



NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SINGAPORE STUDENTS' UNION

NUSSU Secretariat, Yusof Ishak House, 31 Lower Kent Ridge Road, Singapore 119078

Telephone: 6776 4856 (4 Lines) Fax: 6777 1874

Website: <http://nus.edu.sg/nussu>

Minutes for 5th 35th Council Meeting

Date: Saturday, 22nd March 2014

Time: 1015 hours

Venue: King Edward VI Communal Hall, National University of Singapore

Attendance:

Present:

Council Representatives:

Ng Zhi Liang Dennis	Cultural Activities Club, President
Khoo Wei Xiang Jovene	Cultural Activities Club, Vice President (Special Projects)
Goh Ze Wei Zan	Cultural Activities Club, External Relations Director
Kang Wee Jing (Jacky)	Community Service Club, Deputy Volunteer Welfare Director
Kristabelle Tan Chu Qian	Community Service Club, President
Quek Yan Jun Jocelyn	Community Service Club, Vice President
Cheo Jon Loong	Community Service Club, Vice President
Law Zhe Wen	University Scholars' Club, President
Varun Soni	University Scholars' Club, Vice President
Elizabeth Nicole Cutter	Political Association, President
Aw Yong Zhi Yong	Political Association, Vice President
Sim Kern Cheh	Political Association, Honorary Financial Secretary
Foo Jia Xin	Arts Club, President
Chan Siong Woon	Bizad Club, Vice President
Kew Dek Guan (Derrick)	Bizad Club, Vice President
Ng Wei Quan, Desmond	Computing Club, President
Goh Li Min, Natalie	Computing Club, Vice President
Andrew Andy Chng Chee Weng	Computing Club, Vice President
Janson Chan	Design and Environment Club, President
Shawn Ng Kit Yong	Design and Environment Club, Director of Special Projects
Dennis Lim Yong Cheng	Engineering Club, President
Mabel Sim Wenleng	Engineering Club, Student Affairs Secretary
Chen Wei Wei	Science Club, President
Sherman Yee Xian Yang	Science Club, Vice President
Muhammad Danial Hakim Bin Rosli	Law Club, President
Toh Yi Hui	Sports Club, Vice President
Eden Seah Guo Hua	Sports Club, President
Ai Xin	Sports Club, Marketing Secretary



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Exco Committee:

Soh Yi Da	President
Shermon Ong	Vice President
John Paul Chua	General Secretary
Lim Kok Seng	Assistant Secretary
Geoffrey Lee Zheng Hwang	Financial Secretary
Willie Wee	Deputy Vice President
Chang Siong Wei	Director of Projects
Chu Ting Feng	Director of Projects
Alvin Arvind Jaya Raj	Director of Projects
Terence Wong Tai Lun	Director of Services
Eric Khong Mun Kit	Director of Relations
Dexter Shen Yanwen	Director of Marketing
Alvin Poh Leong Ann	Deputy Financial Secretary
Tan Kian Wei Alvin	Deputy Financial Secretary
Kellie Chong	Deputy Communications Secretary
Koh Zhi Xun	Deputy Welfare Secretary
Wu Yi	Creative Director

Absent with Apologies:

Sean Ling Wei Tsi	Bizad Club, President
Nicholas Lim Songping	Dental Club, President
Zhao Yang	Political Association, Vice President
Sim Wen Qiang Rafael	Design and Environment Club, Vice President
Raghav Mathur	Engineering Club, Vice President
Lee Wei Liang	Law Club, Vice President
Tan Yeong Tze Wilnard	Medical Society, President
Andrew Arjun Sayampanathan	Medical Society, Vice President
Lim Li Yan	Medical Society, Vice President
Nicholas Lim Songping	Dental Club, President
Denise Ee	Communications Secretary
Lai Kean Chung	Deputy Welfare Secretary
Duke Tan	Deputy Welfare Secretary
Tan Zi Tong	Deputy Welfare Secretary
Emmeliene Ong	Director of Social Media
Andy Goh Jun Gang	Director of Logistics
Teresa Widodo	Editor-in-Chief



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Meeting Agenda:

- 1. Sharing of MC Electoral Recommendations presented by ELECT**
- 2. Financial Review Update**
- 3. Reform of Adjudication Committee**
4. Collection and Treatment of Personal Data –information session
5. Student Consultative Assemblies – information session
6. AOB



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The 5th Council Meeting was called to order at 1015 HRS by Mr Law Zhe Wen, Chairperson of the 35th NUSSU Council, the motion was proposed by Mr. Soh Yi Da, seconded by Mr John Paul Chua.

S/No.	Agenda	Action By
1	<p>ELECT – Presentation and Q & A.</p> <p>7 Recommendations</p> <p>1. Approve reform election timeline</p> <p>Dennis: What if there is slight deviation from the proposed timeline as the campaign period and election dates have already been set and publicised? ELECT: Consolidate external elections to 1 week so that the union can publicise the elections like “elections week”.</p> <p>Yi Da proposed to adopt the recommendation of a uniform election timeline.</p> <p>Total Voting Strength: 28 For: 27 Against: 1 Abstain: 0</p> <p>The motion is passed and the uniform election timeline would be adopted by the constituent clubs.</p> <p>2. Approve consistent ballot design</p> <p>Alvin: Non faculty clubs have the discretion to How is that consistent? ELECT: This framework is for external elections and there is generally no external election for non faculty clubs.</p> <p>Shermon: The reports states very clearly that people do not know the consequences of abstention, and a lot of people actually do not vote anything not knowing that you need a presumption of no vote, and yet ELECT choose to go ahead and state that there is no need for an explicit abstention choice, and it is basically relying on education which has thus far been ineffective, and how does this go towards achieving your objectives? ELECT: Which is why we have a very clear instructions for the ballot design. For examples for like external elections, the problem is that most people do not know they can vote up to 10 people. Which is why we say there are 12 candidates vying for 10 spots for the MC, so this for a contested external election. So you are allowed to select up to 10 candidates. You may</p>	<p>Information No Action Required</p>



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exercise your right to choose less than 10 candidates but those who choose more than 10 would be treated as false vote. So we actually explain to them what are the consequences of voting for a number of names they tick on the ballot slip.

Shermon: Follow up question. How is this different from the current requirement that the same sentence be put there?

ELECT: No, the thing is we are not sure whether there is a consistent ballot design across all faculties.

Shermon: Is this a matter of enforcement right, not a matter of rule being placed there? If you go over to MCER Part 4, you can see that it is very clearly stated that if it's a vote of confidence, you state it is a vote of confidence and the consequences from it. If it is a contested vote, you state it is a contested vote and the consequences from it. What I see from this is that you recommend that initiative which is a good thing, but its already inside there already, and I am not too sure how is this a change and whether is this even needed to be voted upon or not.

ELECT: If I may comment on that, yes that the regulation says that if it's a vote of confidence, it is state there it is a vote of confidence. If it is contested, we will state there that is contested. But let's assume that a normal student goes into the voting pit, they look at the vote to perform. Will anyone really know what is vote of confidence? And it is vote of confidence would it say how many candidates are there that they can choose up to?

Shermon: It is stated inside the regulation. Please go and read the regulation again, I implore ELECT to read the regulation again. Cause if you guys have missed that out, I am not too sure about what is the rest of your recommendations.

ELECT: Again, that the very fact that there are confusion right now suggests that the system is not working. We can concede that there is already a provision inside the MCER but it doesn't seem to be enforced, doesn't seemed to be translated well into practice, so this is what we suggest.

Consistent ballot design in this format. We can obviously work this into the current MCER legislation, you can interpret the legislation to show this framing of the language. So I don't really see it really as a debate about whether is it already inside the MCER, we are just trying to push for clarity and consistency in ballot design. So it helps to serve everybody. Referring back to the MCER legislation does not really help because the students right now do not understand the different implications. So going back to the wording of the MCER doesn't help. We are trying to improve on the practice and the actual conduct of the elections.



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Shermon: So if that's the matter of enforcing the rule correct? I am not too sure, Chairman, is this even a motion that needs to be voted upon or not?

Motion suspended in the interest of time.

3. Push for implementation of electronic voting for external elections (Only electronic voting for all constituent clubs except non faculty clubs)

Yi Da: Direct voting is susceptible to abuse by the elections committee. However, electronic voting is also susceptible to abuse by hackers. My personal preference is more still towards physical voting, because it is the whole concept of elections where you have to rally, you have to galvanize and bring people down. This is all part of electioneering versus electronic, if we put it online it isn't just about opening a Facebook tab and asking someone to come down and just to provide a URL. It makes things very easy, but then again, do we want to make that process so convenient and easy for people. So this is really a question about convenience of participating in the elections. How candidates go the extra bound to canvass for votes. So my personal preference is for physical voting. But my question is about how do we circumvent abuse by electronic hackers and all?

ELECT: We can adopt the practice by Science where they utilise the IVLE for elections purpose.

Shermon: Student electoral survey Both electronic and physical? Why is there a non-faculty club and faculty club distinction? Why should non-faculty club should be made non easy, convenient and assessable.

ELECT: The reason why we made the distinction between the non-faculty and faculty club is because many of the non-faculty club use direct elections instead of having external or internal elections, which means that voters actually get to choose the candidates that get to be voted up to be president, vice president, secretary and etc. So by opening up electronic voting to all 26000 members of the union, this would mean that we are exceptionally susceptible to troll votes in which anyone who may not understand what the non-faculty club is about, may not even bother to research about the candidates, may access the electronic survey and basically do troll voting.

Geoffrey: Sorry, just to clarify, I think Sports club and PA do not use direct elections, so just now you mentioned that majority of the non-fac clubs practice direct elections.

Varun: Is there a way to identifying non-active members vs. active members.

ELECT: That would be in some way, considered a special voting right. In



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CSC, CAC, for us, we prefer to open up voting to the general population, as long as you come for the elections, as long as you are present as the general audience at the auditorium, it does not matter if you were not an active member. As long as you sit through the election, listen to what the candidates have to say, we deemed you as knowledgeable enough to vote, so we do not want to implement that, because that is basically depriving interested parties to vote.

Ziming: The basis of the report of democracy but you are introducing a barrier of entry, how is this consistent?

ELECT: The reason why we do not implement electronic voting is precisely to make sure that we do not limit the franchise for the non-faculty club.

Ziming: In the long term scenario, troll votes will make out the minority if there is enough participation.

ELECT: Like you said, we are not only trying to encourage student participation, but we are also trying to balance that vis-à-vis club interests.

Zhe Wen: I guess Ziming question is quite clear, I will just clarify. Ziming question is asking about democracy, but correct me if I am wrong ELECT, if I am hearing you right, democracy is not the only basis which you are basing this on, but you also want to protect the interest of the club. So Ziming, that's why I think I will just be explicit if you allow me to say that what they want is to also protect the interests of the non-faculty club.

ELECT: I think a last, closing, Ziming what you are actually suggesting opening up entirely to full democracy, a very close situation we will see is that the club will close down. You will have clubs that will close down because due to the very fact of the vote of confidence, even if there is not enough people to vote for a certain candidate, the candidate may not even be eligible to run or the position can never be filled. So therefore, a very scenario that we have played out is that the clubs will not have any leadership at all. And therefore that is the interest of the club that we are trying to protect. It's a balance of full democracy versus the interest of the club.

Zhe Wen: Can we have the last question please? I will now move this motion to a vote.

Shermon: Just one more question, just now you talk about interest of a club correct? If a club is supposed to represent all members then how is the interest of a club not aligned to the interests of all voting members?

ELECT: Because the non-faculty clubs are in an awkward position.



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Total Voting Strength: 38

For: 0

Against: 27

Abstain: 11

The motion is not passed.

4. Propose threshold for Vote – Of – Confidence

(5% for clubs with more than 1000 members, 10% for clubs with less than 1000 members.)

Wei Wei: What if none of the people running for the MC hits this quota?

ELECT: That is also a problem to show that the club can't even get 250 voters. That the management committee can't even muster 250, it is also a problem.

Wei Wei: I think honestly if you ask right now here in this whole council, who can hit that quota for each faculty, I think most people can't.

ELECT: The argument is fair but actually if you examine the argument is premised on the assumption that everything is status quo, nothing else will change. So if you change the status quo, you actually have this incentive for you to go out and canvass your votes which is what elections are about. We feel that 5% is actually quite insignificant. If you think about it, at the moment now, who are the ones voting? Are they just your friends or are they general members of your faculty club? So if you were to change your incentive to force the people to go down there and ask for votes, the whole idea is to get everyone involved in the elections.

Jiaxin: I would like to ask right, if a particular candidate did not meet the vote of confidence level, do that automatically count as a vote of no confidence for the candidate? And if that is the case, what is the difference between someone explicitly voting a no confidence for that candidate versus not participating in the election.

ELECT: Can you clarify what the thrust of the question is?

Jiaxin: What is the difference between going down to vote for no confidence for the candidate if you have no confidence versus not even showing up for the election? If the person doesn't reached the threshold, you will have no confidence anyway.

ELECT: In this new system, by not turning up to vote, it effectively means that you are not increasing its pool of 5% of valid voters required to pass the elections. So in a case, you are already casting a no vote of confidence for



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him.

Dennis: For engine right, we have 6000 people. We need at least 300 votes for us to get past the vote of confidence. I think it's wrong for you to say that all the clubs are not putting effort within the two weeks to gain votes.

Actually, we have so many members we cannot, the number of people that voted us was only about 400 plus. You cannot get that many people to vote for the members. Let's say if you just hit the quota right, that's means we don't even have to hold elections what, we can just get the members that we want and just take over us right?

Zhe Wen: This will actually put your faculty into a constitutional crisis.

Where you will actually have to reiterate the process that would be a case by case basis. So one way that it can be handled is that you have to redo the whole election process for your faculty. But it is a case by case basis.

Desmond: What is the rationale of having 5% above 1000 members and what is the rationale for 10% below 1000 members? I think for a faculty with about 4000- 5000 people, 5% is not easy to achieve. Probably what I proposed is that we have another tier, for this group of faculty clubs because it's not easy to get these people and I believe that you all should put in effort to see how much effort we have put in behind to get these votes. Because I would say students don't even care about voting, they won't even come to go and vote. No matter how much effort we put in, there is nothing we can do about it. That's the point.

ELECT: Actually, I apologized if we actually offended anyone, because I don't think that this, not that we want to accuse anyone not putting in enough effort. Because honestly we are made up of even council members and we don't even galvanizing enough votes, but I guess is that we actually want to increase student participation rate across all constituent clubs and faculties. Although it's a bit difficult and I think among us whether is it even possible?

Zhe Wen: Can I just do a straw poll here, which faculties managed to hit these quota in the last election? Medicine, Computing, Law, Business, USC.

John Paul: I just have a question, so by virtue of this, why does this not apply to non-fac clubs?

ELECT: If you think about it, non-fac club membership actually applies to the entire NUS, except for PA which actually applies to Singaporeans only. So if we just take a straw poll of 26000 people, 1% of that is 260. We can of course put a number to it. But to me it quite unreasonable. Because honestly it's a high participation rate, I mean it does not sound good on paper right?

John Paul: So are we arguing for the virtue of this or whether it looks good



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on paper? Because I think any percentage we can do will look good on paper right? But if the virtue is to increase participation rate, it should apply across the board right?

ELECT: We also proposed this because we are aware that large faculties will have difficulty trying to get that, but we realized that it would be hard for a large faculty, especially for like science or FASS.

Zhe Wen: I think it is an impasse unless, I will propose two things. One, either you volunteer and hear what the council members have to say, especially for the extra-large faculties. And two, for non-faculty clubs, so ELECT do you have any responses for that? If not, I will again suspend this motion because again the response is for one, super-sized faculty even bigger than a 1000. Two for non-faculty clubs, what are your responses for that? Can you give a response now? I will still put this up to voting, otherwise I will suspend.

ELECT: Can we just raise another proposal? The other alternative is to actually get the percentage of your current elections and get about 2-3%. So basically, it's a progressive proposal based on the performance of the previous election. We can use this proposal to make it more viable.

Faris: What I wanted to say is, I think 5% should be something we all should aim for. If we can't even hit 5%, what right do you have to say that you are representative of the students?

ELECT: One way is yes, we work towards that. If that's the case you are worried, we can use from what we have this year, convert it into percentage.

SYD: So my point is so it's better to have a contested election, you see. If I have say, 12 people contesting for 10 slots I don't need to hit that 5% membership then there is a discrepancy already. With more people contesting, they don't need to hit this membership. So are we addressing this vote of confidence or are we really talking about voter participation? That each club must have this certain amount of voter participate.

Zhe Wen: So I guess to clarify the point, this should be extended to all elections, not only just vote of confidence.

ELECT: Actually to think about it, if Yi Da saying that there is a contested election, the total amount of participation rate would be low. But at the same time if you think about it, if you have contested elections, actually it means that you have more people interested in that elections. Let's say me and Wee Kiat are running for elections, we can galvanized the people for more influence.

Zhe Wen: I will put this up to a vote, unless you have burning questions and



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burning statements to be made.

Wei Wei: Clarification question. Can I ask would you put the elections for the NUSSU reps under this as well? Since they are elected from the different clubs.

Shermon: Point of information. This ELECT committee the term of reference only extends to the management committee election regulations. It does not touch the EXCO reps.

Desmond: Can I just clarify right, a lot of people are confused because to get 5% of participation vote, for like computing we have 1700 so you need around 85 people to vote before you pass the vote of confidence or is it you need 85 people to actually give you the vote of confidence?

ELECT: If you see the ballot design, it's basically like those 10 names, so each candidate has to have 85 ticks.

Zhe Wen: 85 ticks. So it's 5% vote YES? Sorry, just answer this question, I have 100 people, do I need 10 people to tick YES or do I need 10 people to vote?

ELECT: Each candidate, to pass the vote of confidence, they need 10 ballot slips indicating their name. Because the denominator is on the whole student population, so 10 people will still pass the vote of confidence. So you just need to hit that 10.

Jiaxin: The 50% vote of confidence will no longer be in place?

ELECT: Yah, you don't need the 50% anymore. The old 50% criterion is gone. So basically you just get 5% to pass the vote of confidence.

John Paul: So I am just curious right, what you are saying is that some clubs right, you only need about 85 people to vote you in. But for others you need about 300 to vote you in. So how are we going to address this disparity since we are all sitting members in the council?

Zhe Wen: In light of all these, I will just put this up for a vote now. I invite more question for you to put up a new proposal. Because as this goes on, a lot of factors might not be considered, so I will just put it up for a provisional vote now.

Jia Xin: Sorry, Can I propose to object to this vote? Because an election is something that is very crucial to all of us, so I don't think it should be a very rushed process.

Zhe Wen: So in this case then this motion would be completely suspended,



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pending further input.

ELECT: Sorry, on behalf of ELECT can we just do a quick consultation, what do you think is wrong?

Zhe Wen: Sorry, this is not a consultation platform. If you wished to do a consultation platform, please use the time outside of the council meeting. Ok, next. The fifth motion is actually to approve the consolidation of power and functions of UEC as proposed. That is to have two representatives from faculty club, two for non-faculty club and one for associate body. Q and A please.

Shermon: I am not too sure if you guys know the reason behind it, but I think I send you guys this reason. The reason for the UEC current truncated power is not to determine the validity. It is because the sovereignty of each club, they have the right to determine the valid election of their own MC members. This was discussed during the C-cube meeting held in pharmacy last year. I think Yi Da was there also, he can attest to it. But in return, the UEC is not without power. The UEC has the power currently, to disregard any council reps send by a MC right, if the MC does not follow the election regulation. And this was in fact very nearly exercised by the previous union returning officer Ren Kai, when he wanted to exercise this power against this club, which he felt was not in the fair spirit of election. So reading your report, you want to ameliorate this power disparity; but this disparity does not exist in the first place. There is already a huge power by the UEC to strike down any council reps being send to the council and in light of the fact that now council has to pass the budget of every single con club in the new AY, any council rep, if disregarded, to be send to the council is going to affect the club hugely. So there is already a power over there. So does this change your proposal somewhat?

ELECT: Can we check 16.3, was worded quite ambiguously when you said that you can disregard the council representative. Is it their internal election or external election?

Shermon: So basically they will still be valid. Let's say the president, vice president, gen sec has been validly elected. They are the president, vice president and gen sec in the MC level but they cannot sit in the council even though they elect them to sit on the council. So they are valid office holders on their level, the local level. But on the council level they cannot sit. The UEC will have the power to say no, you can't sit on the council. We are going to disregard your spot on the council.



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ELECT: May I clarify what will be the reasons for doing so?

Shermon: It's written inside 16.3, there are different reasons in it. One of them is in the spirit.

ELECT: 16.3 just refers to the election of council representative.

ELECT: The dispute might be on the external election. Not internal election.

Shermon: Anything. The UEC can take into account. Basically the words if I am not wrong, precise words were in the spirit of fair elections.

ELECT: No, there is none. It just say the election of council representative. So technically it is internal election.

Shermon: Can you draw up the MCER? Thanks. Because if you guys feel that there is no such power, I am really not sure because I was the one who drafted it. I was in part of the council that pass it, and I am pretty sure it is in there. And Ren Kai exercised it. He was the previous union returning officer, some of us can attest that he nearly exercised it.

Zhe Wen: Again, we don't want council meeting to be an information finding session rather to actually pass motions. I will exercise my right to again suspend this motion. So in light of what happened earlier, I think it is pretty clear there is not much dialogue going on between the Council and ELECT and as I have always emphasized, if you want to have any motions passed here, you ought to have done the work outside of the council meeting. Because we are really here to pass decisions, not here to find out more information. I would actually like to suspend this motion pending two things. One, a response/question list send by each faculty and non-faculty club to ELECT in response of their report. Two, setting up of a physical consultation platform between ELECT and council, before this agenda item can be put on the table to pass. So that is the thing I am proposing out now. If not, this will be actually quite a ridiculous debate that will go on and become information sharing. I will put this up for a vote to suspend this motion in return mandate the council to do these things. Is that alright with everyone? Those in favour of suspending this motion with the two items that are mentioned earlier on.

Shermon: Sorry Zhe Wen, can I propose an amendment to your motion? I would like to propose for the suspension for the entire ELECT agenda in light of the time constraints because it seems that a lot of people are not fully briefed about the implications of this. And more time will be better.

Zhe Wen: Just to highlight, ELECT actually did have a short consultation



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	<p>period of two days. I think it's too short, but at the same time, the onus is on council reps to respond their emails also. But in which case, so this will go down to the minutes, every faculty has the onus to at least have a response of questions and statements about what they think about the report.</p> <p>Total Voting Strength: 37 For: 34 Against: 0 Abstain: 3</p> <p>The motion is suspended.</p> <p>5. Consolidation of power of UEC</p> <p>6a. Abolish SVR</p> <p>6b. Legitimising Filter Mechanism</p> <p>7. Reduce percentage of SVR</p> <p>The motion is suspended pending two things: Every faculty club will send at least one response to the ELECT report. Response means statements and questions to those reports and two, ELECT will set up a physical meeting in the near future before the next council meeting to answer every questions. The deadline for response is 1st of April for every faculty.</p>	
<p>2</p>	<p>Financial Review Update – Presentation and Q & A.</p> <p>Presentation by Geoffrey Lee</p> <p>John Paul: What is the rough gauge of subscription fees that is collected by the other universities? Yi Da: I think NTU is collecting \$24. Shermon: SMU is almost \$80 Yi Da: Yah, because SMU is a small university, therefore they collect \$80 of student activities fee, and that is distributed not just for their student's association, but all sorts of non-student association activities as well. Because their pool is small therefore overall they need to collect more.</p> <p>Jiaxin: I noticed that the idle income section exceeds the amount of expenditure that the Union has, so what is the current push to increase the subscription fee?</p>	<p>Information No Action Required</p>



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Geoffrey: Just now one of the data show the healthy balance sheet of that year. So it might not sustain in the long run because you do not know when the sponsorship will pull out.

SYD: Some of these partnerships that we sign with different companies, banks and all that. Say for example the bank management has changed, then that kind of understanding and relationship built would be gone, so its not sustainable that we are bringing \$1 million. These are efforts brought together by Bizcomm, by marketing sides and all our different partners. So it is not sustainable in the long run.

Shermon: Ok, just to add on, to clarify Jiaxin's point, for those of you who took basic accounting before, our union subscription fees are cash flow from operations, it is sustainable. But those which we get from external sponsors, are like cash flow from financing activities, they are unsustainable subject to cyclical pressures. So for example in 2008, 2009 due to financial crisis, there was a drop in the sponsorship income, because the banks are less able to have these A and P budgets to sponsor students. And in recent years we also discover one of the trend is that our external partners are becoming a bit more anal in their requirements, and it starts to deviate away from student's interest. So sometimes we are unable to accept these kind of sponsorship in good conscience because it might derogate from students' interest. So this is something for everyone here to consider about.

Geoffrey: Again, if we increase the subscription fee, then the student activity would be too reliant on these fees.

Desmond: Is it possible for us to check this now? To know what is the surplus for maybe 5 to 10 years. Because unlike Exco, faculty clubs do not have the luxury of keeping absolutely more than the subscription fee they are allocated as surplus.

SYD: So the surplus actually goes into the reserves.

Desmond: Yes, but my question is that unlike Exco, faculty clubs are probably collecting less or getting less surplus compared to the subscription fee they get. For example in 2012, your subscription fee is \$199000, let's say round up \$200000, but the net surplus is \$201000, how do you justify that this money goes to reserves and how do you tap on these surplus to give back to students in a way?

SYD: So that one has been my predecessor, how prudent they have been spending. Right now, I think we have been quite supportive of a lot of student events and all that. And we have been tapping on a lot of reserves to fund student initiatives and investing in the future in terms of YIH revamp and all that. It is not a big guarantee that they will always be a surplus more than the subscription fee, it would differ from year to year and I think we would go and look back to generate all those figures. But of course these set



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of figures is only for the Exco, we do not have all your con clubs financial data. So this is only one-third of the picture. But we are basing on this set of picture. We believe that the review of subscription fee will also go a long way in supporting the faculty clubs and non-faculty clubs. Because we will also get a cut of it.

Geoffrey: Any more questions?

Timothy Fang: I think from the perspective of self-sustainability and self-sufficiency, it is appropriate that we should raise it now, because I think \$24 was proposed even before 1976. It is good but can the committee please explain the rationale for justifying these to students because I think all of us kind of understand that the perception of students right now of the union is why does we exist? Can the committee please explain the objectives operating to this, beyond self-sufficiency and sustainability and how they tend to justify these to students?

SYD: In terms of justification right, we have to seek all clubs cooperation cause if we want to increase any subscription fee then we have to be transparent, we have to be more accountable and we seek your cooperation in releasing all the financial reports, AGM, we will disclose everything to show that these are the activities that have been run by constituent clubs, NUSSU committees and NUSSU Exco and from there, that is the best basis of justification that the union is doing something, and with the increase we can do more. Because right now people are not aware of the things that we are doing. And that is partly caused by non-disclosure by some of our entities. So we seek your cooperation to also disclose all these financial data and all that activities that you are organizing. The other thing to generate awareness I think, of course people want to see results using certain form of matrix and KPIs, these are the number of events that are organized, but the union is more than just events, we also need to back it up with qualitative stuff in terms of lobbying and all that. So these are the things that will be done by the union, you need to be more active in promoting the things that we are doing. So that will help to make it more justifiable for the increase.

Shermon: Just to add on to Yi Da's point, I think right now, one of the survey shows that people have crisis of confidence in our transparency. I think this year what the Exco did was that we published our budget on our website and we link people to it so that it is very transparent what we spend the money for. But this is only one-third of the money that is being spent. The other two-thirds are not being publicized, not even AGM reports. So these are lacuna of the areas that we hope can be addressed notwithstanding any increase, decrease or status quo. Cause we are still spending money and it is something we have to address and account to the students.



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Geoffrey: About the accountability and transparency, it will be mentioned in the second point so not to worry about that. So any more questions for subscription fee?

Shermon proposes to vote on the motion.

Zhe Wen: So it will be a voting motion. And the fin standing comm has proposed that it will be an open vote with names. Notwithstanding any objections, any minor clarification before we move this to a voting motion? We move on to voting then.

SYD: I think we want to clarify that the Fin standing comm is providing these are the option space available. And we are not advocating any particular stand. And we have lined up all the different consequences and the considerations, so it is really up to council to decide for themselves as a council rep taking into consideration the whole school population interest, we will decide what is best for everyone.

Total voting strength: 37

In favour of status quo: 28

In favour for increase in subscription fees: 9

Abstain: 0

Subscription fees are to remain at \$24.

Geoffrey: Are there any questions about the distribution?

Tingfeng: If you vote for change, will there be a subsequent meeting where we will be able to vote on what the change is?

Yi Da: So if there is a vote for change, the Fin standing comm will continue to consult and expand our consultation pool and explore the different options space available and we will present all the options to council and decide which change we should adopt.

Shermon proposes to vote on whether to change or remain status quo for the distribution of union fees.

Total voting strength 37

In favour of change: 3

Status Quo: 36

Abstain: 0

Distribution of subscription fees to remain the same.



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	<p>Geoffrey: If council passes this motion, clubs in the future will have to send their AGM reports to NUSSU for publicity.</p> <p>Shermon proposes to vote on this motion.</p> <p>Total Voting Strength: 37 For: 32 Against: 1 Abstain: 4</p> <p>The motion is passed.</p> <p>Geoffrey: So we shall set a deadline for the submissions of AGM report, your statement of budget. So the deadline would be two weeks after the end of financial term 1. Please send me then we will publish on the website.</p>	
3	Reform of Adjudication Committee – Presentation and Q & A <p>Daniel: Firstly I noticed that you didn't define adjudication disputes. And as highlighted just now disputes is something you can define. More importantly is the business of adjudication. Because the AC within the context of the Union, cannot draw parallel to the Singapore government. We don't have an enforcing body. And the idea of adjudication requires two steps, firstly a decision and enforcement. So take for example the second tribunal decision, where you say that Yale-NUS students are not part of the Union. If as a whole they decide to just represent themselves as members of the student union, who is to stop them? There is no enforcement body to enforce the decision of the AC.</p> <p>Shermon: Thank you Daniel for asking. I think Daniel has raised a very good point. I need to bifurcate my response to his question on two levels, first on the student level, and second on an admin level. On the admin level, let's face it, we are pretty much powerless against the admin but then again if we as a student body were to stand together as one and say that this is the decision coming out from a body of students who are vested the power to adjudicate on such disputes, then it's the onus of the student body as a whole to tell the admin that we want this decision to be our view of the matter. So for example, like the Yale-NUS matter, what we have done is to tell the admin that look, this is our interpretation of the university statutes and regulation, so if you take into account interpretation, they have the final word, let's admit it, but at least we state our point of view, and hopefully they would take into account when they make their decision. So that's the university admin. So basically now the council and the Exco have to enforce.</p>	



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And how do we achieve this substantively right is for both the AC people to sit in the Exco as well as the Union president and the Council chairperson to sit in the AC. So basically now when there is an AC decision being rendered, at least the different stakeholders have a stake in the decision that has been rendered. Not rendered independently, and I think this is the biggest distinction from a separation of powers system. Buy in will take some time.

Daniel: You said that with regards to admin bodies we can't do anything. As you know in constitutional problems we always think of the extremes. If there is a problem, there is a dispute and the AC decides one way, but the deanery decides otherwise, so it renders the decision moot.

Shermon: We do not purport on the student's level to override any admin decision. So I give the Yale-NUS example, we have interpreted it in way X, we have given an interpretation in this way. University admin says subsequently that no, your interpretation X is wrong, our interpretation Y is the correct one, we have to follow them. This is by virtue of us being constituted under the University admin. Under the university's framework. But at the very least when there is no interpretation from the admin or it's a matter for the student level itself, we can be the ones who say yah, this is what we want. Let's say faculty X versus faculty Y, and the deanery supports their own faculty club in a dispute, so the AC will be there to say who is on the correct side and who is on the wrong side. Then the onus is on both faculty clubs to tell their deanery that among the students we have reached a decision, so hopefully the deanery will support us on this. Let us look further, this is not about protecting our own interests, but it is about upholding the rule of law so that no regulations could be disregarded in the detriment of others. The AC job is to adjudicate based on legal rules and principles, not matters of policies or political issues.

Jiaxin: What is the function of the AC? Is it for interpretation?

Zhe Wen: Just now you mentioned that the function of the AC is not to interpret any political decision right? I would like to question that statement, because the second interpretation that the AC made, that is whether Yale-NUS is part of the student union, that to me is a political decision, what's your response?

Shermon: I need to first address that it is notoriously difficult to demark what is legal and what is political. What is more important for the AC is to try as much as possible to stick to a legal interpretation. And what the AC did in the second AC decision was to look at NUS Statutes 5 and regulation 9. And then from there see whether what are the requirements that the regulation say and see whether Yale-NUS fits the specifications as stated. The majority of the AC panel based their decision on these statutes and regulations, but the



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minority based it on a more political side of view. This is because of the overlap between council and AC. But with this new AC, these people will be just down there, they know their job is not to represent these students, their job is to just interpret the regulations, written laws and adjudicate any dispute.

Daniel: Can I address that point about AC just interpreting the laws. Basically, interpretation does require a certain element of politics as well. Just because you refer to certain statute does not make it a legal decision. It is still a political decision masquerading under law. So I am still not convinced that you can separate the legal and political functions of the AC.

Shermon: I put it very simply. Any adjudicatory body is supposed to tell what the rule is. They are not there to say what should be the rule. So if this adjudicatory body comes out with a interpretation of the rule that is quite repugnant to reality, then it is up to the rule makers themselves with the power to change the rule, to make it not so repugnant. So basically if now this council feels that the AC has interpreted the Yale-NUS case wrongly, the power lies with this council to pass a statutory amendment to reverse that decision. And this would be a new thing as per any national judiciary. Any judicial decision can be overturned statutorily.

Daniel: If the council could just overrule the AC decision, then do we really need an AC?

Shermon: We still need the AC to be there to uphold the rule of law and prevent any powerful political entity to get what they want through illegal means.

Timothy Fang: I just have two questions, firstly, is there going to be any representative from the faculty of law? And secondly, what guarantees or assurances are there that the expertise of the people sitting on the AC is right?

Shermon: That the AC should not be restricted to the legal industry or people who are legally trained in a way. It would seem sort of unfair that there must be a law person down there. Basically, we leave it free for the selection panel to decide who should sit on the AC, to appoint as student adjudicator.

I think we have to invest trust in the selection panel. The selection panel consists of the Union president, your council chairperson, and previous AC chairman. If these three you do not trust them, then I have nothing else to say.

Zhe Wen commented that the function of an AC is a very specialized stuff and I really don't have a lot of expertise in interpreting this. And he also



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<p>commented that by choosing the people on the AC, he is exercising his political biasness in his choice.</p> <p>Timothy opined that non-legally trained persons sitting on the AC would create decisions that are not legally sound.</p> <p>Shermon replied that legal interpretation is not only the sole prerogative of the legally trained. He opined that laws are made easy for layperson to understand and it would be unfair to say that only people who study law can interpret them. He further states that anyone can interpret the law and they are fully entitled to.</p> <p>Jiaxin commented that the Yale-NUS issue should be brought before the council for deliberation, instead of referring it to the AC.</p> <p>Shermon replied that the Yale-NUS issue is an interpretation issue of the regulations and it is rightly within the province of the AC to decide on it.</p> <p>Jiaxin commented that anything could be subject to interpretation and decided by the AC. She question what is the role of the council vis-à-vis the AC.</p> <p>Shermon: Some students may not see the need for the AC at this point in time, but no one sees the need for a fire extinguisher when there is no fire. If there is no AC, disputes are basically resolved through political power negotiations. The implications of not having an AC could result in ordinary students who have a dispute with a con-club, being politically disadvantaged and left without recourse for his grievances on the union level.</p> <p>Zhe Wen: I will put this motion to a vote on whether we want to adopt the constitutional change to amend the reforms of the adjudication committee.</p> <p>Voting strength: 33 In favor of reform: 11 Against the motion: 13 Abstain: 9</p> <p>The motion was not passed.</p>	
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With no other outstanding matters to discuss, Mr Chu Ting Feng proposed to close the meeting at 1230Hrs.



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