

UGM AGENDA

Time:	17:00
Date:	8 th October 2015
Location:	JCR
Agenda	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Welcome 2) Minutes & Matters Arising 3) Report from Sabbatical Officers 4) Report from executive officers 5) No cuts to courses - No outsourcing - No Confidence in Management 6) Respect for shop and bar workers 7) Support the #LetStudentsUnionize Campaign in Pakistan 8) Defend Corbyn, Fight for Socialism 9) Solidarity with Syrian refugees / SOAS Goes to Calais 10) Determine to defend the White Poppy appeal. 11) Determine to divest from nuclear technology, waste or weapons and commit SOAS and its organisations to of a 'nuclear free zone'. 12) Emergency Motions 	

UGM MOTIONS – 8th October 2015

Title:	No cuts to courses - No outsourcing - No Confidence in Management
Proposer:	Saul Jones
Seconded:	Hanieh Bazargan
This Union Notes:	
1.1	That documents were circulated to Heads of Department on Monday 28th October setting out the results of a “module appraisal” and containing instructions on “next steps” for departments to take
1.2	That these documents contain plans that would mean 184 courses would be cut
1.3	That the documents states that “The Director has decided that all red-rated modules should be withdrawn.”
1.4	That the document also states that there was “there was agreement at EB [Executive Board] level” that a bottom-up process of curriculum review had not proven to be effective and that “The Sustainability Steering Group agreed to take forward the curriculum review in a different way.”
1.5	That the Union already has existing policy highlighting the undemocratic, unaccountable, opaque, and market-focused management and governance structures of SOAS
1.6	That the severity of these cuts to courses would likely lead to some departments being closed and would put entire degree programmes at risk
1.7	That there has been no consultation on these plans with either students or staff
1.8	That the methodology used to draw up a list of courses to be cut takes no account of the impact that this may have on students’ degree programmes
1.9	That the document states that funding for these courses will be withdrawn from departments for the 2016/17 academic year
2	That alongside these leaks, management are planning a mass outsourcing of cleaning, security, postal and maintenance staff on a long term contract in defiance of the overwhelming view of the SOAS community
This Union Believes:	
2.3	That these course cuts on this scale would destroy the ethos of SOAS as a regional and disciplinary specialist institution
2.4	That any attempt to turn SOAS into a mainstream university will fail entirely

- 2.5 That the methodology used to draw up a list of courses to be cut is nonsensical - removing random courses from within degree programmes including core courses or the entire available first year courses - and simply reflects the market-driven ideology that now dominates higher education
- 2.6 That, therefore, this data and methodology is completely useless for discussion as part of SOAS' Curriculum Review and must therefore be entirely abandoned
- 2.7 That the way these plans were compiled and distributed to departments shows a complete disrespect for the staff and students that make up this institution
- 2.8 That, further, they provide yet another example of the unaccountable managerialism that dominates SOAS' governance structure
- 2.9 That SOAS management must agree to the demands of the Democratised SOAS campaign
- 2.10 That any review of curricula must be a bottom-up process led by the academics who teach courses in consultation with students and the Students' Union in order to rationalise course content, develop degree programmes, create more diverse reading lists, improve learning and teaching and making it more accessible and inclusive, and continue to deliver high quality education
- 2.11 That the cleaners and other outsourced workers must be brought in-house, and outsourcing ended on campus
- 2.12 Has no confidence in senior management
- 2.13

This Union Resolves:

1. to call for senior management to:
 - a. make a full, unreserved, written and public apology for the distress caused to staff and students by this document
 - b. give a full account of how these documents were produced and sent to departments
 - c. withdraw these documents and abandon the methodology
 - d. commit in writing to a bottom-up, academic-led curriculum review
 - e. commit in writing to no compulsory redundancies
2. to not engage with the curriculum review unless the above conditions are met
3. to not accept the resignation or scapegoating of individuals, in the firm belief that these issues are structural governance issues that can only be remedied through greater transparency, accountability and democracy
4. to repeat our call for management to abandon their outsourcing plans and demand that the cleaners are brought in-house
5. that this meeting has no confidence in senior management

Title:	Respect for Shop & Bar Workers
Proposer:	Saul Jones
Seconder:	Hanieh Bazargan
This Union Notes:	
<p>2.1 That workers in the Union shop and bar often feel disrespected in their workplace</p> <p>2.2 Customers sometimes fail to address those behind the till and bar with the basic common courtesy</p> <p>2.3 That those workers in the shop and bar are also students, working part time fund their studies and lives in London</p> <p>2.4 That staff are often the target of unwarranted and unwelcome personal criticism (about appearance, taste in music etc)</p> <p>2.5 That closing shifts are made far more stressful for workers when people refuse to accept that the shop/bar is closing.</p>	
This Union Believes:	
<p>2.1 That respect is a mutual act, both in and out side of the workplace</p> <p>2.2 That if this Union wants to live up to it's reputation for being accessible and respectful place, this must extend to relations between members of the SOAS community</p> <p>2.14 All members of the SOAS community have a role to play in making our spaces comfortable, safe and friendly</p>	
This Union Resolves:	
<p>3.1 To remind students to treat shop and bar workers with the level of respect that that would want to be treated with themselves</p> <p>3.2 To encourage students to take responsibility for their actions (and their mess) in the shop, bar and union spaces</p> <p>3.3 To publicize the basic rules of the union spaces and the concerns of those who work there</p> <p>3.4 To empower those workers to voice their concerns when their boundaries are crossed, when shop and bar rules (such as opening and closing times) are broken and their shifts are made more stressful than they need to be</p>	



Title:	Support the #LetStudentsUnionize Campaign in Pakistan
Proposer:	Abdulla Saad
Seconder:	Sheherbano Ahmed
This Union Notes:	
<p>1.1 Pakistani students (and by extension student unions) have been at the forefront of social and political change in the country since its creation.</p> <p>1.2 There exists a longstanding, government-imposed ban on the existence of student unions in Pakistani universities.</p> <p>1.3 This ban is violates Article 16 of the Pakistani constitution, which allows Pakistani citizens the freedom to assemble.</p>	
This Union Believes:	
<p>2.1 That the ban on student unions in Pakistan is unconstitutional and undemocratic.</p> <p>2.2 The denial of the right for students to unionise is a large obstacle in the way of civic development for the students of Pakistan.</p> <p>2.3 Recent state interventions on university campuses in Pakistan necessitate allowing students the right to unionise and organise politically.</p> <p>2.4 There is little scope for organised opposition to recent tuition fee hikes in Pakistan due to the ban on student unions.</p> <p>2.5 Every student in Pakistan must be given the right to be a part of a representative, democratic union that defends their political, social, and economic rights.</p>	
This Union Resolves:	
<p>3.1 That the SOAS Student Union stand in solidarity with the #LetStudentsUnionize campaign.</p> <p>3.2 That the SOAS Student Union condemns the ban on student unions in Pakistan.</p>	

Title:	Defend Corbyn, Fight for Socialism
Proposer:	Mattin Biglari
Secunder:	Ravi Mistry
This Union Notes:	
1.1	Since the capitalist crisis of 2008, conditions for young people and students have considerably worsened and have become a major point of public discussion.
1.2	In the wake of this crisis youth unemployment for graduates also stands significantly above the national average and over 58% of graduates are not in graduate jobs.
1.3	This crisis caused the pushing through of an unprecedentedly sharp rise in fees for students to £9,000 per year, making higher education unaffordable for many and leaving hundreds of thousands in a debt trap.
1.4	Youth and students have been attacked in many other ways, bearing the brunt of welfare cuts and forced into terrible housing conditions.
This Union Believes:	
2.1 During this time, and for decades before 2008, no mass party has stood up for young people and students, leaving the mass of working class youth enormously alienated from politics.	
2.2 Concurrently with this, a process of radicalisation of young people has taken place as the crisis and austerity have hit, visible in the 2010 demonstrations, the riots of 2011, and in Scotland the youth vote for Independence last year.	
2.3 This situation has suddenly been transformed by the landslide election of Jeremy Corbyn to the Labour leadership. Corbyn's election in itself underlines the radicalisation and shift left of many young people and students, tens of thousands of which signed up to vote just for Corbyn, and whose meetings were the largest and youngest seen in British politics for decades.	
2.4 Corbyn's left wing policies overwhelmingly favour working class youth and students, especially his opposition to austerity, plans to build social housing, invest in public sector jobs, and plans to scrap all tuition fees.	
2.5 For this reason, Corbyn has come under sustained attack from the ruling class, who fear for their profits. This includes their mouthpieces in the media, and their representatives in parliament in the form of the Tories and the Blairites in the Labour Party.	
This Union Resolves:	
3.1 Publicly declare its support for Corbyn's leadership.	
3.2 Mobilise students and local youth for the November 4th demonstration in London for free education.	
3.3 Send elected student delegates to represent the student union in the local trades council and to campaign for it to defend Corbyn and fight for Socialism in the wider labour movement.	

3.4 Submit this resolution to the NUS Conference in 2016

Title:	Solidarity with Syrian refugees / SOAS Goes to Calais
Proposer:	Marta Garcia Aliaga
Secunder:	Maia Birtles

This Union Notes:

- 1.1** That there are between 200 and 300 Syrians currently in Calais.
1.2 That these are refugees fleeing the war in Syria, which started in 2011. They have been escaping with the aim of reaching the UK yet the border police have forcibly stopped their journey. **1.3** That since 2011, around 5,000 Syrian refugees have been resettled in the UK. The Conservative Government agreed to admit 20,000 Syrian refugees in a window period of 5 years starting September 2015.
1.4 That SOAS students have previously organised to travel to Calais to take part in protests of different kinds in favour of the relocation of all refugees to the UK.

This Union Believes:

- 2.1** That the UK should live up to its stated commitments with the international community and give refuge to at least 20,000 Syrians (as promised) promptly. Nevertheless, this proves insufficient considering that the UNHCR has recorded 4 million Syrian refugees as of August 2015.
2.2 That conditions in the makeshift camps set up in Calais are worsening by the day. The French police forces, under the lead of Mayor Bouchart, recently destroyed most of the short possessions of many refugees, including tents and tarpaulin shelters that were in the Syrian camp. Tear gas was used as a method of dispersion and intimidation towards many, including children and women.
2.3 That the SOAS Students' Union supported and worked on the "SOAS Goes to Calais" campaign over the previous academic year (2014-15), establishing the SOAS "No Borders" society and visiting Calais on several occasions.

This Union Resolves:

- 3.1** To prioritise the "SOAS Goes to Calais" campaign.
3.2 To contribute financially to the upcoming trip to Calais that shall take place on 30 October - 2 November 2015 as well as to other activities to be carried out by the SOAS No Borders group.
3.3 To call on Heads of Department to mobilise students, teaching staff and others alike to join the convoy to Calais as well as the campaign.
3.4 To assist the "SOAS Goes to Calais" posse in the production of a document

on the 'dos and don'ts' of campaigners going to Calais.

Title:	Determine to defend the White Poppy appeal.
Proposer:	Nobuhiko Ono
Secunder:	Camilla Rechchad
This Union Notes:	
1.1	That the example of the soldiers and artists such as Siegfried Sassoon who turned their experience of war into the Peace Pledge Union that today raises money for the civilian victims of war through the White Poppy appeal.
1.2	Who will remember, passing through this Gate, The unheroic Dead who fed the guns? Who shall absolve the foulness of their fate, Those doomed, conscripted, unvictorious ones? - Siegfried Sassoon, "On Passing the New Menin Gate"
1.3	That the first leaders against the First World War were Labour leaders Keir Hardie and Ramsay MacDonald whose legacy is continued through Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament Vice Chair Jeremy Corbyn today at a time of heightened international tensions.
1.4	That New Zealand's PPU and CND have used White Poppy appeal around Hiroshima Day to make their country a national Nuclear Free Zone.
1.5	That white poppy wreaths are attacked while purple poppy wreaths dedicated to animals are not resembling Nazis.
This Union Believes:	
2.1	That peace is not obscene.
This Union Resolves:	
3.1	To defend the White Poppy appeal.

Title:	Determine to divest from nuclear technology, waste or weapons and commit SOAS and its organisations to of a 'nuclear free zone'.
Proposer:	Nobuhiko Ono
Secunder:	Camilla Rechchad

This Union Notes:

- 1.1 That the principles of SOAS's patron saint Thiruvalluvar that "whatever one studies let one study thoroughly and let ones conduct be worthy of the knowledge".
- 1.2 That Austria has threatened to sue the UK if it continues its nuclear subsidies that are only expanding as it renews its commitment to Trident. that the International Court of Justice that the use of threatened use of nuclear weapons violates Articles 2 and 51 of the UN Charter laws of peace and war.
- 1.3 That SOAS has received a royal charter and that its institutional relationship to the Foreign and Commonwealth office compels it to follow its historic mission to advance peace through British pursuit of diplomacy and international law.
- 1.4 That the city of Berekley, California has declares the territory of UC Berkeley where the bomb was developed nuclear free.
- 1.5 That SOAS committed to the 24 April 2015 resolution to divest from fossil fuels.
- 1.6 That New Zealand CND has maintained its commitment not "to manufacture, acquire, possess, or have any control over any nuclear explosive device" or nuclear waste.
- 1.7 That the commitment of Japan to "nonproduction, nonpossession, and nonintroduction" of nuclear weapons into its territory.

This Union Believes:

- 2.1 That the divesting from nuclear technology, waste or weapons is not just necessary but possible just like deinvesting from fossil fuels is necessary and possible.

This Union Resolves:

- 3.1 To divest from nuclear technology, waste or weapons and commit SOAS and its organisations to of a 'nuclear free zone'.