

## UNIVERSITY OF NORTHAMPTON STUDENTS' UNION

### MEETING OF THE STUDENT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

**Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

- PRESENT:** Samilullah (SK) President (Chair),  
Yeqi Zhou (YZ) VP-Education  
Yuanning Jiang (YJ) VP-Welfare and Activities  
Ahmed Basil (AB) VP-Post Graduate Research  
Kirstie Pope (KP) Disabled Students Officer  
Genine Taylor (GT) Mature Students Officer  
Erin Laste (EL) Womens Officer
- MINUTES:** K Macintyre (KM)
- APOLOGIES:** Tamara Holt (TH) Societies Officer,  
Anthony Stepniak (ASt) Post Graduate Research Officer
- ABSENT:** Arooj Shahbaz (AS) International Students Officer,  
Ratri Mauricio (RM) Sports Officer  
LLnall Emanuel (LM) Changemaker Officer

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#### 09/20 Welcome and Apologies

President welcomed everybody. Apologies and absences noted as above.

Quoracy as per the Terms of Reference is 50% plus one. There are currently 12 members in post and therefore the meeting of 7 members present is quorate.

#### REGULAR BUSINESS

#### 10/20 Verbal Updates from Officers

##### President

- Attended University Board of Governors and HE meetings
- Attended University Business Recovery Group meetings
- Did some work on a campaign with the Northampton Borough Council for Voter Registration for the local and national elections.
- Attended student support meetings with the University and lessons learned from this term and student feedback is being considered. President will be pushing to have input in the planning for January beginning of new term as new students and 500 international students who have been studying online this term will be arriving on campus.
- SU App – working on this. The SU tender proposal requires 3 proposals to be tabled, two are ready but one final proposal is still being sought.
- Bias and Types Campaign – have been working on this and there is a funding request to follow in this Agenda.
- Am working on a Campaign for Change as part of the Students Union's forthcoming Big Plans. The theme is based on Bias and its Types and am working closely with the SU Marketing Co-Ordinator for social media exposure
- Working on a Mobile App for the SU to bring a proposal to the Board of Trustees but will bring it to this Committee next month.

### **Vice President Education**

- Also attended University Board of Governors and HE meetings and Finance
- Attended election Reform Working Group meeting aimed at changing vote message and to work on an online voting process
- Sabb Team attended meeting with Vice Chancellor regarding Placements and Changemaker
- Working on a very exciting Black History Month programme of events
- Attended Student Council where I updated and improved manifesto points to less focus on Mental Health and more focus on Advocacy programme
- Attended a meeting with President and IT to present recent data collection on issues students having with IT.
- Have worked on and am holding public Speaking events in accordance with part of one of my manifest points that will require funding to be agreed later in this meeting. First session to be online with a panel of guest speakers which will be held online. If first session is successful then second session will be arranged to go ahead.
- Have been working on Student Survey regarding student issues but this has been running for a month and will be meeting with SU staff to try and change some of the questions to a more open forum and focus.
- Planning to have a suggestion box somewhere on campus that students can use to tell SU of any issues and to give feedback regarding their student experience.

### **Vice President Post Graduate Research**

- In accordance with manifest point have been working on the PGR Space and have received a number of comments from students regarding the Covid Code of Conduct and desk spacing etc.
- Have had a conversation with CEO and PGR PTO regarding a survey to measure how the PGR space is being used now and how students intend to use the space in the next term and what impact it will have. Attended a UK wide SU PGR Officer meeting and asked them for information on their PGR space issues and hopefully that will be done this week.
- Have focused on Educating the SU about the PGR and the internal communications and what we provide for them. Voting in the recent bye-elections was a big issue. Some of the PGR data that should have been transferred from re-enrolment has reached the SU in a corrupted state and cannot be used which meant that PGRs were unable to log into the website to vote which resulted in the by-election being cancelled.

### **Vice President Welfare and Activities**

- Working on Mental Health Campaign with a company called Mindful Healthcare who are already working with the University. There is a question of a conflict of interest which should be resolved within 2 weeks. Vice President Welfare and Activities to feed back on progress at next meeting.

**Action: VP Welfare and Activities**

- Working on video to do with Mental Health stigma
- Had a meeting with Sports and Marketing Co-ordinators on a Health Body, Healthy Mind campaign which will include a video for Varsity
- Working on a Survey with SU Staff regarding sports and societies

### **Mature Students' Officer**

- Have recently had a meeting with SU CEO regarding the potential for a childcare creche. CEO is going to approach the University. It was noted that provision of a childcare facility at the University has been turned down by the University on more than one occasion.
- In accordance with manifesto point, have been working on a variety of activities to get students engaged including those who have children and these have been going out on a number of different social media channels as well as promoting SU activities.
- Measuring the level of engagement through communications is difficult
- Have been making sure to stay connected via all of the channels to help and assist students by telling them where to go for help, information and assistance.

### **Women's Officer**

- Have been working on the Cop a Feel campaign with the Breast Cancer Awareness charity and putting out information regarding symptoms, getting help etc.
- Cop A Feel have also helped to arrange a Zoom meeting with The Boobettes, a group of young people willing to speak and give their personal testimonies of their breast cancer experience
- With regard to manifesto point have been raising awareness of women's health issues and have had a conversation with VP Welfare and activities on something to do with Birth Control, Sexual Health and Domestic Violence to come up with something to do in that respect.

### **Postgraduate Research Officer**

- Have been supporting the VP Postgraduate Research as he has been on campus dealing with the move of the PGR space from 1<sup>st</sup> Floor to 4<sup>th</sup> Floor in the Senate.
- Have been liaising with University to establish safe social distancing in the PGR space
- Liaising with IT to get the technology on the PGR space properly installed
- Have been working with the University to establish safe guidelines for comfortable working in the PGR space.
- Have been trying to obtain some funding from Enterprise, that used to be provided by the Deanery for Researchers to bid for money to help recover.

### **Disabled Students' Officer**

- Main activity from manifesto has been working on getting the Sunflower Lanyard Scheme rolled out which has been well received by students although there have been a lot of questions from staff.
- Have set up and am running British Sign Language (BSL) workshops initially for frontline staff.
- Attended Disability Co-Ordinator's meeting where several student issues were raised. Went on a tour of every single toilet facility on campus and found there were a number with mirrors and sanitary bins missing, for example.
- Have been working with University staff on dealing with issues raised with students who are identifying as Maybe I'm Clinically Vulnerable and finding t=solutions to the anxiety being raised by people not wearing masks appropriately etc.

The President wished to congratulate the Mature Students', Women's and Disabled Students' Officers for their achievements over the last few weeks and gave them credit for doing an amazing job.

## **11/20 Officer Plans for the Coming Month**

Members have previously been asked to think about and will be expected to come to the next meeting with one objective they are planning to complete during the following month towards achieving their manifesto points.

These have been dealt with in the activities described above. No new objectives have been put forward at this point.

## **12/20 Update on Budget and Expenditure**

Current expenditure is under £400 against the Campaigns Budget of £7500.

## DECISION ITEMS

### 13/20 Review of Fund Release Forms

#### 13.1 VP Education Fund Request form for Public Speaking Event

As per the form submitted. It was clarified that the £20 mentioned for session one should read £200. It was noted that £500 would be split equally between the two sessions. As not all the panel members had been secured yet. Also those that had agreed already to speak has waived their fee and it was explained therefore that any funds left over from the £250 requested would be added to the Emergency Hardship Fund.

It was explained that these two events are part of the VP Education's manifesto which contains an element to try and help students gain confidence and skills at public speaking. This manifesto point has been chosen based on the number of students who had approached VP Education during her campaign and subsequently.

There was question as to how the success of such events would be measured and it was agreed that attendance would be a key priority. Concern was aside that it would be difficult to agree to allocate funding if an appropriately sized audience could not be in attendance. It was noted that the event will be marketed fairly shortly and there will be a booking system for students to register their interest.

It was suggested that a Facebook Event Page be created to gauge interest in the event.

Members were asked to vote to agree to accept the proposal with the following conditions:

- a. Session 1 must register a minimum attendance of 25 students before the session goes ahead otherwise any agreed expenditure will be withdrawn
- b. Session 2 will not go ahead unless there is a guaranteed audience of at least 25 students otherwise any agreed expenditure will be withdrawn
- c. Session 2 must take place not only face to face in the Engine Shed but also online. Should stricter Covid regulations come into force and face to face is not possible, then the session should continue as planned online.
- d. In the feedback session after the first event, VP Education to obtain feedback from students on the date for the following event.

**Members agreed unanimously.** Vote Count: Yes x 7

#### 13.2 Sabbatical Officer Fund Request form for Bias and its Types Campaign

As per form submitted. President is asking for £500 which will be match funded by the CEO.

There are two phases to the campaign. The first is to raise awareness of bias and its types and to measure impact on students and their experience of it.

Phase 2 is to take the data and use it to prepare a Change Campaign that will take the outcomes and use them to create change in institutional policy etc.

It was noted that the Disabled Students Officer would like to possibly run a Disability Campaign off the back of the Bias Campaign. President invited all officers to be involved.

Members were asked to vote to agree to accept the proposal as tabled.

**Members agreed unanimously.** Vote Count: Yes x 7

## **14/20 Any Other Business**

### **14.1 Removing Officers from Post**

There was a discussion regarding the repeated absence of a number of elected Officers at meetings including this Committee, Student Council and Sports and Societies Committees.

Reference was made to the Bye Laws but noted that most Committees say failure to attend 3 meetings in a year would result on removal from post or being subjected to a Vote of No Confidence.

For this Committee, it was agreed that the President would issue a warning to the International Women's Officer and the Sports Officer.

### **14.2 Christmas Dinner**

As has been done previously, the President asked members to indicate their interest in coming together to share a Christmas meal together as a social and team building event to be funded by the Student Executive Committee Budget.

**Members agreed unanimously.**

It was noted that the preferred location should be the Waterside Cafe and menus are to be procured and shared. It was noted that the preferred date is 8<sup>th</sup> December. An expense form is to be prepared for approval at the next meeting.

**Action: President**

## **15/20 Date of Next Meeting: 24 November 2020**

END.