

Singapore Management University Students' Association

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Student CCA Office, Basement 1, School of Information Systems



Meeting Minutes

17th SMU Students' Association (SMUSA) Council

Date	25-03-2021	Time	19:37 - 22:27
Chaired by	SMUSA President	Location	SOE/SOSS SR 2-5
Convened by	SMUSA Honorary General Secretary (HGS)		
Attendees	<p>SMUSA President - Lim Jia En</p> <p>SMUSA Vice-President - Valliapan Arunachalam</p> <p>SMUSA HGS - Shaurya Jain</p> <p>SMUSA HFS - Joanne Ng Yun Ting</p> <p>SMUSA Academic and Welfare Secretary - Nicolette Ang Sher Nyn</p> <p>SMUSA Communications Secretary - Nurul Azimah</p> <p>SMUSA Corporate Relations Secretary - Lei Wan Yu</p> <p>SMUSA Events Secretary - Gayathri Ghandi</p> <p>SMUSA International Students' Secretary - Rhea Singhania</p> <p>SMUSA Operations Secretary - Sylvia Aw Su Wei</p> <p>SMUSA Safety and Strategic Operations Secretary - Udbhav Dalmia</p> <p>ASoc President - Heng Wei Shin</p> <p>Bondue President - Yasirah Umar</p> <p>Oikos President - Wong Rui Heung Glen</p> <p>Society President - Christine Ganaban</p> <p>ACF President - Remus Chan</p> <p>SICS President - Jeslynn Loo</p> <p>SMUX President - Macus Lim</p> <p>SSU President - Thi Ha Thet Tin Dylan</p> <p>Ellipsis President - Toh Wei Xiang</p>		
Absentees			
Latecomer(s)	The Bar President - Tan Choon Hwa Lenvin		

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1. **The meeting started at 19:37**

Presentation by ACF President – Remus Chan

The ACF President shared the details of the recently concluded ACF Quarterly Gathering 1. His team got a chance to interact with all 22 ACF Clubs' Presidents in an informal setting.

Presentation by SICS President – Jeslynn Loo

The SICS President covered the latest developments pertaining to the SICS Camp, SMOO Challenge, and SICS Purple Outreach. She highlighted that the Purple Outings were rebranded as SICS Purple Outreach, and she also shared the confirmed dates for the SMOO Challenge – 3 to 24 September.

Presentation by SSU President – Thi Ha Thet Tin

The SSU President shared a few updates pertaining to the creation of CSP opportunities for SSU members. He also went on to address the concerns around SSU not participating in the SMUSA Student Survey, and highlighted that the CBd is planning to have their own internal survey so as to understand how their internal processes can be improved.

Presentation by ASoc President – Wei Shin

The ASoc President commenced his segment by sharing details and takeaways from the ASoc Seniors' Night as well as SMUC ILS. He went on to share that fundraising for Project Moolah had concluded in addition to the conclusion of the recruitment for ASoc Camp, ASoc Night and SMU-MCCY Charity.

Presentation bt Bondue President – Yasirah Umar

The Bondue President kicked-off her segment by sharing key observations and takeaways from the recently organised Alumni Networking Night. She also shared that ticketing was tried for the event so as to decrease attrition rate. However, doing so resulted in a significant decrease in sign-ups. She went on to share details about the upcoming Bondue welfare drive.

The Bondue President moved on to share her concern with regards to the flow of information between SMUSA and the various CBds. She recommended the various SMUSA Directors to reach out to relevant CBd Directors directly instead of channeling the information through the CBd Presidents so as to avoid misunderstanding and delay in information flow. The example of study space booking was used. The Bondue President highlighted the issue of there being discrepancy in the questions Bondue sent to be included in the SMUSA Student Survey and the Bondue questions in the actual survey sent out to the student body. She shared that the error reduced Bondue's credibility. Moving forward, the council has agreed to vet all major surveys by answering them before sending out to the entire undergraduate population.

Presentation by Ellipsis President – Wei Xiang

The Ellipsis President shared details about the recently organised talks and

academic workshops by Ellipsis. He was also happy to announce the creation of a new SIG by the name of 'Women in Tech' who plan to commence their operations by having relevant panel discussions.

Presentation by Oikos President – Glen Wong

The Oikos President started his session by sharing details about the upcoming Oikos Welfare. He also shared that some of the goods received for the welfare drive were damaged, and as such, it is important for everyone to inspect the quality of welfare drive contents prior to distribution. He went to share learnings from the recently concluded Oikos Mentor Appreciation Night.

Presentation by Sosociety President – Christine Ganaban

The Sosociety President got her segment going by sharing about the recently concluded Major Decisions talk. She went on to share more about the recently organised welfare drive by the CBd whose theme was: 'Supporting local businesses amid pandemic.' She also shared the success of the Mentorship programme meeting which had alumni from the different industries come down to talk to the students. She was also happy to share the commencement of three CSP Projects, under the newly formed community service department under Sosociety. To close off, she shared the dates of the upcoming society events.

Presentation by The Bar President – Lenvin Tan

The Bar President commenced his section by expanding on the plans for the upcoming end-sem welfare drive and also on the new initiative called 'Letters of the Law'. In addition, he also shared how the Law Graduation Week had been replaced with giving out souvenirs of The Bar. Lastly, based on the need for interaction with peers outside of the classroom highlighted in The Bar's

	<p>Telegram's polls, events were organised in collaboration with SMU Law Sports and Recreational Club.</p> <p><u>Presentation by SMUSA President and Vice-President – Lim Jia En and Valliappan Arunachalam</u></p> <p>The President kicked off her segment by sharing that MOF was interested in collaborating with SMU in raising awareness regarding fiscal issues amongst the youth. In particular, they were interested in garnering SMU students' feedback on MOF's policies pertaining to taxation, reserves, etc. She went on to add that Polytechnics, and all educational institutes at the tertiary level have been reached out to by MOF as part of this exercise.</p> <p>The President wanted to get the Council's opinions and thoughts on whether students would be interested in the initiative. The ICON President shared that international students would be interested in it, as a lot of them might not be aware of these policies due to hailing from other countries.</p> <p>Some ISABEL CBd Presidents mentioned that a lot of students not pursuing finance and economics related degrees may not be interested in this. This is so, because many of them will not be able to give any useful feedback due to lack of knowledge in the matter. They also added that students are transactional, and most of them would only be interested if they have a proper incentive – like compensation, or a possible job offer or internship. Vouchers may also be needed to attract students. Possibilities of coffee chats with MOF recruiters to network and gain opportunities could also possibly help attract students.</p> <p>A Council member acknowledged the aforementioned problem of students not wanting to participate in the initiative. As such, he suggested asking MOF for info booklets as well as infographics that can be passed around in school</p>	
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	<p>so as to raise awareness. Another Council member was concerned that this might not facilitate the filling of the knowledge gap to the extent and depth that MOF wants it to be.</p> <p>Council members suggested to involve Citi-SMU in the matter, and all the CBds agreed to share a list of relevant clubs with the SMUSA President following the meeting.</p> <p><u>Presentation by the International Students’ Secretary – Rhea Singhanian</u></p> <p>The ISS shared that ICON is making efforts to host events that would help incoming international students settle into Singapore. She shared that she would be happy to collaborate with other CBds’ or help promote other CBds’ events that could potentially help international freshmen settle into the country or university life.</p> <p>The ISS went on to share details regarding the upcoming ICON Camp as well as the ICON Welfare Drive.</p> <p><u>Presentation by the Academic and Welfare Secretary – Nicolette Ang</u></p> <p>The A&W secretary acknowledged that there were some errors made while sending out the SMUSA Student Survey, and she is actively exploring what went wrong and how it can be improved.</p> <p>She went on to share a few details pertaining to the SR booking for the Study Week:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safe-distancing and patrolling related concerns will be discussed with the relevant offices on the following day. • The opening hours of the SR are currently the ones that have been 	
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	<p>highlighted on the Facilities Booking System. She will share any further developments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Capacity for each SR is projected to be 30. The Council was concerned why classes can have 50 people in a Seminar Room and this is impermissible during Study Week. ● The initiative will be marketed under the different CBds rather than SMUSA. ● Any subsidiary club under a Cbd hoping to have an SR must approach Nicolette. <p>The A&W Secretary ended her segment by sharing a few details about the ongoing SMUSA Welfare Drive.</p> <p><u>Discussion Regarding the Summer Camps</u></p> <p>The President started the discussion by covering the recent developments on Freshmen Orientation and the Cbd summer camps. After discussions with various school offices, the President and the SMUSA Events Secretary were given two options:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● All camps including FO being conducted in an online mode ● FO possibly having a 3 hour in-person tour and the rest of the orientation being held online. Other Cbd camps would still be fully online. <p>After taking all stakeholders into consideration, including the CBds, incoming freshmen etc., the second option has been tentatively chosen by the SMUSA President. She also highlighted that pursuing this argument further can delay the various organising committees' timeline and planning, leaving very little time to put up a good show. She shared the following rationale for the CBds not having an in-person camp.</p>	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There can be a possible spread of infection across the CBd Camps as many students can attend multiple CBd camps. • It would be extremely hard and troublesome to take necessary steps should there be a suspected case in any of the CBd camps considering the scale of these events. Such has been encountered in the past when ACF has had to contact 400-500 people due to a contact tracing case. <p>The following concerns were raised by the CBd Presidents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reversal of the school offices' stance on mode of CBd camps was unrelenting. Many CBd Camps' have already invested a lot of time and effort in planning for their respective camps. • It is unfair to let Freshmen Orientation have 3 hours of physical interaction and not the CBd camps. It is also inequitable to let FO take precedence over the CBd camps. • MOE letting NTU and NUS hold physical events and not SMU reflects badly on SMU, and could possibly dent the university's image in front of incoming freshmen. • School offices do not trust student leaders to carry out these events safely, when other Universities' students are able to do so. • Many of the CBds have effective plans such that any risk will be contained due to no intermingling between small groups. Furthermore, the magnitude of the virus was very different in 2020 than it is now. There are negligible community cases and all cases are imported cases in single digits. As such, the same restrictions as last year should not apply. • It is unnecessary of school offices to give an ultimatum to the CBds now when it is possible to wait for MOE's new regulations in May. Given that MOM has recently relaxed measures, it is possible that MOE will follow suit. A JC being permitted to host a large-scale physical event is also indicative of this. As such, the decision is rather premature. 	
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- The meeting of the CCA CBds with the school offices regarding summer camps was more like a session for information dissemination rather than a discussion. The CBd Presidents involved were not given a chance to communicate their views. Any questions that they asked remained unanswered.
- Student leaders do not have a say in this matter, and the school offices are taking all the final calls. Student leadership in SMU is deteriorating given that student leaders are given no autonomy unlike NTU and NUS who are able to give better leadership opportunities to their students.
- The highest decision makers in SMU aren't getting views and thoughts directly from the students, but instead the many offices in between. This results in a high level of bureaucracy and distortion in conveying true sentiments as many in between do not truly want to represent the students.

The SMUSA President and the Events Secretary clarified that OSL has tried their best to have all CBd camps take place in a physical mode. The office has also written to MOE but is yet to receive a response. The School CBd Presidents were advised to reach out to their respective Deans as an alternative channel to propel their views to the upper management. The CBds responded by saying that the majority of their interaction and communication takes place with their school manager and not their Dean.

The 10 CBd Presidents wished to speak to SMU President, Professor Lily Kong, directly. They were also willing to be answerable to their school managers with regards to this. Their rationale for this stance was to fight for students' interests.

The SMUSA Executive Committee said that they can't reach out to Professor Lily Kong directly, and they must stick to procedures and approach OSL first

	<p>with regards to this. The CBds highlighted that reaching out to Professor Lily Kong directly without half of the SAC will reflect badly on the SMUSA Council as a whole. Furthermore, they mentioned that the problem of bureaucracy will persist should the Council approach the school offices first. A lot of hours had been spent on that already.</p> <p>The SMUSA ExCo decided to raise the matter to the Office of Student Life, whereas the school CBds decided to reach out to their respective Deans to gain their support and get an opportunity to speak to the SMU President. It was also decided that the Council will share any developments the following Friday.</p>	
2.	<u>The meeting ended at 22:27</u>	