



Date: Monday, 9 December 2019
Time: 18:00-20:00
Venue: Pearson G23

**Union Executive
Minutes**

Chair: Carol Paige,
Democracy, Operations and Community Officer

Members:	P	AP	AB
Aatikah Malik, Welfare and International Officer	✓		
Ashley Slanina-Davies, Education Officer		✓	
Carol Paige, Democracy Operations and Community Officer, Chair	✓		
Clara Baltay/Laura Dell'Antonio, Sports Officer (Job Share), Elected Officer from Activities Zone	✓		
D'Arcy McGuinness, Activities Officer	✓		
Jiaqi Guo, Faculty Rep for the Institute of Education (Undergraduate), Elected Officer from Education Zone		✓	
Jim Onyemenam, Postgraduate Students' Officer	✓		
Maë Faugère, Sustainability Officer		✓	
Max Tscheltzkoff, Trans Officer	✓		
Mihir Gupta, Union Chair	✓		
Molly Hartill, Community Relations Officer, Elected Officer from Welfare and Community Zone		✓	
Nilisha Vashist, Women's Officer	✓		
Sandy Ogundele, BME Students' Officer			✓
Xuyi Wang, LGBTQ+ Students Officer	✓		
Zohar Mendzelevski-Steinberg, Disabled Students' Officer	✓		

In Attendance:
Guy Stepney, Head of Marketing
Emer O'Driscoll, Policy Zone Assistant, minutes

1. Introductions

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and everyone introduced themselves.

The Disabled Students' Officer and the Women's Officer joined the meeting remotely.

The Chair announced that, as the Women's Officer could only stay for an hour, the agenda would be adjusted so the items to be voted upon would be first.

2. Policies passed at Zone meetings

Changes to the university's policy for extenuating circumstances

The Postgraduate Students' Officer introduced the policy, which was passed at Education Zone. They explained that a lot of the work on this policy is already being done, but that this policy would solidify the student mandate on the issue.

The Disabled Students' Officer asked if the proposal laid out a potential timeframe for the new EC policy. The Postgraduate Students' Officer responded that it did not, but that they were looking at a trust-based system.

There were no further questions or speeches. The Chair moved to a vote via show of hands.

Vote	Number
For	9
Against	0
Abstain	1

Decision: The policy was **RATIFIED**.

The Postgraduate Students' Officer noted that implementation of this policy will be a continuation of the work that they and the Education Officer are currently doing.

Students Support the UCU Strike

The Postgraduate Students' Officer introduced the policy and discussed the amendment that was made in Education Zone to remove a resolve offering financial support to students wishing to participate in strike action.

The Chair explained that the sabbatical officers had already done most of the resolves stipulated by the policy but that it would remain in place for any further strike action, which they deemed likely.

The Chair noted that the Students' Union cannot legally mandate permanent Union staff members, and so the words "and Students' Union staff" were removed from the third resolve of the policy.

The Women's Officer asked what the word "support" means in this context. The Chair clarified that, as Union Policy can't mandate permanent staff, the Union could still support the strike but could not encourage permanent staff to join it.

The Disabled Students' Officer raised a concern about the accessibility of campus for disabled students during industrial action. The Chair suggested an amendment to the policy, that the Union will only support strike action that does not impede the accessibility of UCL for students.

There were no objections to the amendment.

The Chair moved to a vote on the policy.

Vote	Number
For	10

Against	o
Abstain	o

Decision: The policy was **RATIFIED**.

The Chair noted that there would be no actions for implementing this policy unless and until further strike action is called.

Clear Policy on Supervision Duties of Research Students

The Postgraduate Students' Officer introduced the policy and explained that it is mostly covered by the new PGTA Code of Practice and PhD Code of Practice. They noted that a lot of the work stipulated by the policy is already being done, but that there was no reason not to pass it.

There were no questions or objections from members. The Chair moved to a vote.

Vote	Number
For	10
Against	o
Abstain	o

Decision: The policy was **RATIFIED**.

The Postgraduate Students' Officer noted that implementation of this policy will be a continuation of the work that they and the Education Officer are currently doing.

3. AGD: Removal of the roles of Union Chair and Halls Accommodation Representative

The Chair introduced the AGD and explained that it would not be a removal of the current officers, but would be implemented for the next election cycle. They explained that this had been discussed with the officers currently in those roles and it was not a personal decision, simply a continuation of the Democracy Review undertaken the previous year.

The Chair explained that, due to the new democratic structures, neither the Union Chair nor the Halls Accommodation Representative have a substantial role in the Union. The remits of their jobs are covered for the most part by the Democracy, Operations and Community Officer, the Welfare and International Officer, and (for the Halls Accommodation Representative) the 16 Halls Representatives.

There were no questions or further speeches. The Chair moved to a vote.

Vote	Number
For	10
Against	o
Abstain	o

Decision: The AGD was **CARRIED**.

4. **Phineas Mascot Consultation**

Copies of the Phineas Consultation papers (circulated online before the meeting) were handed out.

The Chair then explained the history of Phineas and the reasons for the consultation. They noted that, while the consultation only received 125 responses, the web-page had been viewed around 3,500 times, with an average viewing time of over four minutes. The consultation was also heavily promoted by the Union via multiple channels and had garnered national and international press.

The Chair explained that the goal at Union Executive was to have a discussion and vote about what to do about the Phineas mascot, bar, and statue. They reported that the online responses from students lean heavily towards keeping the mascot in the bar and not changing anything.

The Union Chair stated that they did not believe Phineas was compatible with UCL's motto of "London's Global University". They saw no problem with keeping the name of the bar and retaining the statue, but thought the mascot should be changed to better represent UCL's global position and outlook.

The Women's Officer reminded members that the consultation is not a referendum, and that just because something like British colonialism has been celebrated in the past, that does not mean it should be celebrated now. They noted that, as an international student from a former British colony, the symbolism of retaining Phineas as the Union's mascot made them very uncomfortable. They advocated for changing the mascot and then naming the bar after the new mascot.

The Union Chair noted that Phineas just represents British history, but UCL has many notable international alumni that the bar could be named after. The Chair made a suggestion that the bar could be named after the Union's first ever President.

The Postgraduate Students' Officer noted that, whatever the decision taken regarding Phineas, it was important not to shy away from the history of the Union. Even if the statue is removed, the Union should be public about the decision.

The Chair added that it would be difficult to remove the statue and change the name without eliding some of the history. They added that the statue could be used as an educational tool and a springboard to talk about issues which affect marginalised communities and that this could go along with an increase in support for Liberation Networks to talk to about the work they do. They also noted that this issue is deeply felt but not widely felt.

The Activities Officer felt that changing the mascot would be relatively uncontentious but that the officer team might face a significant backlash for changing the name of the bar. They explained that the name 'Phineas' has taken on a new meaning to the people who use the space,

especially sports teams. They added that this was not necessarily a reason not to do it, but is something worth considering. The Sports Officer seconded this view.

The Postgraduate Students' Officer asked if sports teams actually use the mascot. The Sports Officer clarified that the mascot is only used at Varsity games.

The Chair decided to split the decision making process into three parts:

- i) Whether to remove Phineas as the Union's mascot
- ii) Whether to rename the bar
- iii) Whether to remove the Phineas statue from the bar

The Chair then moved to a vote on whether to remove Phineas as the Union mascot. The Postgraduate Students' Officer asked whether this would be accompanied by an educational campaign. The Chair said they thought so but that specifics would be decided later.

Vote	Number
For	7
Against	0
Abstain	3

Decision: Phineas to be removed as the mascot of Students' Union UCL.

Members then further discussed the possibility of renaming the bar. It was generally decided that it makes no sense to keep the statue if the bar is renamed, except possibly as a temporary measure.

The Chair decided that as the issue was divisive and not all Union Executive members were present, the issue of the bar and the statue would be deferred to the next meeting. Any members sending apologies to the next meeting must send the Chair a statement of their position on the issue.

Action: The Phineas Consultation to be discussed at the next meeting of Union Executive.

Any members unable to attend that meeting to send a statement outlining their position on the issue to the Chair in advance.

5. Approval of minutes and follow-up on action points

The Chair asked for any comments or corrections to the minutes of the previous meeting. There were none and so the minutes were approved.

The Chair went through the action points from the last meeting:

- *"All members to participate in the Phineas Consultation and encourage other students to"*
– **Completed**
- *"All Exec members to vote online for SU Board Committee and UCL Committee"*

vacancies.” – **Completed**

- *“The Activities Officer to discuss the workarounds for affiliating departmental societies with the policy proposer.”* – **Completed**
- *“Activities Officer to consider building an incentive structure within the Societies Development Award, ensure Clubs and Societies Presidents and Treasurers are encouraged to reduce printing, and liaise with the marketing team to open up digital signage to clubs and societies.”* - **Will be put in place when planning happens at the end of the year.**
- *“Campaign for more laundry facilities in halls, develop a map of local laundry facilities and a guide outlining tenancy rights.”* - **The Advice Manager is creating a booklet on tenants’ rights. The Chair and the Welfare & International Officer are in regular talks with UCL Accommodation Services.**
- *“To liaise with the digital education team at UCL to improve subtitling.”* – **The Education Officer was not present to provide an update on this point.**
- *“To run an election for the vacant Activities Reps as soon as possible.”* - **Completed**
- *“Share the Union strategy and discuss at the next Union Executive meeting.”* - **Has been deferred to the next meeting**
- *“The Disabled Students’ Officer, Welfare & International Officer and Trans Officer to work on staff training”* – **Has been submitted as a matter for discussion for the next Welfare & Community Zone meeting.**

6. Officer Accountability Reports

The Chair noted that officer reports were available to read on the website and asked all sabbatical officers present to give a brief update on their work.

The Women’s Officer reported that their campaign on consent was off to a good start but they were looking to further engage clubs and societies. They added that they were launching a mentorship programme in January that will connect UCL staff members with students in liberation demographics based on their lived experiences. They will be consulting on this with the part-time officers.

The Activities Officer reported that they had been mainly focusing on the Winter Arts Ball and the Winter Arts Festival.

The Chair reported that they had been organising events to do with the general election, such as the London Students’ Assembly and the ‘Goats for Votes’ event. They were still working on the installation of microwaves on campus. They also reported that they have been dealing with a policy proposal to do with protests in Hong Kong, which has been controversial among students. They confirmed that the policy is being amended and will be discussed in the next meeting of Union Executive.

The Union Chair then asked about the appropriateness of having these discussions in busy student spaces – such as a stall run by the Amnesty Society about the situation in Hong Kong. The

Chair clarified that the Students' Union does not mandate where affiliated societies can hold events and campaigns. Events will only be stopped when there are safety concerns.

The Postgraduate Students' Officer reported that they will be launching a national campaign opposing attendance monitoring and the Home Office's policy of data collection. They have also been working on providing sessional day care to student parents and a consultant has been hired to work on this issue. They and the Welfare and International Officer have also been working on nap rooms and a wider sleep strategy, to promote healthy attitudes to sleep, which is being circulated at UCL and will probably be piloted sometime next year.

The Welfare and International Officer reported that they have also been working on nap rooms and the sleep strategy. Additionally, they have been working with the Disabled Students' Network on a report they are producing. They have also been working on increasing the training and support for Welfare Officers in clubs and societies.

7. Report from Activities Zone

The Activities Officer reported that the meeting had been relatively short as there were no policies to pass. The only matter for discussion was about fixing the squash court lights, which work is currently being done on. There were also some amendments to the clubs and societies regulations.

8 Report from Education Zone

The Postgraduate Students' Officer reported that three policies had passed, which had now been discussed at Union Executive. There was a policy proposal about removing the application fee for PGT courses, which has been deferred to the next meeting while they gather more information from UCL. There was also a discussion about skills gaps, which has now been proposed for a Changemakers project.

9 Matters for Discussion: Pay for Part-time Officers

The Disabled Students' Officer introduced the matter for discussion. They explained that they feel the work required for a part-time officer to do their job properly (around ten hours per week) takes a significant toll on those doing the jobs and deserves remuneration. They added that they felt there should be two Disabled Students' Officers, as there are two officers for the LGBT+ Network.

They added that the unpaid nature of the role acts as a deterrent to working class students, as they have to work at part-time paid jobs alongside their officer role and their studies.

They also noted that there are full-time sabbatical officers for some liberation roles (i.e. Women's Officer and BME Students' Officer) but not for Disabled Students' Officer, LGBTQ+ Officer, and Trans Officer.

The Activities Officer noted that it would be difficult to introduce payment for liberation officers but not for the other part-time officers. They also felt it would be difficult to ascertain which officer roles required more work than others.

The Chair explained that the sabbatical officer team all agree that there needs to be more support for part-time officers. They also stated that there needs to be more expectations management in terms of the amount of work part-time officers are required to do for their role – ten hours a week is far too much. They suggested that part-time officers delegate more to their committees.

The Chair explained that for the last few years the Union has run a significant deficit and this year has already seen large budget cuts. Implementing payment for part-time officers would mean cutting something else, probably permanent staff positions. They mentioned they've been given a provisional go-ahead on an Officer Portfolio Review, which would look at these issues.

The Disabled Students' Officer responded that disabled students at UCL, and the Disabled Students' Officer, are in a much more difficult and specific position than many of the other PTOs and their constituents. As a result, the position involves a lot more work as an inevitability.

The Union Chair suggested either having a staff or sabbatical role which would oversee part-time officers, or implementing an efficiency pay scale system.

The Chair suggested setting up a Task and Finish group to address support for part-time officers.

Action: Anyone interested in joining the Task and Finish group to email the Chair at doc.officer@ucl.ac.uk

14 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Minutes approved as a true and accurate record	
Chair:	Carol Paige , Democracy Operations and Community Officer
Signature:	
Date:	