



Submission To	Postgraduate Council
Meeting Date	26 July 2021
Category	Select: Confidential or Non-Confidential
Authors	Diana Zhang, Constantine Tsounis & Jerry Offor
Item No	[Governance use only]

Minutes

PGC Council Meeting

July 26th, 2021, 7:07 – 8:00pm (AEST)

Zoom online

Members in Attendance (on time)

Jerry Offor, Diana Zhang, Constantine Tsounis, Sardor Bakhtiyorov, Chukwuka Madumelu, Liam Cheney, Shruthi Kumar, Jing Sun, Min Huang, Saurabh Kaura, Simon Xu, Emmy Lau, Mariam Soomro, Emilia Nwakpa, Gideon George Jebarajan, Swarali Marathe

Guests in attendance: Melve Varghese, Madhav Raman

Apologies: Kalyani Patil, Christine Castor, Cathy Deng, Saltanat Paritova

Members absent without apologies: Hugo Su, Rabia Mobeen

1. Meeting Opening

The President (Jerry) welcomed all members who attended via Zoom to the July PGC Council Meeting. The meeting was declared open at 7:07pm.

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 Three items were flagged for immediate discussion.

1.4.1.1 Coursework Officer, Saurabh and President, Jerry invited former PGC Coursework Officer, Madhav to the floor to discuss about SEXtember. Madhav introduced SEXtember as a sexual health campaign that has been running as part of UNSW Health Promotion Unit since 2019. They are currently in their planning stages and are seeking a partnership with PGC to hold relevant events for postgraduate students. The event is planned to be virtual via Zoom during Term 3 Weeks 1-3 with possible face-to-face events for colleges. Madhav also noted that there is funding available thanks to the generous support of sponsors. The funding can be used towards prizes and speaker vouchers. So far, based on student feedback,



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the theme of SEXtember is around healthy body image and relationships. Current sessions that have already been confirmed including exploring dating scene, pole dancing, advocacy surrounding sex work, STI testing, and trivia. Madhav noted that Saurabh attended a previous planning meeting and had suggested a PGC podcast session concerning SEXtember and hopes PGC members can continue to brainstorm ideas and to suggest those ideas within the next 2 weeks. In particular, Madhav recommended collaborations with the Women's and Events Office. Finally, Madhav shared Mental Health Month and other collaborative opportunities available.

- 1.4.1.1.1 A question around possible subject topics was raised. Madhav noted the various topics that could be of interest including education in sexuality, consent, body image, relationships and gender identity. RESOLVED THAT PGC will share event ideas with Madhav prior to deadline. Jerry nominated Saurabh to co-ordinate efforts with relevant Offices.
- 1.4.1.2 Coursework Officer, Saurabh raised two items concerning the Arc PGC Ambassador and Course Coordinator of the Year Awards.
 - 1.4.1.2.1 First, Saurabh raised a point of discussion surrounding the definition of Course Coordinator – i.e. whether it should be an Academic staff member, a lecturer, or inclusive of students who teach as well. This discussion point was raised to the floor.
 - 1.4.1.2.1.1 Vice-President, Constantine noted that a long held understanding within the UNSW community is that a Course Coordinator is someone who is appointed to look over that particular course and is usually a Senior Lecturer or similar level staff member. He also noted that if a PhD student were to teach, perhaps a separate award category should be given to ensure fairness. Constantine also noted that usually lecturers are at the interface with students and their efforts should be commended.
 - 1.4.1.2.1.2 Research Officer, Liam also noted that there are current Teaching Excellence awards given to students.
 - 1.4.1.2.1.3 President, Jerry recommended to limit the scope for the inaugural awards as there will be opportunities to expand in future
RESOLVED THAT the Course Coordinator will be defined as a UNSW academic staff member who is not a UNSW enrolled student, and who has co-ordinated and/or taught a postgraduate course in 2021. There will also be a separate question in the nomination form to indicate if the nominee is a Course Coordinator who has co-ordinated a course.



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1.4.1.2.2 Second, Saurabh raised the issue on when to hold the Information session for the Ambassador and Course Coordinator Awards. He noted that applications will be open on August 2 and will close on August 31st. Saurabh asked for suggestions on whether the information session should be held before or after applications open.

1.4.1.2.2.1 President, Jerry shared that last year's information session for the Arc PGC Research Student and Supervisor's Award was held 2 weeks after applications opened to allow for notice of the Awards to circulate amongst the community.

1.4.1.2.2.2 A suggestion for Week 11 or afterwards was made due to the busy academic schedule in Week 10 for coursework students. RESOLVED THAT suggestions should be sent to the Coursework Office.

1.4.2 Vice-President, Constantine volunteered to be the meeting observer

2. Matters for Discussion

2.1 President, Jerry recommended for everyone to review the Charter Review documents found on Teams and to turn on tracked changes when making changes. He noted that these changes need to be made by August 24th in order to meet the next Arc deadline.

2.2 Coursework Officer, Saurabh led discussions around a partnership proposed by Platute. Saurabh explained that Platute is a start up company that provides casual work for tutors and mentors. Platute had approached Saurabh to offer free webinars and sessions for PGC and proposed a long-term partnership.

2.2.1 Vice-President, Constantine asked about what the scope of the partnership is. Saurabh explained that PGC will receive free sessions from Platute in exchange for PGC to become ambassadors for the company. Thus, making this partnership mutually benefitting. Saurabh also clarified that this is a non-binding partnership.

2.2.2 Vice-President, Diana asked about what additional value Platute would be bringing given that the sessions being offered can be obtained through other means such as UNSW Careers and Employability. For example, sponsorships. Saurabh clarified that there has not been any mention about sponsorships.

2.2.3 Research Officer, Liam and Councillor, Sardor also noted the lack of equal benefits in this current proposal and that there should be more incentives for PGC to take part in this partnership.

RESOLVED THAT this partnership will continue to be discussed.



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2.3 Coursework Officer, and Academic Board Representative, Saurabh gave an update on what has been proposed and discussed on the Academic Board.

2.3.1 First, a proposal around final exams to be reduced from a maximum weighting of 50 % (from 60%) has been proposed. In addition, the option of 24-hour take-home exams have been recommended. These proposals were suggested to increase flexibility for students and to reduce student stress levels.

2.3.2 Second, to increase student support services with better training for student staff members in lieu of developing a progression checker system which would otherwise take a considerable amount of time to implement. This has been proposed due to the considerable increase in student queries and a significant lack of support staff to tend to these queries.

RESOLVED THAT any suggestions should be made directly to Saurabh and/or Councillor and Academic Board member, Shruthi.

3. Matters for Decision

3.1 President, Jerry gave a brief update on a recent PGC proposal requesting for Academic Board and Faculty Board representatives to be ex-officio members of PGC. He noted that this has been passed to the Arc Board and will be implemented in the PGC Charter. Jerry also noted that the Pro Vice-Chancellor of Student Experience is also in support and will work with UNSW Governance to sharpen the responsibilities of AB and FB representatives. A vote to bring forward the proposal to PVCSE was brought to the floor. The vote in support was unanimous.

RESOLVED THAT the paper be recommended to PVCSE.

3.2 An election for Councillor B was held. Only one nomination by Melve Varghese was received.

3.2.1 Presentation by Melve was made.

3.2.2 Melve was elected uncontested.

Melve was elected as Councillor B.

4. Other Business

4.1 N/A

5. Meeting Finalisation

5.1 Vice-President, Constantine gave a summary of the meeting. He noted that the meeting was well-timed although there were some items could not be covered in



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detail due to time constraints. He recommended for feedback to be sent to the appropriate people.

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

The meeting closed at 8:00pm.