

University of New South Wales College of Fine Arts Students' Association and the effects of Voluntary Student Union Legislation

Foreword

The purpose of this study is to provide a considered appraisal of the effects that Voluntary Student Unionism will have on the Students' Association at UNSW College of Fine Arts.

The aim is to avoid the well-worn arguments and political sloganeering in the hope that the cold facts will suffice to impress the seriousness of the situation on the reader.

With a target audience of Coalition Senators, NSW state government and senior UNSW and COFA staff and academics I am attempting to combine two objectives.

Firstly, in seeking to educate people as to the catastrophic effect that VSU will have on our organisation, and COFA as a whole, I hope that the Senate will vote against the legislation. Failing this, I am hoping to appeal to people who are in a position to help COFA Students' Association should the legislation reach the statute book.

I make no apologies for the parochiality of concentrating solely on the potential plight of COFA Students' Association. Larger and better-resourced organisations are campaigning over VSU at a national level; I am simply attempting to save something I know to be worth saving.

I have endeavoured to keep this report as succinct as possible. Please take the time to read this booklet. If you do I am sure you will agree that COFA SA is worth keeping.

Kudos Gallery



The Service

The Kudos Gallery is provided as a service to members. The philosophy behind the gallery is the provision of an off-campus space where students can learn how to exhibit their work. The Kudos Gallery represents the first step for student artists towards exhibiting in the 'real world.' As exhibitors they learn how to present their work, design invitations, host an opening, price their work for sale, devise press releases and the many other skills required in running their own exhibition.

A wide variety of exhibitions are held throughout the year. Exhibitions last one or two weeks and consist of solo and group shows as well as the Students' Association's annual Emerging Artists competition. Last year's competition attracted two hundred entries from COFA students and was judged by very respected figures from the arts world – Gallery 4A Director Binghui Huangfu, MCA curator Russell Storer and 2001 Helen Lempriere Award winner and respected artist, Monika Tichacek.

The SA employs a part-time gallery supervisor who helps the artists through the exhibiting process. The supervisor also ensures that health

and safety legislation is complied with and tends to the general upkeep of the gallery.

In the past few years the Students' Association has invested heavily in upgrading the gallery and the service provided. An important improvement was the purchase of four mobile partitions at the beginning of 2004.

The gallery is very well regarded in the wider arts community and received twelve mentions in the Sydney Morning Herald during 2004.

The gallery also provides students with the opportunity to develop gallery management skills. Each year seven students are elected to the Kudos Management Committee. This committee meets regularly and its duties include: assessing exhibition proposals, devising strategies to improve the gallery and the services provided, actively promoting the gallery.

Also, we offer students the opportunity to work as interns in the gallery. This affords students the chance to gain in-depth, hands on experience of running a gallery. This position is particularly valuable to Arts Administration students.



Post-VSU

The Students' Association would no longer be able to run the Kudos Gallery. The current lease expires in July 2006 and the SA would need to meet this responsibility as part of the winding-up process. I would envisage this service ceasing before the start of the 2006 academic year.



Effect on COFA

COFA would lose its only off-campus exhibition space and its only student run gallery. Kudos Gallery hosts around thirty exhibitions a year that involve hundreds of COFA students. Amongst the many student shows that are held annually a number are one-week shows by MFA students who exhibit primarily for the purpose of having their work assessed. The Kudos Gallery is rapidly developing a high profile amongst the Sydney arts community and giving COFA students excellent exposure outside the college.



The Students' Association Committee

COFA Students' Association is run by its members for its members. Annual elections are held and a committee of eleven students is elected by their peers to govern the SA. These positions are purely voluntary, attracting no remuneration.

This committee meets regularly and decides on the day-to-day running of the SA as well as on longer-term objectives.

The committee members are obviously inexperienced in running an organisation of this size and are reliant on the advice and structure provided by the permanent staff. This arrangement is comparable with the elected representative and civil servant relationship that is the norm throughout the democratic world.

At COFA SA staff interference in the democratic process is kept to a minimum. Unlike many of its larger contemporaries meetings of the SA Committee are not 'babysat' by members of staff. Through this system of mutual respect and trust the SA functions efficiently and responsively. As a small organisation the SA is able to act quickly to meet the ever changing needs of its members. With few levels of government and a low-bureaucracy administration the delay between decision making and implementation is mercifully short.

As well as providing an efficient form of government the committee system also provides invaluable experience to its student members. Elected representatives learn how to present their ideas, work with colleagues and consider the greater good as well as to master the intricacies of committee work. Through their work on the SA Committee its member learn skills that will prove invaluable in later life.

Post -VSU

The proposed VSU legislation does not threaten the existence of the SA Committee directly. However, its implementation will destroy its relevance and its ability to function. As mentioned above the running of the SA is comprised of a fine balance between the ideas and energies of the elected representatives and the experience and skills of the permanent staff. Without the staff the committee members would not have the abilities to successfully implement their policies and strategies. Also, without compulsory fees they would be presiding over nothing, with no finances they would be powerless. An SA Committee lacking in finances and staff support would simply whither away. No students would be motivated to stand for election to an eviscerated post-VSU organisation, and no students would be inclined to vote in any such elections for a pointless committee.

In a very short time a self-perpetuating cycle of declining income and lessening services would lead to the disappearance of the COFA Students' Association.

Effect on COFA

The loss of the SA Committee and the accompanying loss of services would leave a gaping void at COFA. Students would no longer have their stake in the College. With the demise of their own organisation students would lose a valuable and integral part of their university experience. Campus life would resemble that of a school with students relegated to little more than school children. Without the ability to organise and represent themselves students will become adults with no more rights than a fourteen year old. Students would lose any effective input into, and control over, their destinies and the campus would become moribund, with students merely popping in for lectures.

Representation

The Service

In theory students at COFA have a variety of forums within the College and the University through which they can represent the views and concerns of their peers. They have seats on important committees such as Coursework Review, Faculty Board, Student Affairs, Student Facilities and Planning and various School committees.

In practice it is extremely difficult for students to successfully avail themselves of these representative opportunities. Any student entering the University committee environment does so as an amateur and quickly realises that they are thrown in amongst professionals. Whilst University academics and staff are discussing matters that they are well versed in as part of their jobs, the student representative is entering the arena armed only with scant knowledge and good intentions. The student representatives are also at a great disadvantage because they are there in a purely voluntary capacity. University meetings are time-consuming and often clash with lectures meaning that attendance for student representatives can involve missing valuable lectures. So, whilst University staff and academics attend meetings as part of their normal working life, student representatives attend unpaid and often at the cost of missing lectures.

In order to try and redress the balance for students involved in University committee work COFA Students' Association offers practical support. A member of staff is responsible for coordinating and organising students involved with University Committees. This service involves reading agendas and briefing student representatives on their content, ensuring that

representatives actually attend meetings and helping the representative write a report of the meeting for circulation to all interested parties. The staff member also maintains a library of minutes, agendas and reports for future reference.

Post -VSU

As can be construed from the above, the student representatives on College and University committees are already at a considerable disadvantage. Under VSU the support they currently receive from the Students' Association will be lost. Without this support student representation on University committees would cease. Students would be largely unaware of these committees and of their importance and functions. In the unlikely event that a student would actively seek to attend these committees, their hopes of understanding the proceedings and making a meaningful contribution would be slight.

VSU would mean an end to any real student representation within COFA and the University.

Effect on COFA

It is hard to believe that anyone would find the prospect of an end to student representation on campus an acceptable proposition.

For students at COFA to lose any real means of being able to make a useful contribution to the College and their own education is, quite simply, a shameful prospect.

Campus Art Store

The Service

The Campus Art Store is the imaginatively named, Students' Association run on-campus shop providing arts materials and supplies to students.

The philosophy behind the Campus Art Store is simple; to provide the arts materials that our members, COFA students, require at the lowest possible price. The store is run as a non-profit making concern with the Students' Association of the view that it should not seek to benefit financially from its members. COFA SA is of the opinion that, having received an annual fee from members, it would then be morally wrong to profit from a service provision to those very same members.

Although the Campus Art Store is open to the public its trade derives overwhelmingly from COFA students. To ensure that it is members that benefit from the non-profit making philosophy all COFA students are given a 15% discount on marked prices.

The store stocks a wide range of materials that is tailored to meet the requirements of COFA students. The store manager works closely with COFA's academic staff to ascertain which particular items students will require in the coming months.

As a further benefit to members the Campus Art Store has a policy of providing casual employment to COFA students. By combining these casual staff with the Store's experienced and knowledgeable permanent staff a high level of customer service is maintained whilst providing greatly needed income for students.

Post -VSU

It is possible that the Campus Art Store could continue to function post-VSU. The Campus Art Store operates on a break-even basis and, therefore, exists without any resort to a subsidy from student fees.

However, this post-VSU scenario would also entail the loss of the current administrative support that the Store receives. Currently all payroll, HR and accounting functions are performed by the Students' Association's administrative staff. Also lost would be all marketing and publicity support which are again provided by SA staff.

The greatest danger of this 'Doomsday Scenario' is that if the Campus Art Store were to be the sole surviving service of the SA it would be forced to radically change its operating philosophy. Instead of being run as a non-profit making concern it would need to try and make money in order to generate income to fund whatever limited services that the SA would try to provide.

This would be extremely difficult for the Campus Art Store. With a client base of just two thousand students and long slow periods during the holidays making even a token profit would require draconian changes. These changes would include abandoning the non-profit making service philosophy and charging students the 'going-rate.' The current 15% discount would obviously have to go. The Store would need to concentrate on the fastest moving lines and cease to stock less popular specialist items.

Effect on COFA

Under VSU COFA would lose the Campus Art Store in its current guise. Should it continue to operate, a drastic increase in prices would be inevitable. Also, it would be highly likely that it would be necessary to close during holiday periods. The new 'profit-making' Store would not sustain opening during quieter periods. Thus the current year round service that is provided to cater for COFA staff, Summer Schools and others would be lost.

This change in operating would, of course, mean the Campus Art Store losing its long-serving and dedicated permanent staff who would obviously seek alternative work in the face of the necessary term-time only employment offered by the SA.

Welfare and Advice

The Service

COFA Students' Association is a small organisation and has neither the resources nor the demand to run a dedicated advice and welfare department. However, the SA does receive considerable demand for help from students in many areas covered by this specialised field.

To meet this demand the SA operates a referral service. A member of SA staff is available to talk to students about their problems and to guide them to the appropriate department or person within COFA or the University. Many students simply require an informal and friendly person to come to, and a little guidance towards finding a solution to their problem.

A large percentage of these enquiries are related to academic matters. Many students are loathe to even approach authority figures within COFA for fear of seeming difficult and of suffering future difficulties. In more extreme cases students come to us after having already raised their concerns with the relevant person within the College but feel that their concerns have not been properly resolved. This can often be very distressing for a student and they see the Students' Association as a friendly and independent organisation where they can speak freely about their problems. In return we seek to provide a non-judgemental service through which we guide and support the student through the correct procedures in search of a successful resolution.

Post -VSU

This is yet another important service that will be lost with the implementation of the VSU legislation. As the SA and its staff disappears from the campus so will this vital last resort for students with problems.

Effect on COFA

It is with considerable trepidation that I contemplate the loss of this service at COFA. Whilst recognising that COFA and the University offers efficient and comprehensive dispute resolution procedures, there has to be a place for an independent and alternative advice service.

Often all that is required is a friendly environment where a student can pour out their troubles to someone outside of the College itself. In the vast majority of cases a few words of reassurance and a telephone call to the appropriate person within the University is all that is needed.

Sadly, during my many years in higher education, I have witnessed too many avoidable tragedies that could have been prevented if only students knew who and where to go with their problems. We often make the mistake of viewing young adults as brash, confident and easily able to cope with life. There are many though who need a little informal help in a non-authoritative environment from time-to-time.

Activities

The Service

COFA SA provides a diverse range of activities for students. These are free and are usually developed in response to need or interest. In the absence of a bar or eat-in café, these activities provide an opportunity for students to get together outside of their class environment.

Activities are developed through direct discussion with students and through the input of their representatives, the SA Committee. It is a constant logistical challenge to provide activities that are compatible with our limited space and facilities. It is only with considerable ingenuity that the SA manages to provide such a wide range of successful activities.

The benefits of SA activities are varied. Some activities are developed to directly benefit students' well-being; yoga classes, meditation sessions and self-defence classes have all been developed to have some physical benefits. With the total lack of any physical recreational facilities on the campus we feel that it is important that students are provided with these opportunities. For the same reason we also run COFA teams in the social sport leagues at Kensington.

COFA SA has also introduced activities that assist extra-curricular skills development whilst providing a social activity. Sketch club provides drawing with classical music and a life model to allow theory students and arts students alike an opportunity to practice drawing without the need for assessment, it also provides students with a chance to gain paid life-modelling experience. Sketch club is held in the evening and has developed a devoted following, especially among mature and postgraduate students. We

also hold regular dj nights and band nights at hotels in the area. Both provide students with an opportunity to gain playing experience, exposure and the chance to create a following among their fellow students. COFA SA has supported many dj's and bands on their way to professional gigs and recording contracts.

In the aforementioned absence of sporting facilities COFA SA has to be more creative in the development of competitive sports. Both pool and ping-pong competitions are held annually at COFA, providing students with a chance to gain sporting glory among their peers.

Possibly the best example of the SA's creativity in entertaining its members in difficult circumstances is COFA Bingo. Lunchtime sessions are held fortnightly in the Common Room and are amazingly popular with students. This is in a large part attributable to the work of the SA staff in squeezing wonderful prizes out of local businesses.

COFA SA works hard to establish strong and enduring relationships with the arts industry. Sydney's major arts institutions are involved in O-Week and our excellent Handy Hints Day. O-Week at COFA provides students with orientation around both the University and the arts industry in Sydney. The attendance of representatives from major galleries and bodies ensures that students feel these organizations are approachable and accessible, benefiting their academic studies immensely. Handy Hints Day is tailored to offer even more information and discussion about being a student of the arts, and about the arts in general. Industry representatives attend a day of stalls and a lunch to talk to students openly about opportunities and services. The SA also organises and hosts events where representatives of organisations and former students discuss the reality of working in the arts, both as an artist and as an arts worker. There are obvious benefits for students that participate in these events but there are

also additional benefits that result from a well-established relationship between COFA SA and these arts bodies: an increase in profile for COFA students and a greater responsiveness to their work and projects. Our work in this area has paid off and we see students more engaged in festivals and events as well as gaining employment.

Research students and postgraduate students are well represented by COFA SA. To ensure that Research students do not feel isolated we have established a monthly get together for no reason other than to chat and thereby create both an academic and social network. A monthly newsletter is sent out with information, events and activities designed specifically to cater to the needs of Post Graduates. The SA is delighted to be launching a retreat for Research students this year. It is hoped that this will give Research students the chance to get to know each other and to work together on these.

Post - VSU

With financial and staff support gone activities will, like everything else, simply cease to be.

Effect on COFA

Activities are an essential part of any student organisation. They are the keystone on which any such successful organisation relies to draw together its members. Only my pathological fear of appearing trite prevents me from using the word 'bonding.'

A university campus devoid of recreational and social activities for its members is surely unthinkable. Yet this is the effect the proposed legislation will have at COFA and it will happen in less than a year from now.



Communications

The Service

COFA Students' Association is justly proud of its communications service. There is little point in COFA Students' Association offering the wide range of excellent services mentioned elsewhere in this booklet if our members are unaware of them.

In our quest to keep our members fully informed of our activities and services we utilise the following mediums:

- **E-Newsletter:** Over the past two years the SA has worked hard to establish and build a fortnightly email newsletter to our members. Due to various University regulations we have had to actively recruit students to this service with our members needing to 'opt-in.' We now have fifteen hundred students (75% of COFA students) receiving this fortnightly service. The E-Newsletter contains a multitude of information for our members covering what's happening at the SA plus items of interest from COFA, UNSW and the wider world. Our newsletter includes arts industry news, employment opportunities and grant deadlines.

- **Website (www.cofasa.unsw.edu.au):** The SA's website is an amazingly comprehensive and topical resource. It contains information on everything that our members need to know and is constantly updated to maintain its relevance. Students can access information on our services, forthcoming events and the latest developments in the world of higher education. Application forms can be downloaded and a comprehensive archive of exhibitions from the Kudos Gallery perused. This only scratches the surface of what is on offer at the website. I would urge the reader to look at our site, as I

am sure you will be impressed with its breadth of content. Although not quite able to boast the BBC's two million pages and 'updated every minute of every day', we feel it compares more than favourably with websites operated by far larger organisations than ours

- The SA also produces an **annual diary** that has become an essential for COFA students and staff alike. The diary contains a plethora of essential information as well as looking good and performing the normal functions of a diary. To accompany the diary the SA also produces a yearly wall planner.

- An **annual COFA SA magazine** is also produced by the SA and distributed in our annual mail shot to members. The magazine contains features on the SA's services and also news of important new initiatives.

Post -VSU

The above services are all brought to fruition by SA staff, again meaning that they would be lost under VSU.

Effect on COFA

The SA does not just publicise services, events, initiatives and news exclusive to itself. Through our many publicity services we cover everything at the College that is of relevance and interest to our members. Obviously the SA will suffer the most, as the inability to communicate with our membership will only serve to hasten our demise. However, COFA in general will be the poorer for the lack of this valuable and vibrant service.

Miscellaneous

This section covers those services that COFA Students' Association provides that perhaps would not fill to a section of this booklet each.

The Services

- **Grants and Sponsorship Scheme:**

Throughout the year the SA invites members to submit applications for funding. This funding is specifically to assist students with extra-curricular artistic projects. It can cover exhibitions, documentation, attendance of conferences, travel and much more

- **Transport:** The SA maintains two vehicles; a nine-seater van and a ute. These are provided for use by COFA students free of charge. This service is designed to assist students who need to move exhibits, transport art materials and to attend conferences and meetings.

- **Free Lunch:** The SA provides free food for approximately three hundred students on a fortnightly basis. The Students' Association purchases the food from a local Krishna group and distributes it on a first-come, first-served basis.

- **Zine:** The SA publishes a regular zine that features works by COFA students

- **The SA Kitchen:** The Students' Association operates a kitchen area that contains a microwave, water boiler, toaster, fridge and filtered water supply. The kitchen is kept stocked with tea, coffee, milk, sugar and biscuits that are all free to students.

- **Games:** The SA offers a wide range of board games for students to borrow and use in the common room area.

- **Post Graduate Scholarship:** The SA offers a \$2,000 annual scholarship to COFA Post Graduate students. This is awarded under the criteria of service to the SA, COFA and the wider community.

- **Equipment Loans:** The SA has a number of items that students can borrow free of charge. These include data projectors, digital cameras, DVD and video players.

- **COFA SA Drama society**

- **COFA SA Film Society**



Post -VSU

The above-mentioned is but a selection of the many services that the Students' Association offers. Sadly, they would all be lost under VSU.

Effect on COFA

A good Students' Association is the heart of any university. It is the extra element that makes the difference between a university being simply a sterile and lifeless place of study and a vibrant, thriving community. I am sure that readers who are familiar with the College will readily agree that the loss of the Students' Association will leave a huge and unfillable void at COFA.

More importantly than any of the services mentioned in this booklet, the SA is a community and a friend. It is the place students go to for help, advice, a chat and to see a friendly face. The Students' Association is the part of the College where students feel the most comfortable. It's the place where they can meet friends, play, work and even sleep.

For those readers familiar with neither COFA SA, or student organisations in general, I would beg your indulgence while I relate an experience of my own that I hope illustrates the essence of a good student organisation.

Having worked in student organisations in the UK for many years I have encountered many of the great and good taking their early steps to prominence. I can say of several politicians that I knew them when they were only just setting out on the road to becoming the self-satisfied, pompous oafs that the public sees today. I can remember a few leaders of industry when they did not have the financial acumen to make their student grants last half a term. All of these, and many others, developed their personal skills and attributes as members of student organi-

sations. But far more important than this I remember people who, although not destined for fame, illustrate why student organisations are important.

I am thinking of a young woman who arrived later at university than her peers. During her final year at school she had the misfortune to be in a car passing the Remembrance Day service in Enniskillen in Northern Ireland at the same time as an IRA bomb went off. Not only did she suffer appalling injuries herself she also witnessed the dreadful carnage of the aftermath of the explosion. A year later than planned this girl arrived at university, scarred both physically and mentally from the explosion (she was quite literally held together with steel rods). Although extremely withdrawn at first, and crippled by a fear of public places, she gradually began to come out of herself as she joined various clubs and societies, frequented social events and generally threw herself into the life of the Students' Union. At the end of her time at university she had been a full-time sabbatical officer for two years, ran three societies, was (non-playing) captain of the hockey club, and had served on a host of university committees. After her graduation ceremony her parents took the trouble to come to the Students' Union to thank us. Oblivious as to what we had done to earn their gratitude they explained that the SU had changed their daughter's life immeasurably. They had never dreamed it possible that she would ever become the bright, lively and extrovert woman that she had. Until her parents came to see us we had been totally unaware of what had happened to her before she reached university. She received no special attention or help because of her circumstances.

I have many such, though less dramatic, stories of students who have thrived through their involvement with student organisations. I hope that by relating just this one that I have impressed on the reader how important student organisations are to so many people.

Conclusion

Three conclusions can be drawn from this analysis of the effects of VSU on COFA Students' Association and on the College itself.

The first, and the obvious one, is that COFA SA would be devastated by VSU. With the loss of income from compulsory student fees nearly everything currently provided by the SA would be lost. Even the possible exception to this, the Campus Art Store, would be forced to make such changes as to make it untenable if not unviable.

The second conclusion that can be drawn is that it would not be feasible to cherry-pick one or two services that can survive in isolation. Hopefully the reader will have ascertained that everything that COFA SA presently does for its members is inter-related and inter-dependent. None of our services operate in a vacuum and none of them could continue to operate viably or successfully without the support system that the whole organisation provides.

Thirdly, the effects on the College itself will be grave and great. Whilst the physical losses are obvious; closure of the Kudos Gallery, loss of the Campus Art Store in any recognisable form, the end of activities, advice, representation and everything else mentioned; there are greater, unquantifiable potential losses.

Whilst I and others can decry the change in the *raison d'être* of universities from exclusive seats of learning to degree factories and glorified technical colleges, this is what we have. The student is no longer the student but the consumer, the paying customer, and like any consumer the student wants their monies worth. As the cost of attending university gets ever higher then the consumer will demand a better quality of product and, also, a better quality of service. Should COFA lose the many excellent services

provided by the Students' Association it will be weakened immeasurably and the consumers will vote with their feet. International students will soon realise they are no longer buying the complete university experience, and when they do they will turn their attentions elsewhere. Thousands of Asian students currently study in the UK, for instance, and it is certain that those deciding where to study will soon learn from their predecessors where they can get the complete package. The domestic student will look to the far cheaper TAFE system as universities begin to offer little more than they do.

Cynics will say that I am harking back to the halcyon days of university life that existed only in the pages of an Amis novel, but as we all know cynics 'know the value of nothing.' Going to university has to be about more than the pursuit of a formal qualification. Academic achievement should be matched in equal part by the opportunity for personal development. Outside of the lecture theatre the student should be developing their personal and social skills, interacting with their peers and organising their own affairs. At graduation a student should be as proficient in life skills as they are in their given subject. Without a thriving and vibrant Students' Association these opportunities will not exist. Students will have no organisation that they can call their own; an organisation that they can direct and govern and where their input and ideas can garner tangible results.

With the best will in the world COFA will not be able to replace or sustain the services that the SA provide. COFA SA's services are popular because they are relevant and this relevance only comes about because students have control over their provision. From O Week to the end of year party, from exhibiting in the Kudos Gallery to buying a canvas from the Campus Art Store, from borrowing the SA van to playing lunchtime bingo, from advice on an academic problem to free lunches - the SA works.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Penelope Benton and Eliza Muldoon for their assistance in the production of this booklet. Both are members of staff at COFA Students' Association and are two more reasons that the organisation must remain.

All errors are entirely my own.

The Author

I have been the manager at COFA Students' Association since January 2003. Prior to arriving in Australia in late 2002 I had been involved with student organisations in the UK since 1978, either as a student or as a staff member.

In addition to working for a number of student organisations at universities in the UK I also ran a student leader training business and worked on a consultancy basis.

I like to think that this gives me a great depth of knowledge on the subject of this report; detractors no doubt will feel that I may be biased.

When faced with detractors it's handy to have a witty riposte. Kindly Oscar Wilde foresaw this need and prepared one specifically for me to use:

'It is only about things that do not interest one that one can give really unbiased opinions, which is no doubt the reason why an unbiased opinion is always valueless.'

To accusations of self-interest I can at least defend myself without the help of a deceased luminary. I will be leaving Australia at the end of this year for reasons wholly unconnected with VSU. I make this point solely so that the reader can be assured that my views are not coloured by concerns over my own future benefit. In this respect I can fairly claim to be a totally disinterested party in the debate over VSU.

Andrew Mann

April 2005