

Minutes of the 2nd Caledonian Student Voice Meeting of Session 2019/20

Meeting held on Monday, 25th November 2019, in NH208, at 5.00pm.

Sign In:

Present: Eilidh Fulton (Student President); Bethany Stevenson (VP SHLS); Susan Docherty (VP SCEBE); Moses Apiliga (VP GSBS); Monica Allen (MA); Kimberley Brown (KB); Rachael Brown (RB); Dara Coussot (DC); Peakay Dennis (PD); Tanya Fate-Cockbain (FC); David Grimm (DG); Seona Halbert (SH); John Hogg (JH); David Howie (DH); Maggie Huminiecka (MH); Ryan Johnston (RJ); Sandra Kubasik (SK); Eleanor MacLennan-Patton (EMacL); Katie Moffat (KM); Kathy Mumme (KM); Grace Nyariki (GN); Adil Rahoo (AR); Sophie Robinson (SR); Thomas Schwitalla (TS); Stephanie Slater (SS); Vincent Waters (VW); Maggie Wierzbicka (MW); Kirsty Winter (KW).

Absent: Raheel Aslam (RA); Dorian Clark (DC); Joanne Duff (JD); Joanne Fitzpatrick (JF); Samah Khan (SK); Claire MacLeod (CMac); Viktor Mirchev (VM); Roxanna Munir (RM); Muhammad Nadeem ur rehman (MN); Ioannis Petrakis (IP); Adil Rahoo (AR); Amy Senior (AS); Jenny Stryman (JS); John Vasconcelos (JV).

Apologies: Gaia Argiolas (GA); Stewart Baker (SB); Laura Clark (LC); Neill Clark (NC); Jonnie England (JE); Molly Ferguson (MF); Nicola Gray (NG); Jennifer Hewitt (JH); Gabriele Janusonyte (GJ); Kathryn McNicol (KMcN); Maria Nagy (MN); Kerryanne O'Rourke (KO); Gillian Poynts (GP); Bernadette Pickett (BP); Zubair Sarwar (ZS); Lucy Starling (LS); Keir Thomson (KS).

In attendance: Sara MacLean (Student Voice Team Leader); Kathryn Collins (Clerk).

Observers: Douglas Chalmers (VP UCU at GCU and President UCU UK); Danny Gallacher (University Court Governor), Lorna Addison (Societies Co-ordinator); Fraser Allan (Sports Co-ordinator); Mary Jane McNally; Sarina Vlaytchev; Sumaya Mughal.

Any member of Student Voice, excluding Full Time Officers, who miss two meetings of Student Voice without apologies in an academic year, will have automatically deemed to have resigned as a member, Officer, Department, PGT or PGR Rep.

1. Welcome

- 1.1 The meeting started at 5.00pm. The Chair (Eilidh Fulton, Student President) welcomed all members and Danny Gallacher (University Court Governor) to the second meeting of Student Voice for 2019/20. Members were asked to ensure they had signed in and taken a voting card to use when speaking. The Chair said that Observers are welcome to the meeting but they are not eligible to vote. Members were reminded of what conduct is acceptable during the meeting.
- 1.2 The Student President explained that for this meeting she would be Acting Chair due to the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair.
- 1.3 The Chair informed members that for the next agenda item Douglas Chalmers, VP University and College Union (UCU) and President UCU UK would be talking about the University Campus Union Strike Action and available to answer any questions.
- 1.4 The Chair proposed moving agenda item 11 – Ideas, further up the agenda and to be discussed at agenda item 7. The Chair called for a vote to move agenda item 11 – Ideas to be discussed at

agenda item 7. **Vote: For: 27; Against: 0; Abstentions: 0.** Agenda item 11 – Ideas, was moved to Item 7.

2. **University Campus Union Strike Action**

Douglas Chalmers (DC), VP University and College Union (UCU) at GCU and President UCU UK gave some background to members on the University Campus Union strike action taking place over disputes on pensions, pay and working conditions. DC talked about pay, equality, casualisation and workloads. There will be eight days of strike action from 25th - 29th November and 2nd - 4th December 2019. As well as eight strike days from 25 November, union members will begin “action short of a strike” when they return to work. This involves things like working strictly to contract, not covering for absent colleagues and refusing to reschedule lectures lost to strike action.

DC then took questions from Student Voice. Members asked about the affect to graduations taking place next week and the lectures that will be missed by striking staff. DC explained that lecturers missed will not be rescheduled. The Student President explained that if anything is missing in an exam paper then students will be asked not to answer the question in the exam. The exams written before Christmas will not be rewritten. Members asked about international students and how their attendance will be affected to which DC and the Student President said that international students’ attendance will not be affected and the cancellation of classes will not have an impact on visa requirements. The Chair encouraged members to visit the Strike Action: Frequently Asked Questions for Students on the GCU website for information. SR asked about tuition fees for international students, or anyone that is paying their fees, in relation to their classes being cancelled. The Student President said she would find out about the tuition fees. **Action: Student President.** PD asked about students currently undergoing ethics procedure for their dissertations/thesis and whether this would be halted until January. This is an issues as no research can be carried out until Ethics Board approval has been granted and some students dissertation research is time dependant. The Student President suggested that PD forward an email to the VP SHLS who will enquire about this on their behalf. **Action: VP SHLS.**

The Chair and Student Voice thanked DC for attending Student Voice.

Douglas Chalmers (DC), VP University and College Union (UCU) at GCU and President UCU UK left the meeting at 5.26pm.

3. **Previous Minutes**

The Chair invited members to consider the minutes of the previous Student Voice meeting held on 28th October 2019. No questions were raised by members in relation to the minutes. The Chair said that only those present at the previous meeting could vote to approve the minutes of the meeting at Student Voice held on Monday, 28th October 2019. **Vote: For: 19; Against: 0; Abstention: 0.** The previous Student Voice minutes from 28th October 2019 were approved.

4. **Matters Arising**

The Chair asked the Full Time Officers to provide a verbal update only on items in which there has been development since their paper was written.

4.1 **Referendum on exams before Christmas**

This matter is ongoing. **Action: Student President.**

4.2 **Allow non-native speakers to have a dictionary**

This matter is ongoing. **Action: VP SCEBE**

4.3 **Increase the provision of daytime lockers around campus**

The Student President said that she had met with Campus Services to discuss the lockers. SP updated Student Voice that postgraduate students wishing to keep their lockers on into Trimester C

can do so and asked that students wishing to keep their locker should contact the Mailroom to let them know this as they deal with the lockers. The Student President added that there are currently 500 lockers on campus unused and due to this there is no need to source more lockers. Members discussed having the lockers located in various buildings across the campus. The Student President said that information on where the lockers are on campus and how to get a locker has been put on the Students' Association social media channels and in the all student email. This matter is resolved.

The Student Voice Team Leader added there has been an Idea submitted on 25th November 2019 to the Students' Association website asking for lockers to be moved to the Sir Alex Ferguson library and if this receives over 10 likes then it will come to the next Student Voice for discussion.

4.4 Hot water to be made available on campus and promoted

This matter is resolved.

4.5 Phase out single use coffee cups in catering outlets

The VP GSBS said that outlets have introduced ugly mugs as a way phasing out single use coffee cups. Baxterstorey said that they will always have to offer takeaway cups as some customers might wish to take their drinks away. Members discussed and asked if takeaway cups are to be phased out then there should be a facility on campus to rinse out keep cups and thus encouraging people to use their keep cup more than once. The Chair called for a vote to make a change to the original action to phase out single use coffee cups in catering outlets and for the VP GSBS to find out about facilities on campus to wash keep cups and then promote where this facility to members. **Vote – For: 28; Against: 0; Abstention: 0.** This matter is ongoing. **Action: VP GSBS.**

4.6 Plant-based canteen drive

This matter is ongoing. **Action: VP GSBS.**

4.7 Mature student room

This Mature Student Room is located in the Hamish Wood Building. This matter is resolved.

4.8 Provision of free dental dams

This matter is resolved.

4.9 Extending locker rental period for post-graduate students

This matter is resolved (as discussed at point 4.3 above).

4.10 Report on what Lottery funding (e.g. Awards for All) the Students' Association receives and how it is allocated

The VP SCEBE said that she had checked the National Lottery Awards for All Scotland within the Students' Association, online via the National Lottery website, and via telephone directly with the National Lottery. The only application ever submitted via the Students' Association was GCU Trampolining in 2018/19 and the application was rejected. Any club or society can submit an online application for funding and the Students' Association can assist with checking the online application before it is submitted. The funding available is from £300 to £10,000. The VP SCEBE said that the National Lottery advised applying for a smaller amount first as the Students' Association clubs, societies or groups have never received funding from them. For an application and to check the criteria go to <https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-scotland> This matter is resolved.

5. Student Voice Committees

The Chair called for a vote to approve the previous minutes of all Student Voice Sub Committees. **Vote – For: 23; Against: 0; Abstention: 2.** The previous minutes of all Student Voice Sub Committees were approved.

6. Elections

Elections took place for the following positions and the results are below:

- Senate Research Representative (x1 PGR) – still to be filled.
- Elections Committee (x2) – David Grimm and Eleanor MacLennan-Patton.

The Senate Research Representative (x1 PGR) will be brought back to the next Student Voice meeting in February 2020.

7. Ideas

7.1 **Get rid of all single use plastics and styrofoam on campus (Tze Yeng Ng joined via telephone).**

There is a shocking amount of single use plastics in the catering services. We have watched enough documentaries on how plastics and styrofoams are (1) not properly recycled and dumped in other countries (2) animals are dying from it (3) our bodies are invaded by micro plastics. Please remove all single use plastics on campus. (1) replace it with biodegradable options – e.g., wooden spoons and forks. If it is an issue of cost, then pray, tell, what is the price tag to life and the earth? (2) remove all plastic water bottles sales from campus and highlight the availability of water coolers (3) promote the selling of fresh fruit instead of crisps/breakfast bars that come with loads of packaging. (4) more vegetarian options on the menu. Let's do this so we can walk the talk of promoting the "common good".

The proposer, Tze Yeng Ng, joined Student Voice via teleconference and gave some background to her Idea and the Chair asked members if they had any questions.

DH asked for an amendment to the Idea as some people with a disabilities require plastic straws. Members agreed that there should be alternatives and to have the availability of plastic straws and that individuals should not need to say why they need it. The Chair asked if anyone wished to speak against the amendment to which there was none. The Chair called for a vote to make an amendment to the initial Idea "to Get rid of all single use plastics and styrofoam on campus" and include that plastic straws are still available on request. **Vote – For: 27; Against: 1; Abstention: 0.** The amendment to include that plastic straws are still available on request to the initial Idea passed. The Chair then called for a vote to approve the whole Idea including the newly added amendment. **Vote – For: 28; Against: 0; Abstention: 0.** The Idea was approved. The VP GSBS and the VP SHLS will take this Idea forward. **Action: VP GSBS and VP SHLS.**

Tze Yeng Ng thanked Student Voice for their support.

7.2 **Referencing, report and essay writing (David Grimm).**

"Through discussion with other liberation group officers, the issue of essay writing came up, and how if a student is unaware of how to write in an academic matter then all responsibility to seek help is placed upon them and they are left to attend the LDC - an amazing service - should they feel confident enough. I am proposing that every student at the start of whichever year they are attending, the student will be given a class/mini-seminar on what their school is looking for with respect to referencing, how to write academically and what an academic essay may look like for example. This would be applicable to all students respective of age and stage of the study."

The hope is that this may empower students to feel empowered from their initial interactions with the university.

The proposer (David Grimm) gave some background to his Idea. Members discussed and gave feedback on their own personal experiences within their own departments/schools. Members suggested an amendment to the initial Idea which is that at the start of each programme there will

be a brief “what we expect from you”, in relation to referencing, report and essay writing, which is compulsory to take place but not compulsory for students to attend (it is there if students wish to attend but they don’t have to and will have no reflection on their attendance). The Chair asked if anyone wished to speak against the amendment to which there was none. The Chair called for a vote to make an amendment to the initial Idea “Referencing, report and essay writing” and to include that at the start of each programme there will be a brief “what we expect from you”, in relation to referencing, report and essay writing, which is compulsory to take place but not compulsory for students to attend (it is there if students wish to attend but they don’t have to and will have no reflection on their attendance). **Vote – For: 25; Against: 1; Abstention: 0.** The amendment to include that at the start of each programme there will be a brief “what we expect from you”, in relation to referencing, report and essay writing, which is compulsory to take place but not compulsory for students to attend (it is there if students wish to attend but they don’t have to and will have no reflection on their attendance) to the initial Idea passed. The Chair then called for a vote to approve the whole Idea including the newly added amendment. **Vote – For: 24; Against: 0; Abstention: 0.** The Idea was approved. The VP GSBS, VP SHLS and the VP SCEBE will take this Idea forward to be included in very programme. **Action: VP GSBS, VP SHLS and VP SCEBE.**

7.3 **ARC Gym – Weightlifting Equipment (Jamie Robertson)**

“The weightlifting room in the ARC gym is in dire need of some new equipment, specifically one of the benches is in a terrible condition which I have linked a picture below. Ideally bigger dumbbells as they currently only go to 44kg, ideally have pairs up to 50/60kg and a few more dumbbells. I know that weightlifting room probably isn't as popular as upstairs but a new bench at the minimum should be realistic for the uni to purchase.

The proposer, Jamie Robertson, was not available to attend but did submit a report which the Student Voice Team Leader read to members.

Members discussed and agreed that some of the ARC Gym weightlifting equipment needs to be replaced. The Chair asked if anyone wished to speak against the Idea to which there was none. The Chair called for a vote to approve the Idea of new weightlifting equipment for the ARC Gym. **Vote – For: 25; Against: 0; Abstention: 1.** The VP SHLS will take this Idea forwards. **Action: VP SHLS.**

7.4 **Let’s get wildflowers on campus (David Grimm)**

“Since starting on campus I have seen flowers near the main entrance but have failed to see any others around the grounds, I believe that by growing wildflowers on the grounds it will have a positive impact on the majority of the student body, even if it's a subliminal impact. Tying into the universities attempts at being more green, wildflowers will increase the population of pollinator insects and promote growth of ecosystems. And obviously plants allow for a more oxygen rich environment and they look pretty which are all positives. I think we should have various flowers, scattered across campus - and all campuses where possible - but particularly on Glasgow grounds, to try and help both the environment and students mental wellbeing.”

The proposer (David Grimm) gave some background to his Idea. It was noted that some people will have allergies to the wild flowers and to bear this in mind. The wild flowers could be put around the edges of the concourse and volunteers, not staff, could help plant them. The Chair asked if anyone wished to speak against the Idea to which there was none. The Chair called for a vote to approve the Idea of having wildflowers on campus. **Vote – For: 26; Against: 0; Abstention: 0.** The VP GSBS will take this Idea forwards. **Action: VP GSBS.**

7.5 **Prayer spaces in each building on campus (Sumaya Mughal)**

“As a Muslim girl, prayer is a significant part of my life and is required in Islam to be done 5 times a day at certain times of the day. This can include times that I am in class. Whilst I am in class, many times I have had to rush out of the building and to the faith and belief which can take a

considerable amount of time, to then pray and rush back so that I don't miss too much in classes/lectures. to solve this, I have the idea of having prayer spaces (which can include a free room) for males and female separate in each building in campus as it would allow Muslims like me across campus to be able to pray on time and at the same time minimise the effect it has on our education and missing class time."

The proposer, Sumaya Mughal gave some background to her proposal. The VP SCEBE said that it would not be possible to have a prayer area in every building on campus but that if Sumaya Mughal wished to join the VP SCEBE at a meeting with the Head of Estates then options could be discussed. The VP SCEBE added that the Faith and Belief area is getting redesigned as a sanctuary. Also, once the quiet space film is made it will be put out across campus and social media to promote the quiet spaces across campus once they are identified. Members discussed and asked if there could be an amendment to the Idea and to have a quiet area/reflection room not just for the Muslim community but for people wishing to meditate or chill out for anxiety reasons. The VP SCEBE said this is why quiet spaces are being identified across campus for anyone to use for reflection, meditation, quiet space, and digital detox. The SCEBE said that the logistics of where the rooms would be need to be discussed.

The Chair asked if anyone wished to speak against the amendment to which there was none. The Chair called for a vote to make an amendment to the initial Idea "Prayer spaces in each building on campus" and to change the name from prayer space to reflection space, which are open to all students and not just a prayer space, and to discuss the logistics with the VP SCEBE. **Vote – For: 22; Against: 0; Abstention: 3.** The amendment to the initial Idea passed. The Chair then called for a vote to approve the whole Idea including the newly added amendment. **Vote – For: 23; Against: 0; Abstention: 4.** The Idea was approved. The VP SCEBE will take this Idea forward. **Action: VP SCEBE.**

*At this point (6.53pm) the Chair called a motion to extend the guillotine until 7.30pm. The Chair called for a vote and asked members if they wished extend the meeting to 7.30pm. **Vote – For: 20; Against: 5; Abstention: 0.** The meeting time was extended to finish at 7.30pm.*

7.6 **More food bins on campus!! (Sophie Christine Robinson)**

"I have come to the realisation that GCU has almost no facilities in the form of food waste bins for students to use around campus. I have walked around campus, consulted with other students and student societies and all agreed that there are very lacking food waste disposal facilities on GCU. I am proposing a motion to push for a drive to increase the number of food waste bins available that students can use on campus. Upon inspection the only food bins on campus are in the refectory (only 2 bins within close proximity to each other), there aren't even any in the learning café, recharge cafe or the Re:Union bar. Unbelievable for the effort GCU has in sustainability. The amount of wasted food that is improperly disposed of on GCU because there are no food bins to put it in will surely affect the campuses green status and environmental impact. The simple and inexpensive fix of more bins could be put in place to remedy the problem easily and effectively, particularly because the disposal facility of the food waste must already be in place due to the 2 existing food bins in the refectory."

The proposer, Sophie Christine Robinson gave some background to her proposal. Members discussed and no amendments were suggested to the Idea. The Chair asked if anyone wished to speak against the Idea to which there was none. The Chair then called for a vote to approve the Idea to have more food bins on campus. **Vote – For: 25; Against: 0; Abstention: 0.** The Idea was approved. The VP GSBS will take this Idea forward. **Action: VP GSBS.**

8. **Full Time Officer Reports**

The Chair asked the Full Time Officers only to provide a verbal update on any items in which there has been development since the report was written.

The Chair (EF) stepped down at 7.00pm and SD chaired the meeting so the Student President could present her report.

Student President

- The Circle Chai tea event held this morning went well.
- Joined, via teleconference, to a Quality Enhancement Symposium in Canada and spoke about Quality Enhancement in the UK and Scotland.
- Attended GCU London Graduations and events/sessions scheduled whilst there and heard about the student experience in London.
- All of the Full Time Officers were out this morning supporting GCU staff with the strike action they are taking.

The Acting Chair (SD) stepped down at 7.02pm and the Chair (EF) resumed her position as Chair.

VP SCEBE

- Organised for the PGR students from London to come to a Christmas party in Glasgow next week.
- Filmed a Christmas film for the University.
- Attended Ask the Officer, Radio Show, SAGE.
- Attended a meeting in place of the Student President about the conviction policy for students.
- Working on the Star Awards.
- Won small grant scheme - £250 towards our Mental Health Agreement. This is a win.
- Mature Student Space based in the Hamish Wood Building is getting furnished and decorated as we speak. This is a win.

VP SHLS

- Working with Student Life on a campaign and they are going to feature on the Students' Association.
- Collating student feedback on the student accommodation in the city centre and in Caley Court. The student experience should not be hindered by accommodation. The VP SHLS asked members to get in touch to give their feedback.
- Planning for the Teaching Awards – support your lecturer.
- Working with Scottish Student Sport (SSS) on female football coaching courses level 1,2 & 3 so they can get the qualifications. There will also be confidence courses available in March 2020.

VP GSBS

- Week commencing 11th November, attended an educational trip in Bosnia.
- Attending a Race Equality event over the weekend in Glasgow.
- Reviewing the Carbon Literacy Training and exploring if it can be rerun next year as it has been popular this year.
- Attending, Climate Strike Action on Friday, 29th November 2019, meet at the Hamish Wood building entrance at 9.45am.

No questions were asked in relation to the Full Time Officer Reports and the Chair invited members to take a vote to approve all the reports. **Vote – For: 22; Against: 0; Abstention: 4.** The Full Time Officers reports were approved.

9. Student Voice Officer Reports

The Chair asked the Student Voice Officers only to provide a verbal update on any items in which there has been development since the report was written.

Black or Minority Ethnic (BME) Officer

- The BME Officer said that the Black and Minority Ethnic Students' Group wish to change their name to Ethnic Diversity Network. The Student Voice Team Leader added that this will require to go to the Executive Committee and back to Student Voice as per our By-Laws. **Action: VP GSBS.**

Care Experience Students' Officer

- The Care Experience Students' Officer asked for any estranged or care experience students to come and speak to him at some point about Christmas dinner, this also includes International Students, as they may not have a home to go to over the Christmas period either.
- The Social Work Society are doing a collection for the homeless, from 2nd to 13th December 2019, to collect warm winter clothes. There will be buckets around the campus and information sent out via social media.

Society Council Chair

- The Society Council Chair talked about doing more to promote societies and so there will be stall on campus on 28th January 2020 for all societies.

Ethical & Environmental Officer

(The Student Voice Team Leader gave an update on behalf of the Ethical and Environmental Officer)

- On 9th December 2019, from 1pm – 4pm, there will be a swap shop in NH008. The swap shop is to help reduce what you buy. Any clothes left over will be given to the Halliday Foundation for the homeless. Check the website for further information.

No questions were asked in relation to the Student Voice Officer Reports and the Chair invited members to take a vote to approve all the reports. **Vote – For: 26; Against: 0; Abstention: 0.** The Full Time Officers reports were approved.

10. Voter Registration for General Election

The Student President reminded all members to register by midnight on Tuesday, 26th November 2019 and to please vote and make your voice heard.

11. Update on Banded Grading

The VP GSBS gave an update on banded grading and thanked those that took part to give their feedback. The VP GSBS said that the work would be continuous throughout the year. At this time there is no start date for when the new banded grading would start as this has still to be discussed. The VP GSBS said if any members had any questions then please speak to him.

12. ELIR Reflective Analysis Report

The Chair advised members to read the ELIR Reflective Analysis Report, in particular chapter 2 which would be most relevant. The Chair added that at the previous Student Voice meeting held Lesley McAleavy, Policy and Development Officer, attended the meeting to reach out to students asking members to be on the panel and to inform members that the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA) will be coming to the University in March 2020.

13. Any Other Business

- 13.1 The VP SHLS talked about the GCU Learn App and Blackboard Learn which is a virtual learning environment and learning management system developed by Blackboard Inc. Blackboard Inc. is stopping the manufacturing of the app and are no longer providing app updates. GCU Learn site should be mobile compatible. The University is looking into possibly getting a GCU app. This has not

yet been communicated out to students as there is not a set timeline about when Blackboard is stopping their app. Communications will be sent out to members in due course.

- 13.2 The VP SCEBE said she would be taking on the Santa Sack Challenge this year and boxes will be put out in the open plan area on the 2nd floor within the Students' Association. The VP SCEBE asked for members to get involved and if possible to make up a selection box with toothbrushes and toiletries. Communications will be sent out to members in due course with a list of suitable items.

The Chair thanked all members of Student Voice for their attendance and reminded members that Student Voice members are invited for one free drink in Re:Union Bar & Grill and a chance to network with other members.

The meeting was concluded at 7.23pm.

DRAFT