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DEBATING SOCIETY

**Executive Meeting 5 Minutes**

Thursday March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2014 – 6:00 p.m. – 7:36 p.m., Library

**Present:** Nandini Bajaj (President), Ryan Thalari (Secretary), Jacob Rock (Treasurer),  
Lachlan McGrath (Vice-President), Anna Kosmyrina (President Emeritus), Nigel Khine,  
Dhanya Mani.

**Absent:** Stephanie Fehon, Rochelle Amys.

**Agenda**

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## What's On Your Mind? Portfolio Updates

### Socials/Marketing

Anna: (Reads Rochelle's update). Pre-Easters Social to be discussed later in the Meeting (p. 8). Marketing also to be discussed later in Meeting, relating to O-Week (p. 7).

### School's

Jacob: Currently chasing payment from schools, but it's difficult with the timing (in terms of them having sent it). Planning a meeting for Monday to discuss Intermediate School's Day.

### Treasury

Jacob: No separate updates for Treasury.

### Competitions

Jacob: No news on competitions until Mac Mini.

Nandini: Do we want to hold a Pre-Australs tournament?

Jacob/Anna: We'll think about it.

**ACTION ITEM: JACOB AND ANNA to discuss the possibility of hosting a Pre-Australs tournament, and to report back on their discussion.**

### Publications/Matter File

Jacob: We did a publication (POI) during O-Week. It went well (received a lot of articles).



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Nandini: We still need articles for the Matter File. Please send me articles if you haven't already.

**ACTION ITEM: ALL EXECUTIVE MEMBERS (WHO HAVEN'T ALREADY) to send Nandini a Matter File article on their nominated topic area before the 1<sup>st</sup> of April. Any mentors who don't will not receive a Matter File for Easters.**

### Finance

Nigel: We've contacted Bunnings about holding a BBQ, but are yet to hear back. The prospectus is being deconstructed.

Nandini: What still needs to be done?

Nigel: We need to figure out what we need to "sell". We need to talk to the other portfolios – events, publications, etc. I would also like some MailChimp data to get a better idea of how far our newsletters "reach".

**ACTION ITEM: NIGEL AND DHANYA to contact all portfolios about "products"/things that can be marketed in the Prospectus before Saturday.**

### Externals

Ryan: Most of what would be covered under Externals will be covered under the Easters Agenda Item (p. 7).

Anna: How did Easters Trials go in terms of attendance/number of triallers?



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Ryan: There were 7 novices who didn't make it into a team, and 7 adjudicators who didn't get a spot. I was thinking about asking for an additional 1 or 2 adjudicator spots given the demand – what do people think?

Nandini: I don't think we should. It will cost more because we'll have to offer more subsidies.

Anna: I'm in favour of sending a larger contingent since sending people to tournaments like Easters is one of the main things we can offer our members. If we just wanted to save money, then we wouldn't send anyone in the first place.

Lachlan: I agree that sending a large contingent is a good idea, as it can also help with engagement with the Society.

Nandini: I just don't think it's worth it unless we can be sure that the person/people who get(s) the extra spot(s) will get a lot out of going to Easters and is likely to remain active within the Society.

Anna: It's hard to tell which people will and which people won't remain active in the Society based just on Easters.

Ryan: We can't really – nor should we – determine likelihood of retention based just on a person's ability to be able to obtain a spot in our Easters contingent.

**Ryan: "I would like to propose the motion that the External Officers apply for up to 2 additional adjudicator spots for Easters 2014."**

**Anna seconds.**

**5 votes in favour, 2 against (Nigel and Nandini).**

**Motion passes.**



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## Camp

Ryan: In terms of cost, I think we should subsidise registration costs for Macquarie students so that both delegates and mentors from Macquarie pay \$130. External delegates would pay \$190, and external mentors would only pay \$170. We'd like people from other universities to attend, but our priority should be to subsidise internal attendance. What do people think?

Nigel: I'm in favour of external mentors not having to pay as much since they're ultimately helping out with event,

Nandini: Those costs sound reasonable, and are mostly up to the discretion of the Camp Officers unless they're charging a contentious amount.

Ryan: Just wanted to mention it because the Society will have to cover any losses. We'd like to announce Camp at Easter, and I think it would be good to have a clear indication of prices. Registration can be capped at those prices, with the option for us to provide further subsidies if we receive funding from the University.

Nandini: Make sure you emphasise that external mentors won't have to pay as much as external delegates.

## Internals/Training

Nandini: Internals was good – there were a lot of novices who attended. Training Days were also good. More people signed up than attended, but they still ran well.



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Anna: Many novices at the second Training Day weren't aware of Easters, or that trials were the next day, so holding them around that time was good because they helped make people aware.

### **Work It: Societal and Executive Responsibilities and Commitments**

Nandini: I want to mention this because I feel as though some Executive members aren't really pulling their weight, which means that other members have to carry the extra burden. Steph and I were at the O-Week stall every day for most of the day. I asked the Marketing team to make posters, but in the end I had to make them. I also asked for them to make an O-Week roster, but I had to make that as well. The way that O-Week was handled shows that some people aren't committing to MUDS as much as they could. I'm not saying that people are being lazy, but maybe they're overcommitting or not realising how much effort is involved in their duties, and so I would like to know what I could do to help people realise realistic expectations.

Nigel: I would like to thank Steph and Nandini for stepping up during O-Week. I was busy and therefore unable to help out much.

Dhanya: I was also busy, and so unable to.

Nandini: Back to the matter, have we set unreasonable expectations for Executive members, or are there other ways we should approach how we handle tasks?

Nigel: Maybe have incremental deadlines for tasks (e.g. in phases) as opposed to one major deadline where everything related to a project is due at once? Perhaps the



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President could regularly check in with Members when they're working on tasks which will create a reminder of the tasks. Having an ongoing presence will help keep tasks at the forefront of people's minds.

Nandini: I feel like I've already been doing that. Has anyone felt that hasn't been enough?

Lachlan: Maybe have regular portfolio updates online – email our progress of what we've done for each of our portfolios?

Dhanya: We could try online updates – post what we do at the end of each week?

Anna: That's getting slightly away from what Nandini was asking. It could also be difficult because of how much there would be to get through.

Nandini: As a final point on this matter, if I allocate you something and you feel uncomfortable, please tell me and ask for help. If you'd like to request a portfolio change, let me know personally and we'll see what we can do.

### **O(MG) Week: O-Week Recap and Future Notes**

Nandini: O-Week was fantastic! We had more signups than usual. There was a large turnout for Easter trials for debaters and adjudicators. I like the new posters that were made – they have a nice, clean design. Having cookies (and a chalk sign advertising the cookies) on the first day was good because it brought a lot of people to the stall. Even if no one signs up, we look like a busy society. We had a good location, and a clear spiel to send about the Society.

***Recommendation for future O-Week/Marketing Team to have posters and flyers ready to go before O-Week.***



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Lachlan: We underestimated the amount of people who would “get” what the Debating Society is. People wanted to know what they’re getting into, or if we just debate.

Nandini: A lot of people said they read about us on the University website where we were featured (maybe as a result of winning Student Group of the Year). We should make sure we advertise as heavily as possible online.

Jacob: How many sign-ups did we have on the pink insurance forms from the University?

Nandini: A book and a half – roughly 75. We should bring them to Internals to be filled out.

Jacob: That’s especially important because that’s probably how the University will decide numbers for student groups.

**ACTION ITEM: RYAN to bring the signed University insurance forms from O-Week to the next Internals.**

Nigel: Maybe we should create an O-Week sub-committee?

Nandini: That could be a good idea.

Nigel: Also, with the cookies, would it be cheaper to just buy them?

Nandini: No, not for how good I make them.

\*Lachlan snaps fingers\*

## **Easters MADness**

### **Pre-Easters Social**

Nandini: Rochelle said she had some ideas for this – a nice dinner in the city, a picnic in Balmoral, or a scavenger hunt in the city.





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Lachlan: It depends on what people are feeling. We could have a nice dinner, or go ice-skating where you fly on frozen water with knives...

**ACTION ITEM: SOCIALS OFFICERS (LACHLAN AND ROCHELLE) to organise a time and possible locations for the pre-Easters Social. Report to Nandini before Monday March 24<sup>th</sup>.**

Nandini: Let's aim for it to cost around \$20 per person. Keep it cool and casual.

### Fostering Inclusivity

Ryan: We need to try and create a welcoming atmosphere for both our new and returning members.

Nandini: Mentors, make sure to invite novices to MUDS Facebook events. Try to come early to Internals so you can socialise as much as possible. Make sure to try to be friends with both novices and adjudicators, and introduce the debaters and adjudicators to each other.

Ryan: Also, invite new members to go to other tournaments as well. The UWS Open is next weekend, plus there's ANU Fall coming up, and possibly a UNSW Pre-Easters Round Robin (maybe April 19<sup>th</sup>).

Nandini: Maybe we could just skip the Opening Night Social since there usually isn't a tab for food or drinks and just have our own contingent dinner?

Ryan: Rather than skipping the opening night social altogether, we should have our own dinner early and then go to the social later so the new members can meet people from other universities as well.



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***Recommendation for all Executive members and mentors at Easters to introduce the new members to people from other institutions.***

Nigel: Are we having a Scavenger Hunt?

Ryan: Nandini and Steph did a good one last year.

Nandini: I'm not doing it this year. The Marketing Officers usually do this.

Lachlan: I'd be happy to. Maybe it could be a VP thing?

Ryan: What about Externals? Also, I liked last year's system where Exec Members could add suggestions to a Google Doc of Scavenger Hunt challenges.

**ACTION ITEM: LACHLAN, RYAN AND DHANYA to discuss the Easters Scavenger Hunt.**

### T-Shirts

Nandini: Rochelle sent me a design, just a visual representation of what we discussed at the last Meeting. The colour of the t-shirt will be blue/navy, black or white.

Anna: What if the Marketing Team creates a set of designs, and we vote on one?

Ryan: We agreed for that to happen at the end of the last Meeting, and now we're supposed to vote on whether or not we approve of this design.

Anna: I'd prefer we don't vote until we see the design in the colours we intend to have. I also wouldn't mind seeing a couple of other design ideas.

**ACTION ITEM: MARKETING TEAM (STEPH, LACHLAN AND ROCHELLE) to create mock-up designs for the new MUDS t-shirt using the MUDS colours before Sunday March 23<sup>rd</sup>.**



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## Post-Easters Tournament and Social

Nandini: I think that there are too many events for a post-Easters tournament, but we should have a social. The Socials Officers can look into organising one.

**ACTION ITEM: SOCIALS OFFICERS (LACHLAN AND ROCHELLE) to look into possible dates for a post-Easters social.**

## International Love: Australs, Trial Policies, Trials

### Trial Policies

Nandini: I don't have any major issues with the current policy.

Ryan: We should make sure to carefully look at the policy, just to make sure we're clear about what the policy says about specific things such as trialling by CV.

**ACTION ITEM: RYAN to circulate the 2013 Australs Trial Policy to all Executive Members, with a note for Members to consider multiple debates and trialling by CV.**

**Australs Trial Policy to be discussed at the next Executive Meeting (before Easters).**

***Agenda Item for Next Executive Meeting: Discussion about Australs Trial Policy.***

### Trial Dates and Selectors

Nandini: Trials should be fairly soon after Easters so teams have a lot of time to prepare together. What about May 11<sup>th</sup>?

Dhanya: That's Mother's Day. It would be better to avoid it since last year Australs trials clashed with it, and Worlds Trials clashed with Father's Day.



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Nandini: May 4<sup>th</sup>?

Anna: That may be too early.

Nandini: The 17<sup>th</sup> or 18<sup>th</sup>?

**Nandini: "I would like to propose the motion that Australs trials for debaters be held on Saturday May 17<sup>th</sup>, pending approval of a Trial Policy."**

**Anna seconds.**

**Motion passes unanimously.**

**ACTION ITEM: RYAN AND DHANYA to find an External Selector for Australs Trials.**

**Anna: "I would like to propose the motion that Australs trials for adjudicators be held on Monday May 19<sup>th</sup> during Internals, pending approval of a Trial Policy."**

**Ryan seconds.**

**Motion passes unanimously.**

Nigel: One concern with Australs is that the dates may clash with exams for some people.

Nandini: Otago has an official invitation letter which I can send if anyone attending Australs needs to apply for special consideration as a result of attending.

### **eXec-Men – Days of Future Past: First-Year Representative**

Nandini: Anna will be going on exchange during Semester 2, which means that the Executive will be short on members. Having a first-year representative allows one member to be involved, and provides an incentive to be involved.

Lachlan: The first-year position is a good way to draw first-years in to the Society. It helps to avoid the perception of the Executive as a clique of older members, and provides



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training so that when current Executive Members graduate, there will still be Members with experience remaining. I also think they should be allocated a specific portfolio, which will help with institutional memory and training for a specific portfolio.

Jacob: We could give them a portfolio that will be left vacant

Anna: Some of them are big portfolios (e.g. School's, Competitions). It'll ultimately be up to the prerogative of Big 3 (President, Secretary and Treasurer).

Ryan: In lieu of Anna going exchange I'm more open to the idea of a first-year representative. However, my initial concerns with the position is that it would make the rest of the Executive seem unapproachable to first-years/new members if we were to designate a specific person for first-years to approach if they had any issues they wanted to raise with the Executive. Thus, I agree they should be allocated a specific portfolio rather than be a general first-year representative. However, there could also be potential for disenfranchisement between new members if they run and aren't elected.

Dhanya: There's always potential for disenfranchisement if people don't get elected at AGMs. This isn't that different.

Anna: Did we want to limit eligibility for the position just to first-year members?

Nigel: How would we define that?

Dhanya: We could have the position open for members who haven't been to a major tournament before, or for whom Monash Easters 2014 is their first major tournament.



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Nandini: Can I get a straw poll of who's in favour of limiting eligibility for the additional Executive position to members who haven't been to a major tournament before, or for whom Monash Easters 2014 is their first major tournament?

*Nandini, Dhanya and Lachlan in favour.*

*Anna, Ryan and Nigel opposed.*

*Jacob in abstention.*

Anna: We should also look at what the Constitution says about electing new members.

Lachlan, what were the circumstances under which you were elected to the Executive in your first year?

Lachlan: There was a vacant spot on the Executive after Lachlan Umbers transferred to ANU. I was elected to fill that Executive spot. I technically wasn't elected to be a first-year representative.

Anna: The Constitution specifies a number of people that can be on the Executive.

**ACTION ITEM: NANDINI to draft a constitutional amendment for the relevant provisions in the Constitution pertaining to the number of Members that the Executive will consist of.**

***Nandini: "I would like to propose the motion that we hold an EGM (Extraordinary General Meeting) on Monday May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2014 at 6 p.m. in a Level 3 Campus Hub (C10A) Room at Macquarie University, North Ryde, to amend the Constitution and to elect a new Executive Member."***

*Anna seconds.*

***Motion passes unanimously.***



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**ACTION ITEM: NANDINI to draft a constitutional amendment before Friday March 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014 to describe the nature of the proposed Executive position which will be discussed at the May 5 EGM.**

### **Where the Party At? Tentative Date for Next Exec Meeting**

Nandini: Our next Meeting should be before Easters, maybe during the second week of April/Week 6. Members can provide their availabilities for a Meeting via Doodle Poll.

***Date for next Executive Meeting to be determined by Doodle Poll, circa Week 6.***

**Meeting Concluded**