



Submission To	Postgraduate Council
Meeting Date	18 January 2021
Category	Select: Confidential or Non-Confidential
Authors	Diana Zhang, Ramanashree Palakshamurthy & Jerry Offor
Item No	[Governance use only]

Minutes

PGC Council Meeting

January 18th, 2021, 6:05 – 8:00pm (AEDT)

Zoom online

Members in Attendance

Jerry Offor, Diana Zhang, Ramanashree Palakshamurthy Jing Sun, Chukwuka Madumelu, Simon Xu, Niharika Kodare, Emilia Nwakpa, Swarali Marathe, Constantine Tsounis, Mariam Soomro, Kalyani Patil, Saltanat Paritova, Rabia Mobeen, Emmy Lau, Hugo Su, Vintii Aggarwal, Cathy Deng, Dimple Lalwani, Liam Cheney & Min Huang

Ex-Officio Members: Shruthi Shankar and Saurabh Kaura

Apologies: Christine Castor

Absence without apologies: Viola Karungi

1. Meeting Opening

The President (Jerry) welcomed all members present via Zoom to the second PGC Council Meeting and start of the New Year. The meeting was declared open at 6:05pm.

- 1.1 An Acknowledgement of country was made
- 1.2 Apology was received from Christine Castor
- 1.3 No Conflict of Interest was declared
- 1.4 Four items were flagged for immediate discussion. Women's Officer, Saltanat raised to present the PGC Financials from December up until January 18. The President, Jerry, raised three items: 1) adoption of December minutes as a working document; 2) update on a recent PGC win from the Vice-President's Office regarding international students' accommodation; 3) update on PGC cruise matters.
RESOLVED THAT Vice-President, Ramanashree raised the motion to accept these items and was seconded by Councillor, Liam.
 - 1.4.1 Women's Officer and appointed Finance Officer, Saltanat presented PGC's financial performance from Dec 1, 2020 to Jan 18, 2021. The finances fell under two main categories.



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- 1.4.1.1 The Salvation Army Pay it Forward Christmas Appeal took place via a GoFundMe page where all income was generated from community donations. A total of \$561 (including service fees) was raised. Additional personal donations of \$80 from Vice-President, Diana was also raised to cover expenses. Total expenditure included \$580 for the cost of 90 Christmas presents and \$61 for the cost of wrapping materials. Research Students' Officer, Mariam congratulated the Salvation Army Committee for their efforts in supporting community well-being and hopes for more similar PGC events in future.
- 1.4.1.2 PGC merchandise consisting of 25 T-shirts (\$673.75) and caps (\$244.75), taken from the PGC budget was signed off by the President and is being processed internally by Arc's Marketing Team.
- 1.4.2 The President, Jerry raised forward three items
- 1.4.2.1 The adoption of the minutes from the December PGC meeting was open to the floor.
RESOLVED THAT the motion to accept the minutes was raised by Vice-President, Ramanashree and seconded by Councillor, Liam.
- 1.4.2.2 Event's Officer, Swarali presented the update on the PGC Cruise. She explained that in a recent meeting between the Event's Officer, President and Vice-President with the owner of the PGC Cruise company, the following details were made clear. In 2020, a PGC Cruise (max capacity of 950) was booked for 3 hours with a total invoice of \$19,350. A deposit of \$9,675 was already paid. Currently, due to recent COVID-19 restrictions, the following rules are applied for the same cruise: a maximum capacity of 220, no dancing or moving around with drinks, and social distancing throughout. Given these restrictions, the owner described 4 possible options: i) proceed with a reduced capacity (\$50 pp); ii) opt for a smaller cruise with max capacity of 150 people; iii) postpone the event until restrictions are removed; and iv) request for a refund of the deposit minus \$1,000. The President, Jerry clarified that if a refund were to be made, the money would go back to Arc and not to PGC.
- 1.4.2.2.1 The item was opened to the floor for discussion. It was clarified that in 2018, the PGC Cruise had attracted ~ 850 people. A number of members suggested that given the current circumstances, the cruise would not be suitable. Suggestions were made asking for a special request by Arc to relocate the refund from the cruise to PGC 2021 budget.
RESOLVED THAT the President, Jerry will contact Arc regarding this issue.
- 1.4.2.3 Vice-President, Ramanashree presented an update on the recent PGC win regarding international students accommodation. Ramanashree



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highlighted a recent clash between international students and the UNSW Accommodations office which has forced students to remove their belongings from their rooms. The President & Vice-President's Office, along with Research Students' Officer and UNSW Council member, Constantine have advocated for student luggage to be stored in a separate room. In a negotiation with the Accommodation Office, it was agreed upon that the luggage will be stored in a separate room free of charge until the end of Term 1 (excluding the fees to pack and clean the room). The President, Jerry added that he will contact the Vice-Chancellor and push for an international student luggage facility. He also congratulated the team on the win, and emphasised the importance for PGC to produce tangible actions rather than just holding meetings and writing reports.

1.5 Women's Officer, Rabia volunteered to be the meeting observer.

2. Matters for Discussion

2.1 The Vice-President, Diana provided an update on the proposed initiatives for 2021. She reiterated that a mock calendar based on the initiatives and proposals from the December meeting can be found in the PGC Teams channel. A deadline to review and change proposed dates for Term 1 events (especially for February events) was set for January 24th. This is to facilitate the work of the Marketing Committee in their PGC Newsletter efforts. It was made clear that after the deadline, the assumption would be that the calendar dates would go ahead. The President, Jerry confirmed that no financial budgets for PGC events have been requested to date.

2.2 The President, Jerry facilitated discussions surrounding O-Week preparations. He asked for PGC members to provide their availabilities for the PGC stall and confirmed that the Events Officers will arrange necessary merchandise. He also clarified that the Vice-President's Office will chair the O-week Committee, which will also consist of the International Students' Officers, Coursework Students' and Event's Officers. Any other member interested to help should email the Vice President's Office indicating their interest for O-week. Jerry also explained that O-week helpers will receive food vouchers as is tradition.

2.2.1 Discussions surrounding O-week ideas was open to the floor. Vice-President, Ramanashree suggested that those with particular skills (e.g. marketing) should indicate their areas of expertise via email. Online videos for YouTube (e.g. Welcome to PGC 2021) which is to be directed by Councillor, Liam is still in continued discussions. Suggestions were made for PGC to do Facebook LIVE videos giving a virtual tours of UNSW.



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RESOLVED THAT these suggestions will be discussed within the O-week Committee.

3. Matters for Decision

3.1 The Vice-President, Diana provided an update on the status of PGC email forwarding. She explained that with ex-officio member, Saurabh, they had a meeting with Mitchell and Lydia from Arc Marketing where it was told that Arc can send the PGC Newsletter via its database. According to Mitch, all postgraduate students who have registered with Arc is automatically in their database which stands at ~ 8,000 students. Ten percent of these are likely alumni. Therefore, Diana explained that it would be beneficial for PGC Newsletters to be emailed via Arc's database.

3.1.1 Questions were raised concerning the benefit of PGC creating its own database from O-week and being able to communicate more closely with those active on campus.

RESOLVED THAT we will see how the first Newsletter looks and is received and then deliberate at the next Council meeting. However, efforts will be made to collect emails for the database during O-week and in any surveys distributed via PGC.

3.2 The President, Jerry gave an update on the Sports committee and explained that there are vacancies for any members who wish to take part.

RESOLVED THAT Women's Officer, Saltanat, Event's Officer, Swarali and Coursework Students' Officer, Simon would like to volunteer.

3.3 The Vice-President, Diana provided an update on the administrative matters concerning PGC Ambassador of the Month and Committee expression of interest. She explained that the nominations for Ambassador of Month will appear each month with nominations closing within 2 weeks. This will allow the Council 1 week to finalise and select a winner. The winner and their details will be published in the following month's newsletter. Expression of interest forms for the Committees will be included in the upcoming February Newsletter. She also explained that all Chairs for the Committees need to submit a short information paragraph which will be included in the EOI forms. A template and working documents will be sent to all Council members. A deadline for this submission was set for January, 24th.

3.3.1 The President, Jerry explained that in consultation with postgraduate students, it was advised that the name 'Committee' as opposed 'Sub-Committee' would sell better as students are more accustomed to 'Committee' and would be of benefit in their resumes. He also suggested a change for the Marketing, Editorial & Videography Committee to be 'Marketing, Editorial & Media Committee'.



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3.3.1.1 Discussions about these changes were moved to the floor. There were no objections.

RESOLVED THAT the name be changed from 'PGC XXX Non-executive and Executive Sub-Committee' to 'PGC XXX and Executive Committee' and 'Marketing, Editorial & Media Committee'.

3.3.2 The President, Jerry clarified that it will be the responsibility of Chairs of Committee to set meeting with the respective members and decide on what to do. Vice-President, Ramana will send a summary of all Committees according to the consent that was sent through by all members.

3.3.3 The President, Jerry also explained that he will email the deputy Vice-Chancellor of Academic for partnership with the PGC Course Co-ordinator and Ambassador Award.

4. Other Business

4.1 Vice-President, Diana gave an update on the PGC Survey which will be distributed in the February Newsletter and beyond. She explained that along with Research Students' Officer, Mariam, there exists a 'general' and a 'PhD' survey, both of which will be combined into one.

4.1.1 Mariam emphasised the need to include a statement about privacy and to indicate that data collected from this survey will remain confidential.

4.1.2 Suggestions for additional survey questions were opened to the floor. Possible questions such as 'Are you currently living in Sydney?', questions concerning academic issues, and open-ended questions such as 'What do you expect from PGC?' were raised.

RESOLVED THAT these questions will be considered in the survey. A deadline was made for any additional questions to be sent through by January, 19th.

4.2 Vice-President, Diana explained about the need to provide COVID-19 support following one of the election campaign promises by PGC Officer Bearers. She made suggestions such as: voluntary salary sacrifice to be compiled and used to distribute essential COVID-19 packs or care packages for students in hotel quarantine.

4.2.1 Suggestions for this initiative were opened to the floor. There were suggestions for COVID-19 packs to come from the PGC budget and handed out during O-week, to work with university administration so to reach more students, and using the PGC Cruise refund to be relocated for this (if possible). Other ideas included using hosting a fundraising event similar to the Salvation Army event and distribute support based on a needs basis, and checking out government support programs of use.



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RESOLVED THAT this will be an ongoing discussion and will be deliberated upon at another meeting.

4.3 Vice-President, Diana also explained about the need to provide greater transparency between the working of PGC and the student community. She explained about the commonality for university administration and councils to disclose documents such as Council Minutes and Reports.

4.3.1 The idea for public disclosure was opened to the floor. The opinion was unanimous for public disclosure of documents. The President, Jerry also suggested hosting a public Town Hall via Zoom for one of the Council meetings. RESOLVED THAT a final decision will be made in the next Council meeting.

5. Question and Answer

5.1 Research Students' Officer, Mariam suggested having a whiteboard in the Postgraduate Lounge for students to advertise their skills or donations. RESOLVED that this will be looked into.

5.2 The President, Jerry brought forward the issue of WeChat. He asked whether or not an existing WeChat platform (with over 600 engaged students) which was used in the 2020 election campaign can be converted to PGC. RESOLVED THAT this will be an ongoing discussion.

5.3 The President, Jerry reminded everyone about submitting financial budgets to be approved for any PGC event. He also recommended combining events with other officers, if relevant. He also reminded everyone to support an upcoming event hosted by the International Students' Officers and Events Officers in relation to Arc's Funner Summer. This event will be a Games Night after Arc denied the possibility of hosting a BBQ due to COVID-19 restrictions.

5.4 The President, Jerry explained that the next PGC Council Meeting on February 1st will be short and will include a presentation from himself and Councillor, Vintii as well as updates and discussions from the O-week Committee.

5.5 A question was raised about the Office Bearer's report and the number of hours to include for the current PGC Council meeting. RESOLVED THAT this present Council meeting should be noted as 2 hours.

5.6 The meeting observer, Rabia provided her assessment for the meeting. She explained that the discussions were well-facilitated and noted the deadlines that need to be met. She will also send her full report to the Vice-President's Office.



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6. Meeting Finalisation

A motion to close the meeting was raised by Vice-President, Ramanashree and seconded by Councillor, Liam.

The President (Jerry) thanked everyone for attending the Council meeting. The meeting closed at 8:00pm.