on the 10th June.
3. That the Zine Fair has received a £200 loan from Balliol JCR, which it has already spent on acquiring copies of 5 zines (several issues of some).
4. That the average amount spent on each title is £48.88, which has covered between 10 and 28 copies of each.
5. That zines can also be acquired on a sale-or-return basis, although postage costs are around £15 each way.
6. That booking a band will cost around £50-60.
7. That this funding will facilitate Oxford women's access to feminist material and ideas.
8. That any profit made will be donated to a relevant charity or funnelled into running further fairs.
9. That any zines left over from the fair will be sold online or donated to local women's refuge centres.

#### **Council Believes:**

1. That giving more people in Oxford access to feminist reading material is a worthwhile endeavour.
2. That the event would receive more interest if we were to book a speaker and/or a band.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. To award the 'Oxford Feminist Zine Fair' £200 or as much as they see fit in order to help this event go ahead, specifically in acquiring a wider range of zines, and hiring a speaker and/or band.

**Proposed:** Ruby Breward (Balliol)

**Seconded:** Aliya Yule (Wadham)

Ruby Breward (Balliol) – Explained that they have more information on costings since submitting the motion, and that ideally they need £211. Added that this would allow them to get ten more zines on a sale or return basis, as well as a speaker from Brighton and a band from Leeds.

#### **Amendment received:**

Resolves 1:

Replace "£200 or as much as they see fit" with "£211."

**Proposed:** Anna Bradshaw (Wadham)

**Seconded:** Ruby Breward (Balliol)

No opposition to amendment.

**Motion passed with no opposition.**

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## **m. Other motions**

### 9. Free our Wednesday afternoons

#### **Council Notes:**

1. OUSU once had policy in support of having Wednesday afternoons free from course commitments for students (both on taught and research courses) so that students can take part in sport and other extra-curricular activities.
2. That Wednesday afternoons are left free from course commitments at many universities for the same reason as above.
3. The British Universities and Colleges Sport (BUCS) league matches for many sports take place on Wednesday afternoons.
4. In universities where Wednesday afternoons are free from course commitments, staff have their committee meetings, which ensures that no student provision is sacrificed when staff take up roles within the University.
5. In the recent meeting of the University's Sports Strategic Sub-committee, this issue was raised, but as OUSU has no policy on this, OUSU's representative, Louis J Trup, could only speculate as to what students want.

#### **Council Believes:**

1. Extra-curricular things are good for students.
2. Students should have the opportunity to take part in extra-curricular activities, even if they have other commitments (such as caring commitments) which prevent them from taking part during evenings.
3. It is bad that students who have full Uni days on Wednesdays yet want to take part in University sport often have to choose between their studies and their sport.
4. More time for extra-curricular things has the potential to make us better at said extra-curricular things.

#### **Council Resolves:**

1. For OUSU to campaign for Wednesday afternoons to be free from course commitments for all students so that the time can be used for extra-curricular activities.
2. To make resolves 1 OUSU policy.

**Proposed:** Louis Trup (Brasenose)

**Seconded:** Hector Bagley (St Catherine's)

Louis Trup (Brasenose) – Stated that around the country, many Universities have Wednesday afternoons off, so that students can take part in sports and leisure activities, and so that staff members can attend committees. Explained that he has brought this motion now as it will be

going to Education Committee, and he thinks this would be a great thing. Added that it has the support of Sports Fed.

St Catherine's student – Asked why the policy was dropped previously.

Louis – Answered that no-one renewed it when it lapsed, rather than it being an active decision to do so.

Alex (Hertford) – Asked why Wednesdays, as Tuesdays and Thursdays are standard for college rugby.

Louis – Answered that he believes that college rugby is moving to Saturday, and that Wednesdays is the day for this nationally, and is when league matches happen. Added that it is also when colleges have governing body.

Jacob Williams (Exeter) – Stated that it may be difficult for some professors to re-arrange academic timetables.

Louis – Agreed that this would be difficult, and that it would be a long process, but that we should have aims for broad structures that we can campaign for.

James Blythe (Brasenose) – Asked if it true that one extra activity for students could mean that they don't have time to sit on committees themselves.

Louis – Agreed.

Marina Lambrakis (St John's) – Asked if this would be making choose between sports and committees.

Louis – Answered that this would give us more choice.

Eden – Asked how we would deal with supervisors that make students work Christmas, let alone Wednesday afternoon.

Louis – Answered that this is part of a bigger thing that we are trying to change through the Education Vision, but that passing this kind of thing helps us make a clear statement to the university.

**Motion passed with no opposition.**

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## **n. Any other business**

### 1. Impact Report (Appendix 5)

Louis Trup (Brasenose) – Stated that the answer to the question 'What does OUSU do for me?' is contained within the Impact Report and urged students to read it.