Macquarie University Debating Society

*Executive Meeting 4 Minutes*

24 April 2013, 7pm – Nicola’s House

Present: Anna Kosmynina (President), Nicola Amys (Secretary), Mark Slaven (Treasurer), Ryan Thalari, Lachlan McGrath, Nigel Khine, Nandini Bajaj

Absent: Steph Fehon, Tim Osborn

Agenda

1. Ben’s resignation
2. Mid-year review/portfolio reports
3. Re-Imbursements
4. Hack Debates
5. Easters wrap-up
6. Mac Tournament
7. Monday Week 8 Internals
8. Schools Training Day
9. Australs- trial date, selector, subsidy, subsidy policy, selection policy

Ben’s Resignation

“Dear Anna,

I hereby tender my resignation as President Emeritus of the Macquarie University Debating Society Executive Committee. As I will be living overseas for the next year as of July 2013, I am no longer eligible to serve as an executive member of the Macquarie University Debating Society. I wish that this reason be explicitly conveyed to the rest of the executive committee.

I request that my profile, including all photographs of myself and online presence be immediately removed from all Macquarie University Debating Society internet sites (including, but not limited to '[www.muds.org.au](http://www.muds.org.au/%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)').

Best,

Benjamin”

Portfolio Update

Anna: valuable to reflect on portfolios that you took on at the start of the year, the goals we discussed and share with the group how you think you are going. We often get caught up with day to day stuff without working on our portfolios yet

Nandini: Equity- no serious issues. Marketing- did an ok job in terms of marketing Easters. Going to have a chat to Ryan and Mark about marketing camp. In terms of internal marketing, let me know if you have any ideas. Schools- waiting on confirmation of rooms. Right now looking at 25/26th of July. Also depends on Anna’s flights. Also signed up a few extra schools.

Mark: are we having a training day?

Nandini: will discuss later

Anna: any questions for these portfolios?

Ryan: how many schools do we want?

Mark: 50 teams or 56

Nandini: want more than senior schools day.

Anna: anyone else want to volunteer?

Mark: Treasurer- consistently frustrated by the uni and had to put through the Australs payment today through my own account. Only one school missing for schools’ day payment. Caught up most Easters payments. Very on top of everything. May need to share the treasury for accountability because I don’t engage with the uni enough.

Anna: have we received an updated version of Sarah’s report from last year?

Mark: no. have an overall page and a leftovers page that include elements of Sarah’s document that were unclear and unfinished. $5,500 in university account and $1,000 in my bank account which I owe, $1,500 in checks and cash. Also owed another $1,500 for Easters. There are just vague figures

MARK ACTION ITEM: Mid-year treasury report

Ryan: this is the second time that you have had to personally pay for a tournament.

Mark: will pursue this now that I am on the student advisory board. This time I realised I couldn’t digitally put through an online transaction, apparently they need to cite it. I was not told this until days later.

Anna: the only options we have at the moment are to pay for stuff ourselves and get reimbursed or keep more on top of payments so that we submit them months before- that is hard. We don’t have that cash flow.

Anything to add for equity?

Mark: Easters was so much easier than last year. Equity was only advice and not conflicts. Publications- done the one POI, went well. Too busy to do another one at the moment. Will aim for macfest and maybe term three. Finance- will only work if we make a personal relationship with organisations and use prospectus as a back up. Would like to do this in july/august when I have time. Will update the prospectus for that. Also organising a sponsorship discussion with speak out education

Ryan: do we want to consider having publications as a dual thing?

Nicola: yeah, that just depends on who is on the exec next year

Nigel: finance- we have contacts being on MULS, so would like to use some of those. Should try and get into the Brief.

Anna: anything else to add?

Nigel: GLP- left it a bit late to get people to sign up to GLP. Will apply for points on behalf of everything.

Mark: when will you find out if it has been successful?

Nigel: not sure, will give them a call. Comps- I haven’t done much with comps. Debating champs at the beginning of the year went alright. Considering something before Australs, happy to assist.

Anna: will talk about that later in the meeting.

Nigel: was also hoping to cater an event that makes the GLP happy. They want evidence and international things

Anna: good to integrate the two when we can

Ryan: Haven’t used twitter as much as I would have liked to. Will look into updating the banner on the website. Updated tournaments on the fb page. Camp: Anna made presentation at easters. We have received interest from Adelaide.

Mark: have we made the down payment?

Anna: made a deposit. Need to pay full price in two weeks. Have booked things and started thinking about in kind sponsorship. We are behind but are planning to have rego open in May. Raw cost around $150 pp. Booked for 40 people. Want to subsidise places for Mac students.

Nicola: if you could make an fb event that would be good.

Ryan: externals- first years enjoyed Easters. Didn’t perform as well as last year but significantly better than Adelaide. Current system better than past system. Two teams confirmed and one adj for australs. Will not know final teams until deposits close on april 26th.

Mark: it think we will find out in the next two weeks. I think we are number 20 on the list so have a likely chance of receiving another team.

When does world’s open rego for teams?

Ryan: will need to look into it

Nandini: pretty sure it is May 20

RYAN ACTION ITEM: Look up Worlds rego. Make camp fb event.

Nicola: secretary- have changed newsletter format, been taking minutes and updating website.

Mark: what have we done with the newsletter? Problems with mailchimp

Anna: mailchimp good cause it looks nice and gives us stats. Not going to exceed quota but it comes from weird server so likely to put it in spam folder. Balance of nice emails and making sure it reaches everyone.

Nicola: I can look into this later. Social events have been good, Monday nights at Max Brenner and pre/post easters socials.

Mark: can encourage MUDS to go to law cruise. Half of us will be there anyway.

Anna: President- I have my fingers in a lot of jars. Not time or attention to devote in everything but practical outcomes are a result of other portfolios.

Re-Imbursements

Anna: I am owed $100 for paying for Fenya and money for the website. Will give receipts to mark.

*Nandini: I propose that Anna is reimbursed*

*Ryan seconds.*

*All in favour.*

*Anna: I propose we reimburse Jenny for all the money we owe her*

*Mark seconds*

*All in favour*

Mark: Tim Osborn not a financial member, so no longer an exec.

Nicola: we should contact him.

MARK ACTION ITEM: Chase up Tim’s financial membership.

Hack Debates

Anna: not on Monday and pitched at people who would normally be expected to run a team

ANNA ACTION ITEM: request Steph to organise this

Easters Wrap Up

Anna: we put out a poll to all of the mentors. All 1-5 responses about preparation, team dynamic, experience, contributions. Overall the responses were fairly positive (4- I agree). The ones that didn’t do well- some people felt ill-prepared. Would have been remedied if we had run the training day we should have. Some teams ended up with an imbalance of novice abilities, so some mentors had to give more attention to some novices at the expense of others. Some felt that even though easters is about development, the nature of the competition ended up being about how well you did. Don’t necessarily need the discussion today. Relatively successful but some identifiable flaws.

Mark: what is wrong with assessing your team based on wins?

Anna: we go to improve, not necessarily to win. Aim to give novices best experiences.

Ryan: nature of debating is to assess on wins.

Nicola: more about measuring development and improvement but sometimes this is unrecognised if team does not do well.

Mark: Steph would like me to mention that team selections were done well but changes were not done in an open manner. Caused problems and others were unhappy with changes. Steph was not consulted and found out change from novice, not selector. Experienced person should be consulted before teams are changed. Selectors should have conversation. I know Dan Dummer disagrees as he thinks it gives opportunity to talk selectors out of things but I think it is fair.

Anna: I’d like to address that. We got feedback that mentors didn’t get enough time to practise. Have to trade off teaching novices how to debate and how much time to practise in teams. When we made the switches, we did this under unideal circumstances and we had to make the next best fit.

Mark: no one is disputing that.

Anna: it is bad to have teams switch, but you don’t mitigate it by moving less teams

Mark: you need to consult the experienced person before you changed

Anna: I disagree, probably don’t need to have this discussion now. Timing issue in relation to not informing experienced person.

Mark: steph found out in the prep room that her team had changed, this was unexpected.

Nicola: she should have been notified before the novice

Mark: should also be done in a personal consultative way.

Anna: we had to make that change during that seminar so couldn’t have taken any more time. We should definitely respect the position of the mentor though.

Mark: didn’t consult so didn’t know of change. Steph had specifically prepped Olivia in a certain role and then when that was changed that changed the team dynamic. Consulting with steph would have provided more information. Most information possible equals better decision. Ie inform that you are planning on changing team.

Anna: I understand but don’t know if that would have been entirely possible. Can take that into consideration for next year.

Mark: can I suggest that for next year’s exec this exec puts forward a list of consideration

Anna: handover is for this!

Mark: action items for next exec of things to consider. Running document as we go through exec meetings.

Anna: it should be like discussions to refer to. Note down meeting date and item on the agenda

Mark: think about policy of making recommendations for next meeting.

ALL ACTION ITEM: think about policy suggestions for next exec. Bring to future meeting

Mark: would like to commend luke and anna for doing an excellent job

Anna: feedback forms at easters would have been good. Mark is disagreeing

Lachlan: I think feedback forms would be a good idea. Easters for the first time, important to get feedback to see how people experienced it. Different perspective. during the actual period is bad though, doesn’t give people time to reflect.

ANNA ACTION ITEM: feedback forms from Easters for novices

Mark: I would like to commend lachlan for his first year rep-ness

Mac Tournament

Mark: we’re thinking of running a real mini for the first time. Were thinking end of week 12, first weekend in june. Tossing up Friday night but definitely full Saturday and Sunday spread with billeting, socials and advertising to other unis. Want to advertise before 23rd of may. Chose date as it is not right before exam period and have nothing until adam- two month gap without a mini. Literally no other time that we can hold it without stepping on another society’s toes.

Anna: what would you like of the committee?

Mark: should be co-convened. I am happy to help but give fair warning that I have lots of assignments around that time.

Nandini: I can help co-convene.

Mark: I would like to convene and propose that anna is CA or DCA. Nigel is comps so could also co-convene.

Nigel: yep, sounds good.

Anna: should approve convenors or small subset of people to start working on tournament.

ACTION ITEM FOR MARKA ND NIGEL: plan tournament and consult exec for dates and portfolio allocation

Internals for first Monday

Ryan: should go ahead as planned

Schools Training Day

Anna: dependent on how many people would be here to run it. Many of us won’t be here.

Nandini: three experienced people wont be there, not sure who else could be here. May not be able to hold a training day.

Anna: agree that it isn’t plausible at this stage. Maybe do it as a three quarter year things.

Australs

Trial Date

Anna: need to discuss date, selector, subsidy

Mark: I suggest May 12.

Ryan: maybe the weekend after so we know how many teams we are filling

Mark: no guarantee that the teams will be decided and we also have to have adj trials. Then only 2 internals to practise

Ryan: we should know how many teams we are able to send

Anna: I would err on side of the 12th. People often pull out, often difficult to get people to come. Better to get people to commit earlier. Not particularly swayed either way.

*Anna: I propose we hold Australs trials on Sunday May 12*

*Mark seconds*

*6 in favour Ryan opposes*

*Motion passes*

Selector

*Anna: I also propose that we have an external selector and pay them $100*

*Nicola seconds*

*All in favour*

RYAN ACTION ITEM: to get selector and organise trials

Subsidies

Mark: want us to pay in Malaysian ringets which is a restricted currency. Exchange rates are very high and we can’t give them ringets- need to transfer money on the assumption that it will be converted at a certain rate. No idea how much it will be. Can’t pay by credit card.

Impact of this is that it is going to be about $575 to $600 per person because of the high exchange rate and high bank fees.

Last year was $520 and we subsidised $260

Anna: usually take into account travel costs too

Mark: NZ was $400, Malaysia is $1000 and $1200

Nadnini: $600 on scoot

Anna: we are looking at $1500 instead of $1000 last year to attend. Consider that Womens is in Sydney and India is closer than Berlin.

Mark: best way to consider subsidy is how much we will charge people

Ryan: should we consider teams

Anna: ideologically, no

Nicola: what about $300

Mark: it will cost us $2100 with 2 teams 1 adj if we pay $300. 3 teams, 2 adj = $3300, 4 teams 3 adj = 4500

2 teams 1 adj at $350 = $1750, 3 teams 2 adj = $2750 or 4 teams 3 adj = $3750

Mark: last year we spent $4000 on Australs

*Anna: I propose that we subsidise Australs so that each member pays $300 pp*

*Nicola seconds*

*All in favour*

*Passes unanimously*

Subsidy policy

Anna: selection and subsidy policy for Australs and usually womens/worlds needs to be discussed. Generally agree with worlds subsidy policies but ambiguities exist. Everyone gets same subsidy for australs and womens. For worlds there are different goals to achieve

Mark: should extend Sydney regionals criteria to UNSW. I like this policy; I think it has done well.

*Mark: I propose that we maintain the subsidy policy but change Sydney to other societies*

*Ryan seconds*

*All in favour*

*Motion passes*

Australs selection policy

Anna: current policy- you get ranked to establish pool of debaters. First rank contacted and chooses two teammates. Next rank picks their teammates. Remaining three clumped into team together by virtue of not being chosen, no other avenue of action.

Mark: means that individuals who were ranked 4th, 5th and 6th can make up bottom team

Anna: also, 1st ranked person may be with lowest if everyone else vetos them

Mark: two policies I would like to put forward:

Steph’s problems, it is too personal. Disproportionate power to certain ranks for no apparent reason. Teams formed beforehand. Quality of trial does not matter and is not meritocratic system. Wants to go back to old policy of meritocratic system- trial, get out in teams, get stuck there. Wants to introduce a veto- can ensure that you don’t want to be with one person.

Nicola: that is principally inconsistent, very personal

Mark: you will never find out that you were vetoed nor the ranks. Therefore impersonal. This is the system we moved away from- didn’t make most cohesive teams. Trials not as meritocratic as we like to think they would be.

Lachlan: concept of singular veto- just removes one person in an otherwise relatively large pool

Mark: who you work better with adds a lot of subjectivity

Lachlan: problem with current policy is too political and personal. An idea would be for each person to put in list of five names that you think you would work well with. Teams put together in ranks and then add in people you want to work with. Selector to take into account preferences if you are close in skill.

Ryan: 1. I like team dynamics, 2. Don’t like steph’s model because team is dependent on performance on one debate. One debate not reflective of a person’s actual ability. Current system = better understanding of each other’s abilities. 3. Not opposed to current system plus veto.

Nicola: veto already implicit in current system

Anna: being aware of veto doesn’t alleviate harms

Mark: I don’t like trials. Always going to be flawed. Need to look at greatest flaws and mitigate them.

My five big changes to current policy.

1. Everyone entitled to debate twice. Other unis pay $100 and have 80 people trial in front of them. Justified to have more debates. Can mitigate screwing up ranks. Judged on average of two debates.
2. Time period of 24 hours to respond to contact and have consented
3. Agreements about team you are going to be on is banned. About honesty and atmosphere about how bad idea is
4. List of ranks circulated
5. Incorporate vetoes rather than refusals. Maximum of two vetoes. Vetoes must be submitted before trials to externals officer. Vetoes do not apply to bottom team

Mechanism to enforce not choosing teams beforehand. Not a personal face to face rejection. End result the same as a person getting entirely refused and entirely vetoed. Include what positions you are comfortable in speaking on the registration document.

Nicola: can both debates be balanced?

Anna: best to organise teams randomly

Mark: except couples should not be put together

Nicola: what about if they get the same person on their team for the second debate?

Anna: I don’t know

Final thing- what happens if people pull out after teams are formed?

Nicola: when do we need to decide?

Anna: two weeks out, by Sunday. Morally, we should also attach the policy.

Lachlan: who is in favour of the spirit of the policy?

*Most people*

Lachlan: anyone have any issues, like myself?

Anna: need to consider- what happens when people pull out? Do we reshuffle teams or move up? What happens with adj stuff?

MARK ACRION ITEM: To type up and send around new selection policy for review.