

# UGM AGENDA

<b>Time:</b>	17:00
<b>Date:</b>	18 <sup>th</sup> January 2016
<b>Location:</b>	JCR
<b>Agenda</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Welcome</li> <li>2) Minutes &amp; Matters Arising</li> <li>3) No confidence in NUS President Megan Dunn</li> <li>4) No to course and job cuts</li> <li>5) Stand By Me</li> <li>6) No political disciplinaries</li> <li>7) Pursue disciplinary action against Senior Managers for intimidation of staff and students</li> <li>9) Support our staff</li> <li>10) Recognize and celebrate international workers day on May 1st!</li> <li>11) Compulsory Access Breaks for Lectures of Two Hours or Longer</li> <li>12) Support a national strike ballot</li> <li>14) Paint the Bar</li> <li>15) Emergency Motions</li> </ol>	

<b>Title:</b>	No Confidence in Megan Dunn
<b>Proposer:</b>	Tom King
<b>Seconder:</b>	Hannah Slydel
This Union Notes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) that Megan Dunn is the elected President of the National Union of Students</li> <li>2) that NUS has policy opposing Prevent and the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act</li> <li>3) That these policies were passed at various autonomous NUS liberation conferences, including the Black Students Campaign</li> <li>4) that Megan Dunn withdrew support for the anti-Prevent "Students not Suspects" Tour</li> <li>5) that campaigning against the Prevent is a priority for SOAS Students' Union</li> <li>6) that Megan Dunn changed NUS policy without any democratic consultation</li> <li>7) that Megan Dunn has failed to respond to a letter from the Union's Co-Presidents regarding her decision on Prevent</li> </ol>	
This Union Believes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) that this is symptomatic of NUS' repeated concern for the so-called 'normal student' at the expense of Muslim students and other students who are structurally marginalised</li> <li>2) this is rooted in a colonialist mentality that the normal student is a white, secular man, not affected by technologies of power and state apparatuses</li> <li>3) A national union should be fighting alongside its most marginalised members and calling out violence in all of its manifestations, not campaigning for a slight reduction within an oppressive fees system or for cheaper pints</li> <li>4) that the climbdown in NUS' opposition to Prevent demonstrated weakness in the face of increasing Government pressure on organisations which are opposing this Islamophobic agenda, when what is needed is continued defiance</li> <li>5) that instead of providing the national leadership we needed, Megan Dunn's decision has undermined the key means by which NUS was opposing Prevent and weakened the work of students' unions on our campuses</li> <li>6) that decisions about policy should be taken in line with the proper democratic</li> </ol>	



procedures and should not undermine the autonomy of the liberation campaigns.

This Union Resolves:

- 1) to express that we have no confidence in NUS President Megan Dunn
- 2) to reaffirm our opposition any compulsory redundancies
- 3) to call for the Board of Trustees to put forward a vision for SOAS that is not based on inevitable decline
- 4) that SOAS must ensure full, meaningful consultation that allow students to shape the proposals
- 5) to call for Valerie Amos to hold an open forum with students to explain and discuss the plans

<b>Title:</b>	No to course and job cuts
<b>Proposer:</b>	Tom King
<b>Seconder:</b>	Hannah Slydel
This Union Notes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) that SOAS now plans to cut £6.5 million from its budget</li> <li>2) that cuts on this scale will inevitably lead to course being closed and jobs being lost</li> <li>3) that SOAS ran a surplus of £1 million in 2014/15</li> <li>4) that this surplus was made despite significant under-recruitment of both undergraduate and postgraduate taught students</li> <li>5) that SOAS has run surpluses for 7 out of the last 8 years</li> </ol>	
This Union Believes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) that these cuts are unnecessary and will put the future of SOAS as a unique, important and special institution at risk</li> <li>2) that SOAS' specialist languages and niche courses are most at risk</li> <li>3) that no member of staff should be forced from their job</li> <li>4) that any Curriculum Review must be about improving the academic experience, not shutting down courses</li> <li>5) that changes on the scale proposed require wide and meaningful consultation with the SOAS community</li> </ol>	
This Union Resolves:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) to condemn the £6.5 million cuts plan</li> <li>2) to reaffirm our opposition any compulsory redundancies</li> <li>3) to call for the Board of Trustees to put forward a vision for SOAS that is not based on inevitable decline</li> <li>4) that SOAS must ensure full, meaningful consultation that allow students to shape the proposals</li> <li>5) to call for Valerie Amos to hold an open forum with students to explain and discuss the plans</li> </ol>	

<b>Title:</b>	Stand By Me
<b>Proposer:</b>	Aida Balafkan 611991
<b>Seconder:</b>	Jonelle Twum 612451
<b>This Union Notes:</b>	
<p>1) 1 in 7 women students (14%) has been the victim of serious sexual assault or serious physical violence while at university or college.</p> <p>2) The NUS Lad Culture Audit report revealed that there's lack of clarity around the complaints and disciplinary procedures in universities across the country.</p> <p>3) In The NUS 2015 lad culture and sexism survey 61% of students stated that they were not made aware of any codes of conduct and 66% stated they were not aware of the procedure to report these incidents.</p> <p>4) NUS has launched a campaign called #StandByMe which calls for the repeal of the Zellick guidelines and for a national consultation which listens to the student movement and specialist services in order to develop new reporting and disciplinary guidelines and survivor support.</p>	
<b>This Union Believes:</b>	
<p>1) The quality of University reporting procedures and support services across the UK are inconsistent and inadequate.</p> <p>2) The Zellick Report is out of date and campuses provide proper support for survivors of sexual assault when institutions base the procedures on this guidance.</p> <p>3) Universities should have accessible reporting procedures for sexual assault and provide access to specialist support for victims during their time at university.</p> <p>4) The cuts to Rape Crisis centres are fatal and these organisations deserve to be fully funded through government money.</p>	
<b>This Union Resolves:</b>	
<p>1) To support the NUS #StandByMe campaign calling for better support for all survivors on campus and sustainable funding for services across the country.</p> <p>2) To call for the repeal of the Zellick Guidelines and for a national consultation to develop new reporting and disciplinary guidelines and survivor support.</p> <p>3) To lobby the Vice Chancellor to support the statement and call for change at a national level.</p> <p>4) To look into forming a partnership with our local rape crisis centre.</p>	

<b>Title:</b>	No political disciplinaries
<b>Proposer:</b>	Tom King
<b>Seconder:</b>	Hannah Slydel
This Union Notes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) that Sandy Nicoll was suspended on charges of gross misconduct</li> <li>2) that these charges and the suspension have now been dropped</li> <li>3) that Sandy is Secretary of SOAS UNISON branch</li> <li>4) that Sandy has been a hugely important activist on campus for more than a decade</li> <li>5) that Sandy has always stood alongside students in struggle</li> </ol>	
This Union Believes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) that the charges against Sandy were clearly ridiculous and politically motivated</li> <li>2) that this use of disciplinaries is clearly intended to victimise trade unionists and intimidate student and staff from protesting</li> <li>3) that this is a clear attack on our right to organise collectively on campus</li> </ol>	
This Union Resolves:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) to condemn the use of disciplinaries for political ends</li> <li>2) to call on management to issue an apology to Sandy Nicoll and the SOAS community</li> <li>3) to call for management to provide urgent answers as to why these charges and suspensions were used in this way</li> </ol>	

<b>Title:</b>	Pursue disciplinary action against Senior Managers for intimidation of staff and students
<b>Proposer:</b>	Hamish Quinlan Anderson 625365@soas.ac.uk
<b>Seconder:</b>	Dimitri Cautain 593573@soas.ac.uk
This Union Notes:	
<p>That on Wednesday 28th October 2015, Mr Sandy Nicoll was suspended from his job in the library on information services department, on grounds of alleged 'gross misconduct'.</p> <p>That suspension is a neutral act under the disciplinary procedure for support, research, teaching &amp; scholarship and casual staff, but is required 'in exceptional circumstances' only.</p> <p>That the allegation of gross misconduct is seriously disproportionate to any facts that can be established on Mr. Nicoll's actions on Tuesday 27th November 2015.</p> <p>That on the 4th November 2015, the suspension was dropped with immediate effects and the gross misconduct allegation and threat of dismissal was also dropped.</p> <p>That senior management is spearheading a new outsourcing program is being planned and soon implemented.</p>	
This Union Believes:	
<p>That senior management allowed for such excessive disciplinary actions against Mr. Nicoll, a trade union representative for Unison.</p> <p>That the suspension and allegations of gross misconduct were lifted by senior management following resistance by students and workers including an open letter to Baroness Amos signed by 182 SOAS academics on November 4th.</p> <p>That this action against Mr. Nicoll but not other workers exercising their right to peaceful protest on Tuesday 27th October 2015, indicates a direct victimisation of a vocal trade union representative.</p> <p>That this action against Mr. Nicolls was an act of intimidation against all workers and students at SOAS wishing to exercise their right to peaceful protest.</p>	



This Union Resolves:

That a working group be set up to consult with affected workers of this act of intimidation in the aim of identifying disciplinary actions to take against senior management.

That the students union executive call on senior management to write an official apology to all staff for continued acts of intimidation and threats to workers' job security and fundamental freedoms.

<b>Title:</b>	Support our staff
<b>Proposer:</b>	Tom King
<b>Seconder:</b>	Hannah Slydel
This Union Notes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) that as well as impacting on the courses we study, the cuts proposal will have a direct impact on SOAS staff and their jobs</li> <li>2) that students and staff have regularly stood together in campaigning on campus and at a national level</li> <li>3) that the Students' Union is already working with UCU and UNISON to oppose the cuts</li> <li>3) that many staff - for example, cleaners and fractionals - already see their labour undervalued, casualised and informalised on our campus and have had to fight for improved conditions</li> <li>4) that it was only through industrial action that the cleaners and fractionals were able to win concessions</li> <li>5) that staff may need to take industrial action to defend their jobs</li> </ol>	
This Union Believes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) that student-staff solidarity is vital to building successful campaigns</li> <li>2) that industrial action is a necessary and important tactic</li> <li>3) that academics and support staff should not face their jobs being cut</li> <li>4) that UNISON and UCU are our obvious allies as fellow unions on campus</li> <li>5) that working together with staff unions will be essential to preventing cuts</li> </ol>	
This Union Resolves:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) to support staff as they fight against job cuts</li> <li>2) to build campaigning tactics to unite students and staff</li> <li>3) to express our support for staff industrial action</li> </ol>	

<b>Title:</b>	Recognize and celebrate international workers day on May 1st!
<b>Proposer:</b>	Saul Jones 595693
<b>Secunder:</b>	Monna Matharu 569420
This Union Notes:	
<p>1.1 that May 1st is international workers day, a day to recognise and honour the essential work performed every day by millions of working class people across the world</p> <p>1.2 that May day is not as widely celebrated or observed as a public holiday in the UK as it is in other countries</p> <p>1.3 that working class people and workers rights have come under sustained attack from neoliberal austerity politics in past few years</p>	
This Union Believes:	
<p>2.1 that working class people deserve a holiday! Their work is essential to the lives of all and deserves to be honoured</p> <p>2.2 that capitalism degrades and devalues working class people, taking both their labour and their time.</p> <p>2.3 that forms of reproductive and domestic labour are devalued to the extent of not even being recognised as forms of labour.</p> <p>2.4 that any move towards intersectional liberation cannot ignore class issues</p> <p>2.5 that celebrating May day is a political act, showing solidarity with all those who work, both in our community and everywhere else</p>	
This Union Resolves:	
<p>3.1 to celebrate May 1st with a day of talks and presentations from workers movements and on the place of class in liberation struggles</p> <p>3.2 to follow this up with a proper party, which all workers at SOAS will be invited to attend</p> <p>3.3 to lobby the school to try and make sure that whenever possible, work deadlines won't fall on May 1st in future, so that everyone can enjoy May day!</p> <p>3.4 to support the long running Wages for Housework campaign and associated campaigns of the Cross Roads Womens Centre</p>	

<b>Title:</b>	Compulsory Access Breaks for Lectures of Two Hours or Longer
<b>Proposer:</b>	Hamish Anderson 625365
<b>Seconder:</b>	Shezebel Jayus 612473
This Union Notes:	
<p>1.1) That lectures at SOAS can go on for lengths up to (and possibly beyond) 3 hours.</p> <p>1.2) That currently there is no compulsory requirement to have a break during lectures.</p> <p>1.3) That therefore some lectures will occur none stop for several hours.</p> <p>1.4) That there is significant research into concentration times that points towards access breaks being necessary in order to maintain student alertness and concentration for the duration of the lecture.</p>	
This Union Believes:	
<p>2.1) That a significant number of students at SOAS cannot concentrate for more than an hour without a break.</p> <p>2.2) That this inability to concentrate results in lectures not being properly understood and therefore hampering learning.</p> <p>2.3) That the addition of an access break to lectures of 2 hours or longer would increase concentration and productivity.</p>	
This Union Resolves:	
<p>3.1) To have compulsory access breaks introduced into lectures of two hours or more.</p> <p>3.2) To have a minimum time for these breaks to be set at 10 minutes for lectures of 2 hours up to but not including 3 hours and 15 minutes for lectures of 3 hours or longer.</p>	



<b>Title:</b>	Support a national strike ballot
<b>Proposer:</b>	Tom King, tk68
<b>Seconder:</b>	Aida Balafkan, 611991
This Union Notes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) That the recent government Green Paper on Higher Education has raised the possibility that, in the future, ministers might raise tuition fees without a vote in Parliament.</li> <li>2) That the proposed metrics for the Teaching Excellence Framework are inadequate for assessing teaching quality, and that these metrics may disproportionately benefit market-oriented institutions with a low intake of working-class students.</li> <li>3) That higher education institutions which perform well on the Teaching Excellence Framework will be rewarded with the power to raise fees in line with inflation, thus squeezing the budgets of institutions which perform poorly.</li> <li>4) That the government intends to convert maintenance grants into maintenance loans, putting the poorest students in the most debt.</li> <li>5) That the government has been making significant cuts to Disabled Students' Allowance, endangering access for disabled students to higher education.</li> <li>6) That the government proposes to change the conditions for post-2012 student loan repayments, and that these new conditions will affect lower-earning graduates the worst.</li> <li>7) That the government has proposed to cut £1.6 billion from the further education budget, putting 4 in 10 colleges in danger of closing.</li> </ol>	
This Union Believes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) That students should have the right to democratically decide how we fight against the government's attacks on further and higher education.</li> <li>2) That there are many cases for and against the strike tactic, but that these arguments should be had by students at large in a democratic process.</li> <li>3) That the student movement will only ever win on the basis of mass grassroots participation.</li> </ol>	
This Union Resolves:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To inform the NUS that this union supports a ballot on the questions and demands specified herein: Question: "Should students take strike action on 22nd and 23rd February to defend students, colleges and universities from current government attacks, which threaten to further</li> </ol>	



marketise education?”

Demands:

“The demands of the strike are to defend students, colleges and universities from current government cuts and attacks. The specifics are:

- That tuition fees are not increased, and that the power to raise them undemocratically is not handed over to the Secretary of State.
- That the Teaching Excellence Framework, which will only further harm education, pressuring and overburdening academics and workers in an already intense climate of uncertainty, is scrapped.
- That increases in the cost of education for the poorest and most vulnerable students are halted: that cuts to Disabled Students' Allowance and cuts to maintenance grants are reversed, and that student loan repayment conditions are not worsened.
- That all cuts to further and adult education since 2015 are halted and reversed.”



<b>Title:</b>	Re-paint the bar
<b>Proposer:</b>	Aida Balafkan (611911@soas.ac.uk)
<b>Seconder:</b>	Zain Dada zd4
This Union Notes:	
<p>As part of the SU's response to the centenary, the SOAS SU going into the 100th year, would like to paint a reflective piece on "100 years of anti-colonial writers." As we go through a process of self-reflection are spaces should visually reflect this. The bar is looking really drab these days and needs a lift</p>	
This Union Believes:	
<p>The Union believes the School was started as a colonial project. Therefore as part of centenary celebrations, the Union believes in celebrating anti-colonial writers who have provided an alternative perspective to the Schools historic coloniality. As part of the Confronting the White Institution campaign, the Union believes that aesthetic changes play an important role especially for future students.</p>	
This Union Resolves:	
<p>The Union resolves that an event around "Lebanese graffiti," its history and politics will take place 9-11th of March. The Union resolves as part of this event there will be a participatory graffiti painting in the bar with two Lebanese graffiti artists. The Union resolves that space itself is part of our student identity.</p>	