



General Council Meeting

Prindiville Hall

14th May 2024

Minutes written by Lana van Wyk

Attending

Eric De Sousa (President)
Georgia Comerford (Vice-President)
Mikaela De Kok (Treasurer)
Lana van Wyk (Secretary)
Taneisha Ricketts (Marketing Director)
Japneet Mehta (Events Director)
Julia Watson (Environment Director)
Tharushi Kannangara (Academic Chair)
Elizabeth Lee (Welfare Chair)
Sophia Giuffre (Clubs Chair)
Edward Hamersley (Ordinary Council Member)
Shanara Wijethunga (Ordinary Council Member)

Attending via proxy

Natasha Liem – Proxied by Eric De Sousa

Apology

N/A



Absent

N/A

Opening

Eric De Sousa opened the General Council Meeting of the Notre Dame Student Association on 14th May 2024 at 5.46pm.

Agenda Items

- **Acknowledgment of Country**

Eric reads through the Acknowledgment of Country.

- **Approval of Proxies**

Motion		
Approve the proxy of Natasha Liem.	Moved by: Eric Seconded by: Bless	In favour: All Against: N/A Abstained: N/A
The motion is passed.		

- **Approval of Previous Minutes**

Revisions to be made regarding discussion of NDSA/SAUNDA SSAF Growth & Development Plan.

Edward stated that there was a discrepancy regarding the confidential discussion around SSAF was held regarding the growth plan as it wasn't included. Georgia stated that we first mentioned the confidential growth plan which was sent out with the agenda for the meeting on the 30th April 2024, and then when we got into the SSAF discussion surrounding collective feedback surrounding, Lana asked aloud if this discussion should be minuted, to which Georgia stated that we shouldn't minute this aloud, Georgia mentioned at that moment, no one was concerned or disagreed with this decision. Eric then reminded the group of the 'In Camera' process, which Georgia apologised for not using at that moment.



Council members were then asked to provide written feedback of what edits they would like to make and that these would be discussed/approved in the next meeting as per Edward's request.

Julia voiced concern about members of the council potentially not wanting their names and points being shared to all students. Edward rebutted saying that all members of the council should be held accountable to their words and actions in meetings.

Edward asked that all meeting minutes be uploaded immediately to the NDSA Council Website.

● **Treasurer's Update**

Tickets:

- Eric stated he believes it is a fair allocation of the tickets. Agreed that it is better to have a lower ticket price, the loss can be accepted.
- Mikaela explained the reason for the tiered ticketing, it will increase excitement to buy tickets sooner rather than later.
- Not sure how the ticket sales will go, need to make 80% in order to make the quote.
- Japneet informed that we have to let them know 15-20 days before booking date regarding if we will be able to secure the venue.

Motion		
Approve the pre-stated ticket price.	Moved by: Mikaela Seconded by: Julia	In favour: All Against: N/A Abstained: N/A
The motion is passed.		

NDSA Tickets

- NDSA ticket's are only for NDSA members, not for welfare chairs and academic chairs.
- Mikaela explained that the purpose of the discounted tickets is because the NDSA council will be helping out on the day.
- Eric explained that the expectation is that we will be helping out. It is also a significant loss in order to extend to the chairs.
- It is the NDSA council that is discussing weekly. If we have extra funds then we might be able to extend it.
- Elizabeth asked if there is spare money that we can extend discounted to chairs. Decided that we will look in future closer to the time.



Motion		
Approve the discounted ticket price of \$87.50 for 14 NDSA council members.	Moved by: Mikaela Seconded by: Shanara	In favour: All Against: N/A Abstained: N/A
The motion is passed.		

Add-ons:

- Mikaela explained her rationale for the numbers she has calculated. It has been cost-analysed.

Decoration Options:

- Mikaela asked how much are we willing to lose on this event and what events are we willing to sacrifice for this event.
- Calculations were done with the assumption that all tickets will be sold.
- Mikaela has not had a chance to sit down and talk with the Optus people regarding the quotes and the variations.
- Shanara asked if the vision was actually necessary. Mikaela explained that she thinks the lighting would be the more reasonable option instead of the vision. Agreed that we probably don't need everything regarding that add-on.
- Mikaela explained the difference between the fairy lights and the lighting.
- Eric said that he thinks it doesn't make sense to have lighting and fairy lights. Entrance feature would be nice but not necessary.
- Eric mentioned he remembered there being two audio options. Mikaela was not able to provide an explanation.
- Taneisha mentioned that she thinks the ball committee can be in control and discuss regarding the centrepieces as well as making the centrepieces themselves.
- Tharushi was wondering what the entrance feature would be, Eric explained that it was proposals from Optus, some might include a red carpet etc.
- Tharushi mentioned that the last ball she attended, there was a combination of lighting and fairy lights but that the fairy lights became redundant as they were drowned out by the lighting.

Motion		
Approval to get the lighting package for decorations as well as DIY centrepieces (\$1000)	Moved by: Mikaela Seconded by: Tharushi	In favour: All Against: N/A Abstained: N/A
The motion is passed.		

Additional:

- Considering using Kieran (\$95/hr) as our photographer or having two photographers.



- Also our consideration for a photo booth.
- Shanara is waiting on a quote from a photographer. Vendor Media (Instagram).
- Taneisha mentioned that her cousin is also a photographer.
- During consideration of the prices for the photographer the time we had allocated was 4 hours for the ball and drinks before hand. Eric mentioned that he thinks that it might be best to have the photographer for only during the ball and have them finish 30 minutes before the night ends.
- Mikaela asked how much we want to budget for a photographer and a photo booth. Georgia mentioned that it can be around \$1000.
- Eric mentioned it might be difficult using Kieran for the ball as it is difficult managing him working for the University. We might be able to use Kieran as a roaming photographer, but people mentioned that they preferred having someone with a set up photography area.
- Georgia mentioned that SAUNDA used disposables, Shanara mentioned that that might be expensive. Sophia mentioned that we might be able to get the camera's from Kmart but then it can be the difficulty of getting the timing right. Georgia mentioned that it was just an idea.
- Eric mentioned that it might be good to have a photographer with a backdrop and a photo booth. Mentioned that it might be around \$2500 for the both of them. Tharushi mentioned that there might be more cost-effective options.
- Decided that we won't make any decisions during this meeting and table the issue.
- Everyone agrees on 1 photographer and a photo booth.

● Academic Chair's Update

Study Night:

- Decided to cancel the next one as there wasn't a large turnout.

AI Breaches

- Eric asked for an update on what the university's progress is at.
- Tharushi explained that they brought it up but didn't give much explanation of what they were going to do. Looking at what other university's are doing.
- Elizabeth mentioned that the AI breaches have been very inaccurate. People have been pulled for it even though they haven't used it and vice-versa.
- Georgia mentioned that if there is a section which doesn't follow the same tone as the rest of the assignment it get's pulled up.
- Without sufficient evidence student's shouldn't be risking their studies.
- Julia mentioned that some people have used AI for their entire assignment and haven't been pulled up and vice-versa. There have been multiple meetings occurring regarding it.



● **Assist Director's Update**

Motion		
Approve the expenditure of up to \$500 for fortnightly restock for the Food Pantry	Moved by: Eric Seconded by: Japneet	In favour: All Against: N/A Abstained: N/A
The motion is passed.		

Mikaela mentioned that it has been running over budget the last few weeks.

- Part of this was because we were behind but now have maintained that cost.
- At the moment spending \$1000 per month on the Food Pantry.
- Mikaela mentioned that we have \$2500 in the supporting practicum students payment fund.
- Corrected that it would be \$2000 per month. Wouldn't be running during the break but it wouldn't have much of an effect.
- Eric corrected that he will only spend \$250 on this weeks shop.
- Shanara mentioned that there will still be people doing Winter Term but we don't need to spend that much going forward into the break as there isn't a lot of people on campus.
- Eric mentioned that he thought doing \$250 per week would be enough.
- 16 restocks sticking to \$250, can potentially increase depending on the budget.

● **President's Update**

2024 NDSA & SAUNDA Growth Priorities

- Eric asked if people were happy with the document that was sent out.
- Edward mentioned that he believes it is a waste of money and resources to change the NDSA.
- Edward believed that we should be lobbying to remove SSAF and that it would be negligent to push for this.
- Edward has stated that he is against the document. He stated that he thinks it is a poor use of funding to be employing a full-time employee to further facilitate bureaucracy.
- Eric gave a reminder that tone is important in meeting and requested Edward to act professionally in his discussions.
- Julia stated that she thinks that SSAF is going to happen regardless and that we will need to undergo changes as there will be lots of changes and that the changes in the document reflect the changes occurring.
- Mikaela asked if it was legally binding, Eric answered it is not.
- Liz asked if it would not be a student who will be the full-time employee.



- Eric explained that having an undergrad student controlling the large amount of money might be risky, so the employee would help us with our essential financial management, record keeping and legal liability. It is a practice that many other university associations employ to protect from any mismanagement of funds. It is a practice which every other university does to protect any mismanagement of any funds. Particularly when a new council comes in.
- Edward stated that he thought that it was a waste of resources and that SSAF shouldn't be charged.
- Sophia asked if it will be separate from the SEA. They will probably be working on a national basis.
- Taneisha asked if the structure of the NDSA will change. Eric mentioned that we're not sure if the structure will change. Mentioned that our policies and constitution might need to be revised to fall in line with all the changes occurring. Taneisha was wondering if that additional person would be changing our roles. Eric explained that these are changes going forward to 2025.
- Edward mentioned that to amend the Constitution it would require 75% of approval. Edward asked if we thought that would be reasonable to expect. SAUNDA recently had a similar situation. It is 75% of members in attendance of the Annual General Meeting. This has been clarified with the University. Eric stated that he doesn't believe that the Constitution is a legally binding document and Edward stated that it was, as incorporated associations Constitutions are legally binding.

SEA Position

- His roster is on the forum.

Semester 1 Reports

- Exams will be completed on the 14th June.
- Brief explanation of what should be in the report. Explained that it can be just a paragraph.
- Decided on having the reports due on the 21st of June to be sent to Lana.
- Outline of what was during semester and what will be done.

SSAF Feedback

- Edward is strongly against it. Gave the opinions that he had heard from other students such as, since we are in a cost of living crisis, why should students be forced to pay another fee. He also stated that it was 'disgusting' that the university be charging the students more money for their own agenda.
- Some council members stated that they have been receiving harassment and interrogatory questioning by students in class and on campus.
- Have been putting the feedback from our anonymous box through to the university.
- Major points of feedback:



- o Have expressed confusion on what SSAF is, how to apply for the loan and requests to join the SSAF Governance Committee.
- o Complaint surrounding practicum placements and not being able to access the SSAF benefits, particularly Education students who will be on practicum placement for 10 weeks. The university has stated that there will be online and practicum support services available so they will still be getting benefits.
- o Tharushi mentioned because of her practicum, she won't be on campus most of next year, Eric stated that there will still be services provided. The university can't guarantee what it will be used for so are still waiting for the feedback to go out.
- o Eric confirmed that the University can't spend any of the SSAF money without student feedback.
- o Mikaela mentioned a concern that most students aren't going to fill out the form, as after they filled out a previous form the SSAF got introduced so they are nervous that if they fill out the feedback form regarding the distribution of SSAF that another fee will be introduced. She mentioned that people have been particularly targeting her because she is on the Executive.
- o Edward mentioned that the only communication students received was the email stating that SSAF was being implemented.
- o Mikaela mentioned that it's not fair that people have been approaching and commenting on social media pointing and unleashing their frustrations on people. Has mentioned that it has been affecting her very negatively. Has not heard any positive feedback.
- o Taneisha stated that she has been receiving emails, but hasn't been able to read them through the website. Discussed where the source of the feedback has been coming from (website or email). Mentioned that there has been a large number of overwhelming negative comments from the feedback forms.
- o Sophia mentioned that when the clubs were emailed about it they were told it was the same as other universities, but word of mouth says otherwise (says other universities are charging less).
- o Sophia mentioned that the Practicum Support Scheme from the government might be impacted by SSAF since it is means tested.
- o Eric mentioned that he doesn't have answers to all the questions. Has heard that some people are complaining about the facilities but the SSAF won't be going towards building etc.
- o Eric stated that the university hasn't talked about the government practicum support scheme yet and how that may affect the university's practicum support fund. Stated that he doesn't know if the university would reduce the amount they are giving in grants in lieu of the government fund.



- o Japneet mentioned that international students are concerned as they don't have the option to put it on HECS and it is a big concern for them as they have to pay the fee's upfront.
- o The university has said that people who are struggling to pay the fee can apply for the hardship fund, but Eric raised concern that that is already drawn thin. Other universities often use part of the SSAF for international students. Eric emphasised emailing any concerns so they have it documented.
- o The governance committee will be 50% students and 50% staff. If student's don't like how something is done there will be an equal voice.
- o Mikaela mentioned that if SSAF is going to international students then what is the point of them paying it.
- o She raised the point that Law students are on campus the whole time and do volunteering and don't get supported.
- o Eric pointed out that we don't want to exclusively focus on one school so tried to be more broad.
- o Eric pointed out that SSAF has been in discussion for a significant time and has been brought up multiple times in various meetings.
- o The point is that the fund will be used across the university and will reap more rewards than you would get without paying.
- o The university might be able to provide things such as counsellors, financial advisors etc.
- o There will still be things that will be heavily benefiting people who are on campus. In the end it will be completely about what students say.
- o Edward has stated that he doesn't think that most students will be using those services. Asked why all students have to pay for those services when not everyone will be using them. He then proceeded to stand up and say "we don't even have a ****ing library".
- o Eric reminded the members of proper meeting decorum and requested Edward to act professionally in his discussion again.
- o Eric mentioned that other universities have independent academic advice that can defend their students without having to wait on the University's feedback.
- o Eric asked that people send him their feedback in writing so that he can have it on record instead of spending more time discussing in the meeting which was already going over time.
- o Shanara mentioned there are a lot of people who are very confused. She had to talk to the Pro-Vice Chancellor to understand because she has had people approaching her aggressively. Very upset about the fact that she has to bear the weight of everything that has been happening. She mentioned that she would desire that there was more readily available information.
- o Shanara asked if there was a way to stop the students from harassing members of the Council.



- o Eric mentioned that he is happy for us to tell students that we are not directly involved in it, and that we are not the people to direct your frustrations and questions towards.
- o Shanara brought up that we have been directly mentioned in the email therefore students feel like we can be asked all of the questions they have.
- o Eric mentioned that he would like the university to release more information and from our side we are pushing for them to release it.
- o Eric stated that we should say “We are not the university, I have not personally have that conversation, my predecessors might have but that is not me, it is not ok for you to harass or be rude to me”
- o Mikaela asked if the NDSA brought it in the National Student Board. Eric stated that in 2022 SSAF was brought up in NSB by the student associations and passed. It was then taken on board by the university and they have been processing its implementation since then.
- o Eric stated that it was the 2022 National Student Board who brought it forward and now we are experiencing the backlash from it.
- o Mikaela raised the concern that there has been a lot of miscommunication and confusion.
- o Feedback is requested formally from each member to submit to Eric.
- o A few members of the council were visibly affected by this discussion, so it was agreed to take a brief recess at 7.16pm.
- o The council reconvened at 7.31pm.

Motion		
Approve the NDSA/SAUNDA SSAF Growth Priorities	Moved by: Eric Seconded by: Taneisha	In favour: 9 Against: Edward Abstained: Mikaela & Shanara
The motion is passed.		

● **Environment Director's Update**

Julia mentioned that she has noticed Containers for Change (C4C) bins around campus. Mentioned that the university has been using them for events. Might be left over from said events.

Julia told us the plan for if the bin is full the QR code can be scanned and it will send a message to Julia to book a pickup as she will not be on campus every week due to practicum so won't be able to check herself. Has gotten permission from the City of Fremantle to do this.



Motion		
Approve the Expenditure of \$45.95 for QR code stickers for the C4C bins	Moved by: Julia Seconded by: Taneisha	In favour: All Against: N/A Abstained: N/A
The motion is passed.		

Motion		
To approve the expenditure of \$97 for vinyl stickers for the C4C bins.	Moved by: Julia Seconded by: Tharushi	In favour: All Against: N/A Abstained: N/A
The motion is passed.		

- **Clubs Chair's Update**

Motion		
Approve the constitution of the International Relations Society	Moved by: Sophia Seconded by: Eric	In favour: All Against: N/A Abstained: N/A
The motion is passed.		

Will record the upcoming clubs meeting and Lana will minute and distribute following.

- **Secretary's Update**

Reminded the council of timeliness regarding checking emails.

- **General Business**

Motion		
To enter into a Secret Ballot regarding the NDSA's position on SSAF on the 14 th May 2024	Moved by: Edward Seconded by: Mikaela	In favour: Against: Abstained:
Motion not completed.		
Motion		
That the NDSA formally adopts the position for the removal of the SSAF in	Moved by: Edward Seconded by: Mikaela	In favour: Against: Abstained:



any correspondence with the university that the students don't support the SSAF furthermore any NDSA representatives on the NSB will lobby the university for the reduction or potential removal of SSAF and in any other circumstance lobby for the removal or reduction of SSAF.		
Motion not completed.		

Secret Ballot regarding NDSA's position on SSAF

- Edward put forward to have a Secret Ballot to put forward the motion that the NDSA formally adopts the position for the removal of the SSAF in any correspondence with the university that the students don't support the SSAF furthermore any NDSA representatives on the NSB will lobby the university for the reduction or potential removal of SSAF and in any other circumstance lobby for the removal or reduction of SSAF.
- Eric deleted both proposed motions on the basis that the motion and discussion prior was disrespectfully worded.

Mikaela brought up that there has been an article circulating regarding a Misconduct suit against the University.

Eric has been told by the university that despite this article, it isn't an actuality.

Eric recommended that we continue the discussion regarding SSAF feedback in the next meeting after getting an opportunity to discuss with the University regarding getting more information out.

Edward restated how the situation was unacceptable and disgusting. During this statement Edward used unprofessional language.

Eric suggested that it might be beneficial to get a University representative to attend the next meeting. Eric stated that the Pro-Vice Chancellor Selma might come to the next meeting so that we can ask her questions directly. Confirmed that we will hold a meeting with Pro-Vice Chancellor Selma in attendance next week.

Edward said that having a meeting with PVC Selma would be a waste of time, and that a decision needed to be made at this meeting, as he believed it is a pressing matter.



In past years we were consulted about the SSAF and in previous years the committee was quite positive about it. Edward stated that he thinks we should still hold the vote regarding the Secret Ballot, as we need to reaffirm that while previous NDSA councils were positive about SSAF, this council is not.

Edward questioned why previous years would have been in favour of it, stating that all the people he has been speaking to have been largely against SSAF and have been quite upset by it.

Eric said that it might be best to have an opportunity to first ask Pro-Vice Chancellor Selma. Edward disagreed. Eric explained that there shouldn't be a rush as agenda items for National Student Board aren't due for two weeks.

Taneisha summarised Eric's point that it is important that we have all the facts to make an informed decision.

Edward then restated that he thinks it is important that actions must be done now during the current meeting.

Eric reasoned that this discussion was sprung on many of the members of the Committee and that many of the members of the committee were blindsided as we didn't get an opportunity to consider the motions, due to Edward failing to submit an agenda or previously request any additional information about SSAF

Edward firmly argued against this, stating that this is the purpose of the general business; bringing up motions not otherwise mentioned in the agenda, and that he didn't believe any of the members of the council were blindsided.

Multiple members of the council were visibly affected by this discussion.

Eric reminded members of appropriate meeting decorum, and the importance of respectful communication.

Eric informed the council of the policy stating the chair is able to table this discussion and delete the motion in this case regarding the motion Edward wanted to put forward.

Edward stated that he disagreed because he had already put forward the motion and Mikaela had seconded it, and that it now had to go forward.



Eric reiterated that the policy allowed the chair to table this discussion and delete the motion which goes against the standards set out in Clause 12.8 of the Standing Orders Policy.

Eric made the decision to formally request the removal of Edward from the meeting at 7.53pm acting under the Standing Orders Policy (Clause 8.1 & 8.3) due to unprofessional and disrespectful language.

Edward notifies the council his disagreement with Eric's decision to delete the prior motions and provides verbal warning this could open Eric to legal action from himself on the basis that these motions were proposed, seconded and this is an attempt to silence his voice.

Eric encouraged Edward to reach out to the university or to exercise his right to take that stance.

Edward left at 7.54pm

Closing

Eric officially closes the general council meeting at 7.55pm.



Confirmation of Minutes

By signing below, I, Eric De Sousa, confirm that these minutes are a correct and accurate reflection of the meeting dated 14/05/2024.

Signed: Eric De Sousa, President