

## **Motion to Disaffiliate from the National Postgraduate Committee (NPC)**

### **This Union Notes:**

- 1) The Postgraduate Association (PGA) and its representational function for UCL's 8,431 postgraduates.
- 2) On the 4<sup>th</sup> of November 2008, the PGA held a General Meeting.
- 3) At this General Meeting, the floor voted to disaffiliate from the NPC.
- 4) The attached appendix.
- 5) UCLU has already paid its membership fee to the NPC and as such is a member for the entire current academic year.

### **This Union Believes:**

- 1) The PGA's General Meeting is a representational voice for UCL's postgraduates, those who are supposed to benefit from the affiliation.
- 2) The NPC is a shambles of an organisation and has done absolutely nothing to help UCLU this year.
- 3) UCLU has not received any contact from the NPC this year, apart from when they contacted us twice, asking for their £1000+ affiliation fee.
- 4) Both UCLU and the PGA do not benefit at all from the affiliation to the NPC and we could use the money for a much greater benefit.
- 5) The NPC would do much better to merge with the NUS and form a 'Postgraduate Campaign.'

### **This Union Resolves:**

- 1) To disaffiliate from the NPC from the next academic year.
- 2) To write to the NPC and the NUS explaining our decision and calling for a merger.

ADDRESS (ADDM)

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SCHEMATA / ~~Handwritten scribbles~~

## Appendix 1

### **Motion: THE NPC (NATIONAL POSTGRADUATE COMMITTEE): SHOULD THE PGA REMAIN AFFILIATED?**

**Proposer: Shawn Sherwin Williams, Dept Human Comm. Sci. SN# 723889**

#### **The PGA notes:**

1) That the NPC was established to represent Postgraduate students at the national level. Its vision was similar to that of the NUS, and was initially organised to become the “NUS” for graduate students.

2) UCLs affiliation for 2008/2009 is over £1000. This gives students access to restricted affiliate information on their website and resources to support officers and students on provision, codes of practice welfare support and advice.

3) The NPC is also able to offer support to officers and students in appeals and information through the General Secretary.

4) The NPC works with the Quality Assurance Agency on revising their codes of practice and ensure there is a student input in decisions affecting postgraduates on the national level. Involvement through the NPC allows opinions to be directed nationally and local issues UCL has to be raised.

5) Former General Secretary of the NPC, Duncan Conner in his goodbye letter stated that “the NPC is facing a serious crisis, one of the worst sub management sub committees in the history of the NPC and one that does not in anyway represent the interests of postgraduates”.

6) The below report from the PGA President:

#### NPC Committee Crisis

Five of the incoming committee members are from the same university and were student union officers together, three of those shared the same, two have been never been postgraduates, and three are student union employees and are not current postgraduates. The incoming General Secretary (who was ROned the first time he stood for election) has never been a postgraduate and is postponing starting a course to take the position up after being a student union sabbatical for an extended period of time. This was realised by many delegates at the recent AGM.

In his final words, the outgoing secretary stated “I have tried to make the NPC work, but I can only admit failure, we are too small, we are unrepresentative and we do not do the job advertised. We are basically one person, the General Secretary, who relies on the charity of so many other people and organisations and this is just not enough to do all the work required. Indeed, our fortunes fluctuate depending on whether we have a good, or a bad person in the position. Therefore, we should either change massively or we should finally admit our failings and work to create much better postgraduate representation under the umbrella of the NUS. Until that happens, I wholehearted agree with any student union that wants to question whether it should

pay for affiliation to the NPC, because at present (and for quite a while to be honest) I cannot think of a single reason why a student union should actually spend their money affiliating to us". (Duncan Conner)

**The PGA believes:**

1) That the NPC has never lobbied on behalf of UCL postgraduates on any important issues that affect graduate students.

2) We believe that the crisis within the NPC is enough reason to disassociate ourselves from the NPC.

3) College only provides £ 3000 as contribution to the PGA and contributing more than £1000 to a committee that does nothing for postgraduates at UCL is definitely a waste of a valuable resource which could be used to fund more activities for our members.

**The PGA resolves:**

1) That we disaffiliate from the NPC.

*This motion was passed at the PGA's Welcome General Meeting on 4/12/08*