

UGM AGENDA

Time:	17:00
Date:	Tuesday 26 th April 2016
Location:	JCR
<p>Agenda</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Welcome 2) Minutes & Matters Arising 3) Report from Sabbatical Officers 4) Vote of No Confidence in Postgrad Student Research Officer/RSA President 5) Condemnation of extreme action during Student protests. 6) The SOAS Students' Union declares the university a TTIP-free-zone 7) Subsidise menstrual cups 8) Subsidise reusable cups 9) Emergency Motions 	

UGM MOTIONS – 26th April 2016

Title:	Vote of No Confidence in Postgrad Student Research Officer/RSA President
Proposer:	Daniel Luther 577754
Seconder:	Simon Leese 208900

This Union Notes:

1. That Mohammed Taha has been elected SU Postgrad Research Officer again for the third time unopposed. His track record thus far has fallen short of what we should expect from a Postgrad Research Officer.
2. That he has failed to directly communicate to PhD students the nomination process for elected roles for the Research Student Association (RSA) and failed to announce the results of recent SU election. He has also discouraged people from running against him.
3. That he has undemocratically merged the roles of Research Students' Association (RSA) President with SU Postgrad Research Officer without consulting or informing the PhD student body.
4. That he has undemocratically and without consultation written and introduced a new constitution for the RSA
5. That he was absent from crucial meetings about Graduate Teaching Assistant budget cuts related to the SOAS Sustainability document and has failed to address these issues in an open public forum.
6. That the RSA under his leadership has not been proactive in engaging with PhD students and organising activities for the larger research student body, apart from a six-a-side football tournament.

This Union Believes:

1. That the RSA/Postgrad Research Officer exists to represent PhD students at SOAS in a transparent, fair and open manner.
2. That the representatives should encourage participation rather than actively work against it.
3. That the RSA has the potential to be much more than it currently is and that although we are all busy with our research it would be great to have an exciting, engaged, and engaging association to represent us at SOAS.

This Union Resolves:

1. To put to vote the motion of no confidence in the present RSA President/ SU Postgrad Research Officer.
2. To call for fresh elections for Postgrad Research Officer/RSA President, to be actively advertised to PhD students to ensure greater participation and a more democratic process.
3. To hold consultations with the PhD Student body about more general representation and participation within the RSA, with the view to potentially hold fair and open elections for various posts aside from President, such as Treasurer and Secretary.

Title:	Condemnation of extreme action during Student protests.
Proposer:	Rupert Wilkinson 553354
Seconder:	Lisa Aissaoui 542579
This Union Notes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That the right of peaceful protest is an essential part of our university and its culture. However, some protesters engage in unacceptable behavior. 2. Extremist elements in past protests have done criminal damage to the university, including breaking windows, starting fires, throwing paint bombs exc. 3. Large disruptive protests can stop students accessing university resources, which can damage their studies. Differently-abled students are disproportionately affected by this factor. 4. This behavior has seriously angered and divided the SOAS community. 	
This Union Believes:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This union believes that the actions of certain individuals during protests are damaging the university as a whole. They are disruptive to others, and do not represent the form of protest action SOAS students want to be associated with. 2. This Union believes that the Student Union and the student body should take action to avoid this kind of destructive behaviour in future 	
This Union Resolves:	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To denounce the actions of extremist elements in student protests, who act violently and cause criminal damage. 2. To email all students as SOAS, condemning this behavior 3. To take action to stop this kind of behavior occurring again in the future, engaging with groups regularly to remind them what we deem acceptable. 4. To draw up a list of guidelines of unacceptable behavior during student protests, for example: Starting fires, smashing windows, assaulting individuals, setting off fire alarms, exc. 	

Title:	The SOAS Students Union declares the university a TTIP-free-zone
Proposer:	Gil Southwood 626172
Seconder:	Annie Davidson 560792

This Union Notes:

- 1.1 That the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is currently being negotiated by representatives of the EU and the US.
- 1.2 That the negotiations are being undertaken in secrecy with only minimal amount of information being shared with the public.
- 1.3 That the alleged economic benefits of the agreement are modelled on assumptions greatly challenged from the world of academia to the UN.
- 1.4 That a growing number of NGOs and public interest groups are strongly critical of the potential effects on labour standards, food safety, and the environment of standardising EU and US regulations of trade and production.
- 1.5 That the incorporation of an Investor-State Dispute Settlement (ISDS) mechanism into the agreement will allow private firms to sue government for imposing laws and regulations that might threaten their actual or potential profits.
- 1.6 That 97% of responses to a recent public consultation on the ISDS element of the agreement conducted by the EU Commission were opposed to the mechanism.
- 1.7 That negotiators have stressed that the TTIP will strengthen the position of the Europe-American economic axis vis-à-vis developing countries and that the TTIP is set to make up the blueprint for future trade and investment agreements between core capitalist and developing economies.
- 1.8 That several groups are campaigning to, as symbolic acts, have TTIP-free-zones declared across Britain and that several areas in France, among which the Paris region, have been declared TTIP-free-zones by their relevant elected bodies.
- 1.9 That TTIP is symbolic of the new hyper-capitalist, neo-liberal economic order that now governs our lives.

This Union Believes:

- 2.1 That trade has the potential to be conducive to human welfare and environmental sustainability.
- 2.2 That any negotiations with potential societal and environmental consequences as controversial as those of the TTIP should be subject to public debate and scrutiny.
- 2.3 That an implementation of the ISDS mechanism would be a barrier to public decision-making and thereby democracy.
- 2.4 That labour standards, food safety, the environment, and democracy should never be compromised for benefits as uncertain as those offered by the TTIP.

2.5 That an implementation of the TTIP will not only have negative repercussions for the welfare of EU and American citizens but also for populations of developing countries in particular who will be expected to accept future demands modelled on those outlined in the TTIP.

This Union Resolves:

3.1 The University is declared a TTIP-free-zone

3.2 The SOAS Students Union will support initiatives campaigning against the TTIP and help facilitate public debate on the issue

3.3 To publicise the university's concern about TTIP; join with other organisations which are opposed to TTIP across the UK and Europe and work with local campaigners to raise awareness about problems with TTIP.

Title:	Subsidise menstrual cups
Proposer:	Stella Vellendi 634204
Seconder:	Agnes Schim van der Loeff 626389
This Union Notes:	
<p>1.1 That roughly half of the population have periods. 1.2 That menstrual products are expensive. 1.3 That disposable menstrual products require a lot more resources and cause a lot more waste than menstrual cups over time. 1.4 That the union currently provides free disposable menstrual products.</p>	
This Union Believes:	
<p>2.1 That expensive menstrual products are an unnecessarily large and unjust financial burden. 2.2 That environmental sustainability is vital. 2.3 That reducing the amount of waste is important for the environment in terms of resource use and waste reduction. 2.4 That by incentivising the use of menstrual cups, more people would buy and use them. 2.5 That incentivising the use of menstrual cups would lead to a reduction in the use of disposable menstrual products, and save the people using them a lot of money.</p>	
This Union Resolves:	
<p>3.1 To sell menstrual cups in the union shop. 3.2 That the cups will be sold at a heavily subsidised price.</p>	

Title:	Subsidise reusable cups
Proposer:	Stella Vellendi 634204
Seconder:	Agnes Schim van der Loeff 626389
This Union Notes:	
<p>1.1 That students and staff of SOAS love hot beverages.</p> <p>1.2 That there are huge amounts of disposable cups used at SOAS every day.</p> <p>1.3 That disposable cups require a lot more resources and cause a lot more waste than reusable cups over time.</p> <p>1.4 That currently the union shop gives a 20p discount on hot beverages if people bring their reusable cups, which encourages using reusable cups.</p> <p>1.5 That the co-op already sells reusable cups.</p>	
This Union Believes:	
<p>2.1 That environmental sustainability is vital.</p> <p>2.2 That reducing the amount of waste is important for the environment in terms of resource use and waste reduction.</p> <p>2.3 That by incentivising the use of reusable cups, more people would buy and use them.</p> <p>2.4 That incentivising the use of reusable cups would lead to a reduction in the use of disposable cups.</p>	
This Union Resolves:	
<p>3.1 To provide funding for the co-op to subsidise reusable cups so that they would be sold at a discounted price.</p>	