

**Goldsmiths SU Student Assembly 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2016**

5.30pm, Ian Gulland Lecture Theatre

***All students must bring their student ID in order to enter the meeting***

**1. Welcome and Introduction**

1.1 Safe space policy –

The video for safe space was presented to the assembly.

2.

2.1 Procedures of motions –

Chair advised the Assembly to ensure that we have a few Motions to get through and to be as succinct as possible.

**2. Apologies**

Eliane Edmond – Disabled Students Officer

Allussia Cancemi – Palestine Twining Officer

Officers present

Liam Renouf – Housing Officer

Serena Savini, & Alice-India Garwood Womens Officer

Aisha Khan - Societies Officer

Kiona Niehaus - Postgraduate Students' Officer

Lynsay Hodges - Campaigns Coordinator

Laith Whitwham – Chair

Daniel Nasr – President

In attendance: Josh Habimana (Secretary)

**3. Emergency motion –**

Acting President Daniel Nasr Advised made a proposal to the assembly in regards to the absence of Officers that were not present at the Assembly and had not been in touch with the Chair or the Clerk of the student Assembly.

In accordance with the Byelaws article 16 it was noted that officers who have not attended up to 3 Student Assemblies without notifications to the chair or secretary can be dismissed.

16. Assembly Members shall cease to hold office in the following circumstances
  - 16.1 Upon written notice of resignation sent to the Assembly Chair
  - 16.2 If a resolution is passed by a simple majority of the Assembly in the event that the Assembly Member has failed to attend either two consecutive or three in total meetings of the Assembly without providing proper cause to the Chair or Clerk.

The following Officers were noted to have not having attended over 3 Assemblies with no notification.

Black and Minority Ethnic Office - Emma Marie Rodgers [and] Eva-Grace Bor  
Ethic and Enviromental Officer- Nazneen Master  
International Students Officer -Divya rao

A vote was taken in regards to considering the officers as resigned

Black and Minority Ethnic Office - Emma Marie Rodgers [and] Eva-Grace Bor

**For 24**  
**Against 0**  
**Abstain 4**

Ethic and Environmental Officer- Nazneen Master

**For 26**  
**Against 0**  
**Abstain 2**

International Students Officer -Divya rao

**For 25**  
**Against 0**  
**Abstain 3**

### **3. Approval of the minutes from the last meeting.**

#### 3.1 Ratification of last April Assembly

It was agreed that now with the Assembly being quorate, we could now ratify the indicative votes that were taken at the Students Assembly. This was agreed unanimously by the Assembly.

### **4. Smiths & Leopard Editor elections**

### **Daisy Graham & Abigail for Smiths**

Daisy Graham and Abigail Lister addressed the Assembly and advised that they have been editor for the last two years with Smiths. They were also responsible for the launch event. They also want to publish more regular articles going forward and work with other media.

### **A vote was taken for Daisy Graham and Abigail to be the editors for Smiths**

**For 24**

**Against 0**

**Abstain 4**

Jamie Barton addressed the Assembly, he stated that his priorities are improving distribution of the Leopard, integrating it into the Student Union Activity, improving the content of the newspaper, speaking to the community and working as part of a team to ensure the best possible distribution.

### **A vote was taken for Jamie Barton to be the editor for Leopard**

**For 26**

**Against 0**

**Abstain 2**

## **5. Motions**

### ***5.1 Motion to introduce scholarships for persecuted academics at Goldsmiths***

Proposed: Neda Genova

Seconded : Sina Freund

#### **This Union notes**

Academics for Peace, whose more than 2000 members current face institutional and criminal persecution for their signing of an anti-war petition is just one amongst many examples of scholars facing persecution worldwide.

#### **The Union believes**

We believe that it is necessary to offer not only expressions of solidarity but also practical support to academics and PhD students who have lost their jobs, institutional affiliations and possibility to research in their previous environments as a result of their practice of critique and dissent. One possible way would be through the introduction of visiting fellowships and scholarships for those of the academics who would wish to come to Goldsmiths.

### **This Union resolves**

We, a solidarity group called Academics for Peace Goldsmiths, would like to ask the SU to support us in this and help us with moving the proposal to decision-makers at the university and instating it. The SU's experience with the introduction of ""scholarships for refugees"" could help us better understand the necessary steps that need to be taken in order to put this idea into practice."

Neda Genova explained that the context to the motion that previously there has been support for the academics for refugee scholars and that there has been Amendment to state that the Union will support with materials to raise awareness for the campaign.

**For 28**

***Against 0***

***Abstain 0***

### ***5.2 Motion to support Academics for Peace***

Proposer: Sina Isabel Freund

Seconder: Jonas Prinzleve

"This Union notes that there have been violations to academic freedom and freedom of speech in Turkey. Academics who signed a petition to stop Turkey's war on Kurds have been fired, were put under investigation, lost their scholarships or even got imprisoned.

This Union believes that academic freedom is important and needs to be respected. People should not face oppression because of supporting the ones who are already oppressed. There needs to be the possibility to oppose the state if necessary. There is a need to support Academics for Peace in Turkey.

This Union resolves to support Academics for Peace Goldsmiths, who are organising a solidarity conference with Academics for Peace in Turkey and are trying to obtain scholarships for PhD Students and Professors who lost their funding and jobs because of criticizing the Turkish state and supporting the Kurds."

Sina introduced the motion and explained that recent events in Turkey had prompted this motion. Sina also advised this was a partnership with students hence the motion was coming from them.

**For 26**

**Against 0**

**Abstain 0**

**Motion passes**

### ***5.3 #StandByMe Campaign***

**Proposer:** Lynsay Hodges

**Secunder:** Stefanie Cooper

#### **This Union Notes**

- 1 in 7 women students (14%) has been the victim of serious sexual assault or serious physical violence while at university or college.
- In the NUS 2015 lad culture and sexism survey 61% of students stated that they were not made aware of any codes of conduct and 66% stated they were not aware of the procedure to report these incidents.
- The Zellick Report was created in 1994 to give guidance to universities about how to deal with sexual assault cases. It tells universities not to investigate cases and not to go through disciplinary procedures until the victim had gone through the police system.
- Evidence shows that 82% of rapes are never reported to the police and of these, only 1 in 5 results in court proceedings. For the few cases which do enter the court system, the average length of the court process is 1 year and 4 months from report to verdict – at which point many victims may no longer be studying at the university. This means in practice, the majority of victims of sexual violence would see no action taken by their university.
- NUS has launched a campaign called #StandByMe which calls for the repeal of the Zellick guidelines and for a national consultation which listens to the student movement and specialist services in order to develop new reporting and disciplinary guidelines and survivor support.
- Like other survivor services such as domestic violence shelters, Rape Crisis and their local centres are under continuous cuts from Conservative party policy.
- Goldsmiths University does not have an individual policy of sexual harassment/assault, and student conduct policies are difficult to access.

#### **This Unions Believes**

- The quality of University reporting procedures and support services across the UK are inconsistent and inadequate.
- The Zellick Report is out of date and campuses do not provide proper support for survivors of sexual assault when institutions base the procedures on this guidance.

- Universities should have accessible reporting procedures for sexual assault and provide access to specialist support for victims during their time at university.
- Although there are problems with actions towards sex workers and trans women, Rape Crisis Centres overall provide vital support services for survivors of sexual assault.
- The cuts to Rape Crisis centres are fatal and these organisations deserve to be fully funded through government money.

### **The Union Resolves**

- To continue to support the NUS #StandByMe campaign as part of our Tackling Sexual Harassment campaigns.
- Join national campaigns calling for better support for all survivors on campus, the scrapping of the Zellick guidelines, and sustainable funding for services across the country.
- Lobby Goldsmiths University to provide a comprehensive, easily accessible reporting policy that centres the support of survivors.
- Establish care pathways in our Union to better support survivors, and train all staff and officers in them.
- Continue to facilitate the Goldsmiths Survivor Support Network, and provide adequate training for coordinators.
- To look into forming a partnership with our local rape crisis centre, under the premise of critical engagement due to their history of being transmisogynistic and anti-sex work.

Campaigns part time coordinator Lynsay Hodges introduced by explaining that the motion discussed sensitive issues and offered students an opportunity to leave if they feel uncomfortable with the topic of any of the campaign.

Lynsay advised that currently the support offered locally for people affected by sexual harassment does not cover Trans Women.

Lynsay also noted that support also needs to cover men who have been affected by sexual harassment.

**A vote for the motion was taken For 26 Against 0 Abstain 0 Motion Passes**

### ***5.4 Support the lecturers' strike!***

**Proposer:** Jamie Green Jamie Green (Chair, Goldsmiths Labour)

**Seconder:** Molly Kneath (Education Officer-elect)

"This Union Notes:

1. The UCU has called a strike for 25th and 26th May 2016 in a dispute over pay and conditions in higher education as well as 'working to contract'.

2. Since 2009, staff in higher education have received a 14.5% pay cut because of pay freezes or below inflation pay rises.
3. This has come at a time where senior managers have regularly received, above inflation pay rises of 3% or more, with the average pay and pensions package for vice-chancellors standing at over £270,000.
4. Alongside this, there is still a significant gender pay gap in higher education.

This Union Believes:

1. Goldsmiths SU has a proud tradition of supporting strikes, particularly that of our lecturers and support staff.
2. The pay cut being offered to staff is unjust and part of a wider trend of burgeoning inequality in higher education.
3. The only people profiting from the trebling of fees are higher education bosses who are consistently enjoying significant pay rises, whilst students and staff get poorer.
4. There is enough money in the higher education system to pay staff fairly and improve student provisions, it is simply in the wrong hands and being used in the wrong way.

This Union Resolves:

1. To support the upcoming lecturers strike and all further actions related to the dispute it is related to.
2. To publicise the SU's support to students, including via an all student email if possible.
3. To write to the College's management outlining the SU's support and urging them to put pressure on UCEA (the body that negotiates on behalf of Universities) to make a fair offer to the UCU.
4. To encourage all students not to cross the picket line if they can help it and to encourage students, including political groups and societies, to join staff on the picket-line"

Mollie Kneath set contexts for the motion by explaining that currently at Goldsmiths and most of higher education there is significant discordance in regards to pay for staff, including

A high number of staff on zero hour contracts.

A persistent gender pay gap

A disproportionate income difference between senior management and staff

Mollie also explained that the university staff had requested a 5% pay rise but only a 1% was agreed. Mollie explained that that reason the conditions of staff matters should matter to students is that their living conditions are students learning conditions.

### **A vote was taken for the motion**

**For 26**

**Against 0**

**Abstain 0**

### **Motion Passes**

#### ***5.5 Stop the Tory White Paper, Defend Education!***

Proposer: Toby Peacock (Goldsmiths Labour Committee)

Seconder: Jamie Green (Chair, Goldsmiths Labour)

"This Union Notes:

1. The government recently published a 'White Paper' on Higher Education which outlines its broader plans for the sector and possible legislation. 2. Within the paper, it is proposed that universities who offer an outstanding 'student experience' may be able to increase its level of tuition fees to that of inflation. This will be measured by the 'Teacher Excellence Framework' (TEF).
3. Despite acknowledging that the current £9,000 fee generation do not believe their degree is value for money, the government are still furthering their current policy of making education more expensive.
3. Other plans include allowing private organisations to apply for university status and reviewing the charity status and/or accountability of Students' Unions.
4. The National Union of Students opposes both the White Paper and TEF, as well as tuition fees.

**This Union Believes:**

1. The Tory government is creating a market in higher education, rather than running the education system for the purpose of building a better society.
2. There is no place for markets in the higher education system. Markets have winners and losers and these proposals will almost certainly lead to a tiered education system, with wealthy institutions at the top and poorer ones at the bottom making it even more unequal.
3. Education should be free for all, democratic and decolonised. It should be run for the collective good of society, liberation of all and as a tool to build a better world, rather than making a profit for private institutions.

**This Union Resolves:**

1. To oppose the Government's White Paper for Higher Education.
2. To oppose the White Paper and a rise in tuition fees and make this a campaigning priority for 2016/2017, bringing together other campaigns and causes on campus (Cut the Rent, Diversify the Curriculum, the UCU campaign for fairer pay etc. ) to oppose the Tories' vision for education.
3. To campaign locally, in raising awareness on the issue and lobby Goldsmiths' College management, asking them to publicly denounce the White Paper and commit to not raising fees.
4. To join the NUS' proposed sabotage of the TEF and the National Student Survey by publicly asking students not to fill-out the latter, in line with the NUS' policy on the issue.
5. To re-commit to the idea of education being free for everyone through the abolition of fees, introducing universal living grants and abolishing all existing student debt paid for by taxing the rich."

Jamie Green presented the motion and highlighted that there was an increase in marketisation of education by making it less accessible to students.

A proposal for an amendment was proposed Danny amendment Boycott the NSS to stop the marketisation of education as part of this motion.

**A Vote was taken on the amendment**

**For 26**

**Against: 0**

**Abstain: 0**

**Motion Passes**

**A Vote was taken on the motion with amendment**

**For 26**

**Against: 0**

**Abstain: 0**

**Motion Passes**

## **6. Officer report**

Daniel Nasr (Acting President) thanked the union for the commitment of the members through a challenging year for the Students Union

## **7. Bye Election Proposal**

A proposal was made to the assembly to carry out a by-election to recruit for the officer positions that have not been recruited for in the March election. . It was noted by the clerk to the assembly that whilst there is the practice of appointing during the assembly, there is no guidance on this.

**A vote was taken on the change in procedure For 24 Against 0 Abstain 4**

**Motion Passes**

## **8. Solidarity Motions**

There was a proposal to propose that union challenges the times when the heating is turned on and off. Ben ..... who was proposing suggested that this was illegal and needed to be challenged by the union. He also explained that in approaching accommodation services it was argued that the argument for keeping this as it was in order to reduce the greenhouse impact.

Liam Renouf advised that this is part of the campaign and Bed could quite easily approach the housing officers to add this to the campaign but it was not necessary to approach this as a campaign.

## **9. Any Other Business**

Jamie Green advised that the labour party was going to be holding its Monday holding elections

Alice Garwood informed the Assembly that the Sex Worker Solidarity society needed support from students and that anyone was interested in the campaign or know people who were, to join the society.

Liam expressed thanks to the chair as this was the last Student Assembly for the year. There was a reminder from the Clerk for students to remember to register to vote for the EU referendum.

There was also an announcement for the SU quiz