



<b>Submission To</b>	Postgraduate Council
<b>Meeting Date</b>	19 July 2021
<b>Category</b>	Select: Confidential or Non-Confidential
<b>Authors</b>	Diana Zhang & Jerry Offor
<b>Item No</b>	[Governance use only]

## Minutes

### PGC Council Meeting

July 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021, 7:06 – 7:56pm (AEST)

Zoom online

#### Members in Attendance (on time)

Jerry Offor, Diana Zhang, Saltanat Paritova, Min Huang, Saurabh Kaura, Liam Cheney, Simon Xu, Jing Sun, Chukwuka Madumelu, Hugo Su, Mariam Soomro, Constantine Tsounis, Emilia Nwakpa, Rabia Mobeen, Gideon George Jebarajan, Sardor Bakhtiyorov, Emmy Lau

*Committee Members:* Shuang Song, Hang Thanh Bui,

*Guests in attendance:* Yanrao Zhao

*Members in attendance (after meeting opened)*

7:08 – Joshua Karras

7:28 – Michael Odutola

*Apologies:* Shruthi Kumar, Swarali Marathe, Kalyani Patil, Christine Castor

*Members absent without apologies:* Cathy Deng

#### 1. Meeting Opening

The President (Jerry) welcomed all members who attended via Zoom to an Emergency PGC Council Meeting. The meeting was declared open at 7:06pm.

1.1 An Acknowledgement of country was made

1.2 No apologies were received.

1.3 No conflict of interest was declared.

1.4

1.4.1 One item was flagged for immediate discussion.

1.4.1.1 President, Jerry gave an update on his previous meeting with the Pro Vice-Chancellor of Student Engagement and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic). He noted that both university executives approved the proposal to bring together all Faculty Board representatives and to include



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them within the PGC structure. Jerry said that the UNSW Governance will work to sharpen the responsibilities of Faculty Board representatives and Academic Board representatives and outline their role within UNSW governance structure.

1.4.2 Committee member, Joshua volunteered to be the meeting observer

## 2. Matters for Decision

2.1 Incoming Vice-President (shared) and Chair of Charter Review Committee, Constantine led a discussion on the PGC restructure proposal, noting that the proposal will be sent to the Student Development Committee for discussion before final approval from Arc Board.

2.1.1 Research Officer, Mariam raised a comment on the need to include a grievance officer. She noted that the current PGC structure has a power-driven hierarchy, and therefore should have an independent person to attend to grievances by any members within PGC. This pathway should be made clearer and that grievances should be dealt with confidentially.

2.1.1.1 President, Jerry noted that Arc has an existing grievance policy in place and that the current working grievance policy is different for Councils such as PGC compared to Arc societies. Therefore, PGC will need to write a separate proposal to be approved by Arc Board in order to change the existing grievance procedure.

RESOLVED THAT a Matters for Discussion paper should be sent in for the next Council meeting making reference to existing and relevant Arc and PGC documents.

2.1.2 Committee member, Hang noted the simplified structure being proposed and questioned why there is a separate International and Equity Office.

2.1.2.1 Incoming Vice-President, Constantine noted that the reason for separate International and Equity Offices is because: 1) there is a large international population in the postgraduate community; and 2) Equity office will address the needs of multiple underrepresented groups. He also noted that the Equity and Women's Office have been merged for the reasons above. Further, Constantine noted that these offices will contribute to one of the main PGC missions which is to increase the grassroots connection between PGC and the community and enhance the engagement from PGC offices with the respective Committees.

2.1.3 Equity Officer, Chuka noted that without a Women's Officer, there may be a gender imbalance and questioned how the new structure can ensure equity in this regard.



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2.1.3.1 Incoming Vice-President, Constantine acknowledged that this is a continuing discussion point that will require further consultations with Arc. He noted a possible solution whereby the Vice-President (Equity) must fulfil one of the following eligibility requirements: Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, LGBTIQ+, female-identifying or person with disability. Further, he noted that the Terms of Reference for PGC Committees will be established such that the equity, diversity and inclusion practices can be followed when appointing Committee members.

2.1.3.2 Councillor and Charter Review Committee Secretary, Liam also noted that the Committee has been actively trying to work out gender-neutral position titles and requested suggestions from everyone regarding the position titles.

2.1.3.3 Committee member, Joshua also offered his support to recommend gender parity solutions based on his experiences with the United Nations.

2.1.4 Councillor, Gideon noted that the current structure reveals the General Secretary to be the focal point of all tasks within the PGC which demands a significant amount of responsibility. Thus, he questions what would happen if that officer is not performing to expectations.

2.1.4.1 President, Jerry noted that Terms of Reference will be established for each PGC member and will outline the duties and responsibilities for each role. Thus, the metrics of performance can be adequately established. Jerry also noted that there will be outlined procedures for non-performance.

2.1.5 Committee member, Hang suggested whether the Vice-President role can be shared to ensure gender diversity.

2.1.5.1 President, Jerry noted challenges of shared positions. In particular, the PGC budget restrictions means that honorariums would need to be divided. Given past experiences, the honorarium has proven to be a working incentive for officers to perform, thus, shared positions may be ineffective.

RESOLVED THAT the Matters for Decision paper to be approved was unanimous.

2.2 Vice-President, Diana noted that from the last Council meeting, Councillor and Committee member, Sardor recommended the recruitment of more Committee members to increase efficiency and effectiveness of each Committee. Therefore, Diana requested all chairs to notify whether they'd like more Committee members by July 21<sup>st</sup> so that a 2<sup>nd</sup> PGC Committee recruitment drive can be opened.

2.3 Prior to voting, President, Jerry addressed the concerns of online voting procedure from the previous Council meeting. Jerry highlighted two methods of voting: 1) according to the Charter, the President has the power to direct the meeting as needed; and 2) according to the Arc Regulations, motions should be voted by raise of hands. As such, Jerry requested a vote to determine which method the majority of the Council preferred: 1) vote by show of hands; or 2) vote via the Zoom poll function where the President and Vice-President are the Returning Officers.



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2.3.1 Zoom poll: 11 votes  
Show of hands: 1 vote  
Note: Councillor, Hugo was not present for the votes

2.3.2 Following this vote, Jerry requested a follow-up vote to determine whether the identity of voting members and whom they voted for should be made known.

Voting identity made known: 11 votes  
Voting identity not made known: 1 vote

2.3.3 Finally, Jerry asked if any member is against voting for themselves.  
2.3.3.1 Councillor, Sardor objected to PGC members voting for themselves

2.3.4 Nominations for Research Officer were received from:  
Liam Cheney  
Yanrao Zhao

2.3.4.1 Presentations were made from both candidates

2.3.5 The results for the elections were as follows:

**Research Officer**  
**Liam – 11 votes**  
Yanrao – 2 votes

Councillor, Liam abstained from voting as he is one of the candidates  
Liam was elected as Research Officer (shared).

### 3. Other Business

3.1 N/A

### 4. Meeting Finalisation

4.1 Committee member, Joshua gave a summary of the meeting. He noted that the objectives were clear and the meeting went smoothly. Joshua also noted that an important point on grievance procedure was raised and a unanimous vote was achieved for the new proposed PGC structure.

The President, Jerry thanked everyone for attending the emergency PGC Council meeting.

The meeting closed at 7:56pm.