

5th Week Michaelmas Term 2019 Student Council

TIME: 17:30

DATE: Wednesday 13th November

LOCATION: St Anthony's College, Investcorp Theatre

If you have any questions about Student Council, please feel free to contact:

Chair of Council: chair@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk

Student Engagement Coordinators: studentengagement@oxfordsu.ox.ac.uk

Disability Contact: registrar@sant.ox.ac.uk

Project Bid Pot: £1600 remaining

- a. Minutes of the previous meeting
- b. Matters arising from the minutes
- c. Elections in council
- d. Reports from and questions to Sabbatical Trustees
- e. Reports from and questions to International Students Campaign
- f. Reports from and questions to Medical Sciences Divisional Representatives
- g. Items for resolution
 1. Support Hong Kong's Fight for Freedom and Condemn Police Brutality
 2. Sign the Oxford Homeless Movement Charter
 3. Establish 'Oxford Migrant Solidarity' as an SU project.
 4. Amendment to UCU Strikes Policy
 5. Establish Disabled Students' Publication as an SU Project
 6. Santa Claus is Comin' To Town
 7. Establish the Living Wage Campaign Project
 8. Allotting Sufficient time for Student Council by the addition of an article 5.4 to Rules of Council
 9. Exclude fossil fuel extraction from career recruitment at Oxford
- h. Items for discussion
 1. Planet Pledge Launch (An upgrade from Veg Pledge)
 2. Membership code of conduct
- i. Any other business

a. Minutes of the previous meeting

b. Matters arising from the minutes

c. Elections in Council

Scrutiny Committee (x2) - Scrutiny are elected at the start of Michaelmas to serve for the entire academic year. It is their task to interview the Sabbatical officers at the end of each term and ensure that they are doing the job they have been elected to do. Scrutiny will craft a report to be delivered to Council in 7th Week of each term.

d. Reports from and questions to Sabbatical Trustees

e. Reports from and questions to International Students Campaign

f. Reports from and questions to Medical Sciences Divisional Representatives

g. Items for resolution

1. Support Hong Kong's Fight for Freedom and Condemn Police Brutality

Council Notes:

1. Mass protests have persisted in Hong Kong for more than 140 days, and clashes between protesters and police have grown increasingly violent.
2. Police brutality has become a prominent issue over the course of the protests, with real bullets, tear gas, water cannons and pepper sprays deployed against protesters, and observer groups such as Amnesty International and Civil Rights Observer detail evidence and concern for inappropriate use of force.
3. According to the 2018 Annual Admissions Statistics Report, students from Hong Kong rank fifth for successful admissions into Oxford University by country of domicile.

Council Believes:

1. The SU is a place of inclusion and supports democracy and peace.
2. Fundamental human rights, as outlined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and implemented via the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (HKSAR) Basic Law, should be respected and protected.
3. The SU should support its students in times of adversity, especially when they are far away from home.

Council Resolves:

1. To mandate SU President to publish an open letter on all of the SU's social media platforms supporting Hong Kong's fight for freedom and condemning police brutality. This should be done by the end of MT2019 and the SU President should work with draft the letter in collaboration with the proposer and seconder of this motion

Proposer: Martin Yip, Oriel College

Secunder: Alexander Yen, Green Templeton College

2. Sign the Oxford Homeless Movement Charter

Council Notes:

1. Nobody should have to sleep rough on the streets.
2. The Oxford Homeless Movement brings together everyone addressing homelessness in the city to work together to eradicate rough sleeping.
3. In 2019, Oxford SU signed the Oxford Homeless Movement Charter.

Council Believes:

1. Oxford SU should work in line with the vision and values outlined in the Charter.
2. Common rooms should be encouraged to advocate students sign the Charter.

Council Resolves:

1. To make the values of the Oxford Homeless Movement Charter SU Policy: "Oxford SU is a signatory to the Oxford Homeless Movement Charter. We believe:
 - a. Rough sleeping causes significant harm to physical and mental health, and people are safer off the streets.
 - b. Prevention is always better than cure. Every opportunity should be taken to prevent people from sleeping rough.
 - c. The best way to help rough sleepers is to provide the accommodation and support they need to help them off the streets, to rebuild their lives, and to prevent a return to street homelessness.
 - d. People who are rough sleeping should have the same opportunity to access information, work, training, volunteering, leisure and creative activities as the rest of Oxford's community.
 - e. People with lived experience of homelessness should have a voice and a say in finding the answers to their own issues, to rough sleeping, and in the wider world.
 - f. Everyone can do something to help end rough sleeping – this includes individuals as well as organisations. We are stronger together, and will deliver joined-up services to help realise our vision.
 - g. We will listen to and treat with respect all those who share our vision to ensure that nobody has to sleep rough on the streets of Oxford.

We will support the movement by focussing on:

- a. Providing guidance for homeless students
- b. Giving information to students about how they can help
- c. Taking donations of items for the homeless during specific campaigns"

Proposer: Kaya Axelsson, Oxford SU

Second: Esther Hung, St Catz

3. Establish 'Oxford Migrant Solidarity' as an SU project.

Council Notes:

1. Oxford currently classifies forced migrant students as international students for fees purposes.
2. Oxford has made no commitment to keep data-sharing and Home Office surveillance of migrant students to the bare legal minimum.
3. Oxford has made no commitment not to invite Immigration Enforcement 'visits'.

Council Believes:

1. Oxford University must work towards equal access to education for migrant students.
2. Oxford University must respect the fundamental rights and civil liberties of migrant students.
3. Oxford University should act as a place of sanctuary for migrant students, not a place of border enforcement.

Council Resolves:

1. To establish Oxford Migrant Solidarity as an SU Project (Appendix A).
2. Allocate an additional £50 from the Project Bid Pot.

Proposer: Philomena Wills, St. Anne's College

Seconder: Emilio Caja, St Antony's College

4. Amendment to UCU Strikes Policy

Council Notes:

1. Oxford UCU has voted to strike over pay and working conditions between 25th November to 4th December 2019.
2. The SU supported previous UCU strike action over pensions in Hilary 2018.
3. UCU represents over 120,000 academic, academic-related, and professional staff in the UK, including researchers, postgraduate researchers, teaching staff, and permanent lecturers.
4. Previous Council policy passed in Hilary 2018, affirming Oxford SU's support for and solidarity with strike action taken over pensions, and setting out Oxford SU's default position on future UCU strikes
5. Many graduate students are members of both UCU and Oxford SU. UCU membership for students is free.
6. Policy passed in Trinity 2017, which states Oxford SU's commitment to fair working conditions for graduate students who work, includes a commitment to working with UCU to best represent and support these students.
7. Alongside the planned strikes, Oxford UCU have begun concerted work on casualisation in the collegiate University through the recent creation of the Anti-Casualisation Network.
8. UCU has supported students in the past, notably against the trebling of tuition fees, the scrapping of maintenance grants, the policing of freedom of speech through PREVENT, the University's complicity in damaging and extractive industries such as coal tar and fossil fuels, and recently, on the campaign against the Schwarzman donation for the new Humanities centre.

Council Believes:

1. That we have a responsibility to support this upcoming strike over issues of pay and working conditions.
2. Current SU policy needs to be amended to clarify that the SU will support strike action whether it is pensions related or not.
3. The work of the Anti-Casualisation Network will be of benefit to graduate students who work, and who are some of the most exploited workers in the collegiate University.
4. That people should be paid enough to live decently, and that properly remunerated staff with secure and stable jobs are better placed to provide the excellence that the University of Oxford claims to promote. Fair pay and conditions for staff are non-negotiable.
5. In the principle of solidarity across unions, and that an injury to one is an injury to all.

Council Resolves:

1. To remove
 - "1. To call on the University to oppose the pension reforms and meet with UCU representatives to determine the best way forward
 2. To mandate Oxford SU Sabbatical Officers to release a statement in full support of the UCU strike action
 3. To mandate Oxford SU Sabbatical Officers to support organisation for the strike
 4. To mandate the VP Graduates to email all graduate students to encourage membership of UCU
 5. To, by all means possible, encourage students to respect the strike by not crossing the picket lines and not attending classes over this period except in the case of compulsory assessments. This could include, but is not limited to, producing materials including posters and leaflets to help explain to students what is happening and why our staff needs support.
 6. To encourage students to participate in solidarity action as requested by UCU's Oxford branch including standing on picket lines and excluding non-attendance at compulsory assessment."

from the UCU Strike policy and replace it with

- "1. To support the cause and organisation of the strike action and communicate this to the University.
2. To release a statement in full support of the UCU strike action.
3. To email all graduate students to encourage membership of UCU.
4. Liaise with UCU representatives.
5. To encourage students to respect the strike by not crossing the picket lines and not attending classes over this period except in the case of compulsory assessments. This could include, but is not limited to, producing materials including posters and leaflets to help explain to students what is happening and why our staff needs support.

6. To encourage students to participate in solidarity action as requested by UCU's Oxford branch including standing on picket lines and excluding non-attendance at compulsory assessment."
2. To mandate the sabbatical officers, especially the President and VP Graduates, to ensure that this policy is enacted for the academic year 2019/20
3. To encourage Common Rooms to consider donating to the strike fund.
4. To mandate Sabbatical Officers to release a statement in support of the UCU strike action and in solidarity with the UCU Anti-Casualisation Network.

Proposer: Anisha Faruk, Oxford SU

Seconders: Neha Shah, University College

5. Establish Disabled Students' Publication as an SU Project

Council Notes:

1. Tabou is a new magazine which aims to open up a conversation about disability and give insight into the lives of disabled students.
2. It currently being designed as both a print and online magazine for students in Oxford and from across the UK. Both disabled students and high profile disability charities are contributing to the first edition which will be launched in January 2020.
3. There is currently no other magazine like this, on this scale, representing disabled students at Oxford.
4. Disabled students both at Oxford and across the UK face many challenges which could be resolved if more attention was paid to issues impacting disabled students.
5. A project proposal has been submitted (Appendix C)

Council Believes:

1. TABOU provides a unique opportunity to increase the representation of disabled students in student media and allow participation in journalism from disabled students across the UK.
2. That the SU must work to increase the inclusivity of Oxford to disabled students in both academic and social life.

Council Resolves:

1. To establish the TABOU Disability Magazine as an SU Project.
2. To allocate the project an additional £85 from the project bid pot.

Proposer: Danielle Watts, St Hugh's

Seconders: Sophia de Madeiros, St John's

6. Santa Claus is Comin' To Town

Council Notes:

1. Seasonal affective disorder affects an estimated 1 in 4 people every year. Given the pressure on students at the end of term, this is especially relevant.

2. The project proposal has been replicated at another top-ranked international university (MIT) with huge success for three years. The project organizer has received feedback from staff, faculty, and students that this project has demonstrably improved their happiness.
3. The Student Union already supports many activities for the wellbeing of students, such as the Wellbeing Walks and Hot Chocolate and Chat events. This project could complement the mission of events like these.
4. A project proposal has been submitted (Appendix D).

Council Believes:

1. That comic relief is an excellent way to alleviate stress and improve student happiness.
2. That a project like this one which reaches to every facet of the University—students, faculty, and staff in all departments and colleges—has a large impact, given the number of people affected.
3. This project organizer is a Marshall Scholar, meaning that even after they leave, the project will be sustainable from year to year. The organizer will simply pass on the project to a member of the next Marshall Scholar class.

Council Resolves:

1. To establish the Santa Claus is Comin' To Town as an SU Project.
2. To allocate the project an additional £468.27 from the Student Council Project Bid Pot.

Proposer: Nick Schwartz, Somerville

Seconders: Annee Lyons, Somerville

7. Establish the Living Wage Campaign Project

Council Notes:

1. Oxford is one of the most expensive cities in which to live in the UK.
2. The Oxford Living Wage, calculated by the Oxford city council to reflect this high cost of living, currently stands at £10.02 p/h, and is set to rise in the second week of November 2019.
3. Neither the central University, nor 41 out of 44 colleges/PPHs have committed to paying the Oxford Living Wage to all staff, though the Student Union has.
4. A project proposal has been submitted (Appendix E).

Council Believes:

1. Staff are the backbone of the colleges and of the central university, and an integral part of the university community.
2. Staff should be paid a fair wage that reflects their contribution to their college, and their costs of living.
3. That the university and colleges will only change their policy with sufficient pressure from students, alumni, academics and workers—groups which the Living Wage Campaign seeks to unite in lobbying for change.

Council Resolves:

1. To establish the Oxford Living Wage Campaign as an SU Project

Proposer: Angela Boyle, Lincoln College

Seconded: Martin Babicka, Wadham College

8. Allotting Sufficient time for Student Council by the addition of an article 5.4 to Rules of Council

Council Notes:

1. There have been previous occasions where council has met past 1900 on a Wednesday afternoon. At the last meeting of council, the council met only to 1900, without an ability to continue discussions beyond this time.

Council Believes:

1. That it is not simply a rubber stamp
2. That at first week council of Michaelmas Term 2019, the Chair repeatedly cut debate and discussion short.
3. That it must have the opportunity to thoroughly scrutinise the actions of those under a mandate from it.
4. That it must have the opportunity to thoroughly scrutinise motions set before it, and that this is best done in a relaxed environment since this is both more productive and more inclusive to all students. The addition of a time pressure makes it harder to discuss generously.

Council Resolves:

1. To the rules of student council to add:
“5.4 (a) – The chair of council must ensure that sufficient time is allotted to discuss all motions and business brought before council & if there are eligible motions under 5.3.b, the chair of council must organise an extraordinary additional meeting of council for that term to discuss any motions not discussed in ordinary meetings of council. Rooms in which council meets should be booked for an additional half an hour at minimum to allow over-run & a relaxed end to discussions.
5.4 (b) – ‘sufficient time’ is to be understood as allotting
i) 15 minutes for the sabbatical officer reports & the questions arising
ii) 10 minutes for reports to council from campaigns, projects, and other individuals compelled to report to council from time to time, individually.
iii) 20 minutes for the debate and voting on motions presented before council
iv) 7 minutes per candidate present for elections-in-council”

(Appendix B)

Proposer: Gwynfor Morgan, Exeter College

Seconded: Ebie Edwards Cole, New College

9. Exclude fossil fuel extraction from career recruitment at Oxford

Council Notes

1. Students have long protested fossil fuel recruitment in Oxford and have sent around a petition with 200 signatures calling on the Oxford University Careers Service to deplatform organisations with fossil fuel interests which are currently advertising employment opportunities.

Council Believes

1. Fossil fuel extraction is a career opportunity with a dead end for students with grave impacts for the planet and future, that the globe cannot afford to burn the majority of fossil fuel reserves.
2. The Careers Service should not necessarily deplatform all fossil fuel company employment opportunities, for example those that facilitate renewable energy expansion should remain, but this motion calls on them to exclude all fossil fuel extraction employment opportunities.

Council Resolves

1. To mandate VP Charities and Community to lobby the careers service to exclude advertising for fossil fuel extraction positions.

Proposer: Kaya Axelsson, Oxford SU

Seconder: Roisin McCallion, Oxford SU

h. Items for Discussion

1. Planet Pledge Launch (An upgrade from Veg Pledge)

Discussion of how the pledge will work, including the improvements we made this year, and how you can best promote it in your common room, division or student group.

Proposer: Kaya Axelsson, Oxford SU

2. Membership code of conduct

It is common practice for student unions to have a membership code of conduct. Currently Oxford SU does not have one. We want to hear students' views on whether or not we should introduce one and what this should include.

Proposer: Roisin McCallion, Oxford SU

i. Any other business