

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
STUDENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes of the seventh meeting of the Student Services Committee held on
Thursday 20 November 2008 at 10 am in the Board Room,
Union Building, Bundoora.

Present: Dr Kerry Ferguson, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Equity and Student Services, Chairperson
Mr Michael Torney, Executive Director, Student Services
Ms Julia Lambert, President, Guild
Mr Bruce Carboon, Nominee of Vice-Principal, Resources and Administration
Ms Sally Huang Yang, LUPA Nominee
Mr Lachlan Batchelor, SRC Nominee
Ms Katherine Nix, BSA Nominee
Mr Joe Arena, Nominee of Chief Financial Officer
Ms Joanne Mathey, WSA Nominee

In Attendance: Mr Frank Van Groeningen
Mr Robert Stephenson
Mr Ray Barker

Apologies: Mr Peter Boyle
Ms Lee Ann Bassar
Ms Jenny Reynolds
Mr Pranay Lodhiya
Mr John Mrakov

ITEM	DETAILS	ACTION
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1 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting Paper SSC/08/21 were confirmed subject to the inclusion of the following after the fourth paragraph of minute 2.1.

“Dennis Bainger the President of the BSA also indicated that he was opposed to the EFTSL model on the basis that it does not take into account the diverse nature and governance structures of the student organisations or the campuses on which they operate. Dennis Bainger also stated that a model which was based and indexed against a measure such as centrelink assistance/poverty line would be more appropriate if presidents were forgoing part/full time work or deferring parts of their study”.

2. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

2.1 Payment of Honoraria to Student Leaders

The Committee noted that the Federal Government has determined a policy that, if passed by the Senate, will permit greater funding for student services, including representation and advocacy, than is currently the case. The Government has indicated that its intention is to re-introduce a compulsory General Service Fee from 1 July 2009.

The Committee will review the policy in regard to payment of honoraria to student leaders through 2009 as the Government's policy proceeds towards Senate approval.

MT

2.2 2009 Budget

The Executive Director, Student Services, reported that at the Budget Forum held on 11 November 2008 the Division of Student Services budget was presented. Subsequent negotiations have occurred with the Chief Financial Officer where discussion centred on examining whether any additional income or cost reduction could occur within the commercial areas of the Division's budget. As a result of those discussions an additional \$70,000 of sales in Functions and Image La Trobe have been identified for 2009.

The final budget position has yet to be announced but when it is, it will be circulated to all members of the Committee.

If necessary, a further meeting will be held in late November.

MT

The Committee noted that the total 2009 University Budget will be submitted to Finance and Resources Committee on 1 December 2008 for final decision by Council on 15 December 2008.

3. VOLUNTARY STUDENT UNIONISM

As indicated above the Federal Government has decided to reintroduce a compulsory General Services Fee to come into effect from 1 July 2009. The Ministers Media Statement and Fact Sheet were distributed. The most relevant section of the Fact Sheet indicates that Universities will have the ability to set a compulsory fee for services and amenities and student representation and advocacy to be capped at a maximum of \$250 per full time student with annual indexation.

Furthermore, students will have an option to take out a loan for the fee similar to the HECS scheme, which will be called Services and Amenities Help (SA-HELP). The Government also requires Universities to meet national benchmarks relating to access to student support services and fulfil new representation and advocacy protocols. These benchmarks and protocols will be developed during 2009 with the Government consulting both students and the University sector. Universities will be required to meet these benchmarks and protocols by providing basic support services of a non-academic nature for students in line with the current requirement for international students. The \$250 General Services Fee would be used to provide services and amenities over and above the proposed benchmarks and protocols.

The Committee noted that the Government has also enhanced the objectives of the Capital Development Pool to allow Universities to apply for grants to build or undertake major refurbishment of student amenities.

The legislation regarding these changes will most likely be introduced into the House of Representatives early next year. Senate approval is necessary.

The Committee resolved to recommend to Finance and Resources Committee that if the legislation is approved by the Senate then the University charge full time students the maximum amount of \$250 per annum. In 2009, as the effective date is 1 July 2009, the fee is recommended to be \$125.

MT

For part time students the fee is recommended to be set at 65% of the full time fee i.e. \$162.50 (\$81.25 in 2009).

MT

4. GUILD FEE FOR 2009

The Committee decided to re-affirm its previous recommendation of setting the voluntary 2009 Guild Fee at \$105 at Bundoora and Bendigo and \$65 at Mildura, Shepparton and Wodonga.

MT

The Committee further resolved that if compulsory fees are re-introduced then those students who voluntarily pay the Guild Fee have 50% of their voluntary fee credited to them on payment of the compulsory fee.

MT

This will need to be publicised widely in marketing the 2009 Guild Fee.

MT

5. OTHER BUSINESS

5.1 Bendigo Car Parking Fees

The Committee noted that at Bendigo in 2008 those students who paid the Guild Fee and also paid their car parking fees at the same time had \$50 of the Guild Fee credited to the car parking account rather than the Guild Reserve as originally intended. The Committee asked the Executive Director, Student Services to seek an explanation from Buildings and Grounds why this has occurred.

MT

6. NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will occur at a date to be advised.

Dr Kerry Ferguson,
Pro Vice-Chancellor, (Equity & Student Services)
Chairperson