

Submission

to

Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education
Legislation Committee

Inquiry into the provisions of the Higher Education Support Amendment (Abolition of Compulsory Up-front Union Fees) Bill 2005

Submitter/Organisation:

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Cindy Wilkinson, Faculty Manager, UNSW COFA
Jim Rimmer, Victorian College of the Arts Student Union
Anne McLaughlin, WattSpace, University of Newcastle
Gregory Stevens, SASCA
Andrew Johnston, Arts and Volunteering, UNSW Union
Ben Smyth, Blitz Magazine, UNSW Union
Lachlan Williams, The Tertangala UOW SA
Nick Vickers, Sir Hermann Black Gallery, USYD Union
Edward Campbell, TUNE!FM, UNESA
Sandie Bridie, George Paton Gallery, MU Student Union
Aparna Rao, ANU Fine Arts Students Association (FASA)
Tim, Lefa & Brad, Rabelais Student Media, La Trobe University
Katie McGregor, Curtin Student Guild
Barbara Whelan, Guild President, Murdoch Guild of Students
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Students and arts coordinators within several student organisations have put together this joint submission from ‘the creative arts’ to the the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Legislation Committee for the Inquiry into the provisions of the Higher Education Support Amendment (Abolition of Compulsory Up-front Union Fees) Bill 2005.

This submission highlights the often overlooked activities of student organisations and groups that nurture and support the creative arts with the higher education sector. This includes, but is not limited to, student galleries, student theatre and drama, student film, television and radio, student newspapers and publications, design, music and sound.

This joint submission includes the immense contribution to the cultural wealth of on-campus life that is provided by student organisations; places that are occupied on or off campus to promote and foster students’ professional and practical learning within the creative sphere; and an assessment of the likely effect this legislation will have on the creative arts on campus, and related consequences that will ripple through our community.

The advent of Voluntary Student Unionism will result in a catalogue of lost opportunities; lack of exhibition spaces for emerging artists, publications for emerging writers and journalists, and venues for emerging performing artists, actors, directors, producers, and technical crew; extracurricular activity that, after all, defines the quality of on-campus life. This in turn will result in the loss of networking opportunities that are so fondly remembered by our senior academics and creative personalities like Clive James, Germaine Greer, John Bell, Barry Humphries and Robert Hughes, to name a few.

Many student galleries provide a space for emerging artists, designers and curators to learn and develop their work and experience in a competitive and expensive industry. Many student union theatres have lists of the names of actors, directors and producers that have gained their first experiences on the student stages. Similarly most student newspapers and publications boast a history of first steps for our countries top journalists, editors and writers. The prizes and awards that are annually dispensed by student organisations, the collections of the works of emerging artists that are, after all, the encouragement awards that in many cases have assisted in the confidence building that is required for survival in the arts industry in Australia.

Under VSU, many student organisations would no longer have the funds to support these arts and cultural services, facilities, activities and events. Most of these services are not for profit, and thus are unsustainable under this legislation. A user-pays system would mean that for many students, access to galleries, theatres, publications and radio stations would be near impossible for both artists and their prospective audiences. The result of this inaccessibility would of course be the demise of these services, facilities, activities and events. The introduction of VSU is not a political triumph, it is an artistic catastrophe.

This has been tested and verified by the abolition of some student unions in Victoria or Western Australia whose experiences are outlined in this submission.

As a national collective of ‘arts’ supportive organisations this submission shows the effects of the Higher Education Support Amendment (Abolition of Compulsory Up-front Union Fees) Bill 2005 would be devastating for both campus life and cultural communities around this country.

We thank you for this opportunity to be heard and trust in review of these submissions you will reject this legislation.

UNSW College of Fine Arts Students' Association

The UNSW COFA Students' Association serves the 2200 students enrolled at the College of Fine Arts, a faculty of the University of New South Wales. We are an art and design based Students' Association operating a number of creative programs, services and facilities to nurture and support the educational development our members. As a non-profit serviced based organisation this legislation poses a significant threat to our sustainability. In addition to the uncertainty VSU creates financially, the concept of a user-pays system on this small city campus is one that is just not applicable. With universal membership, we are able to provide a full and dedicated service which includes;

Kudos Gallery - COFA SA has provided students and graduates with an exhibition space for 20 years. In it's current guise and location, our Kudos Gallery boasts close to 10 000 visitors to see approximately 30 diverse exhibitions from over 200 artists per year. As well as offering a first-time experience to many emerging artists and designers, Kudos Gallery provides many students with their first experience as a Board member on the management committee or as a curator for many of our group shows. This gallery plays a central role in the development of artists, designers and curators by allowing them to work in the context of a fully-functional gallery. A gallery that could not be provided by the Faculty. Kudos is a student run student gallery that due to the costs involved in administration, rental and maintenance, will be lost under VSU.

Campus Art Store - The foundations of CAS date back to 1976 with the deliveries of numerous rolls of canvas between art schools in Sydney. Synonymous with the store is our longest servicing staff member Denis Mizzi, who has watched over the fates and fortunes of the store since 1978. CAS today operates as a non-profit service for all of our members, providing a diverse range of materials for arts, design and theory students at COFA. CAS has always been more than just a shop, acting as an intermediary between COFA SA and the public by supplying a community notice board for students and the general public alike. The store also operates as Sydney's only permanent venue for zines and artists books, and the CAS windows serve as a free exhibition space for students. Under VSU, this store would be forced to run as a profit making enterprise, losing its creative edge and struggling to remain competitive with a much larger art supplies shop just a few block away. Failing this, COFA SA faces the loss of our long serving staff as the attraction to stay in a job with an unstable organisation is low.

Kudos Gallery and the Campus Art Store are our largest facilities threatened by VSU. Without going into too much detail about our other services, facilities and activities [as my colleagues have already submitted many of these details] our other services threatened by this legislation include our art collection of COFA students and graduates works, student lounge, a fully equipped kitchen, meeting room, women's room, website, advocacy, representation, COFA to Kenso Shuttle Bus, Grants and Sponsorship Scheme \$12000/yr, Postgrad Grant \$2000/yr, equipment loans [data projectors, vehicles; van and ute], student zine - *zing_tycoon*, online arts mag - *The College Voice*, fortnightly e-newsletter [1500 subscribers], free tea and coffee, student diary, wallplanner and showbags, o-week + mid-yr intake o-day, lockers, fortnightly vegetarian lunches, yoga, life drawing classes [sketch club], table tennis and pool tournaments, art market days and second-hand books sales, bingo, social events and Handy Hints: a careers event for artists and arts workers in the form of info stalls and discussion panels.

Under VSU we would no longer have the funds to continue our grants and sponsorships, these grants are vital to the stimulation of extracurricular student projects. Many of the grants have enabled our students to create works that have

gone on to be accepted to some of this county's great art awards, including Helen Lempriere, Wynne and Sulmann prizes to name a few. Whilst many of our other activities and events cost very little to run, it is the potential job losses that we face under VSU that will result in their demise. COFA SA is run by a very small and tight team of just two full-time and four part-time administration staff. The experience of VSU in Western Australia shows us that the abolition of universal membership results in significant losses in funding. For COFA SA this sort of loss would be devastating for students, staff, the College and the community.

The role COFA SA plays in student advocacy is as an independent body often operating as mediator between students and the College. Student grievances and concerns are appropriately addressed and conveyed to Faculty bodies by the SA. COFA SA, through representation on a number of key Faculty bodies also ensures that student opinion is represented in decision-making. This kind of representation is vital to the development of creative and cutting edge courses. Under VSU, the resources required for researching current issues that relate to the higher education sector and this university would be demised, making it virtually impossible to maintain an efficient and reliable service.

Lastly, COFA SA funds and supports three creative clubs and societies; Drama Club, Film Soc and CRUMS [COFA DJ Society]. Our Drama Club nurtures experimental theatre, street theatre, live sound, performance art and spoken word. The club has over one hundred members and an active committee of over ten committed students. "There is an enormous pool of technical and artistic talent that we felt needed to be tapped. There are students making great sound works who may be into the live possibilities. There are people in sculpture, art theory and Time-Based Art doing performance electives. There are actors studying painting; and photographers with bands, who can get involved in something experimental. Through COFA SA, Drama Club are able to provide technical and administrative support, a chance to collaborate, a sense of spectacle, a venue, a bar, and most important, a big audience." (Drama Club 04) Similarly, our Film Soc and CRUMS are supported by COFA SA through promotions, funding and administration. We provide these clubs with a page on our website, promotions in our e-newsletters and publications, and we help negotiate deals with local venues and businesses, designs and access to printing facilities to promote their events and activities. Under VSU, we would be unable to provide this support on the great scale that we currently do. This loss would eventually lead to the demise of these clubs due to lack of funding and support.

The UNSW College of Fine Arts Students' Association cannot exist under VSU. I ask you to please reject this Bill.

Penelope Benton
Publicity Coordinator
UNSW College of Fine Arts Students' Association

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The COFA Students' Association provides a wealth of activities which support and enhance COFA student's in their studies. They provide vital opportunities for student exhibitions, a community which encourages peer interaction and mentoring and generally augment the value and scope of what is available on the Paddington campus. It would be a significant loss to the culture and quality of student life on the Paddington Campus should the Students' Association no longer operate.

Cindy Wilkinson
Faculty Manager
College of Fine Arts
University of New South Wales

Victorian College of the Arts Student Union

Victorian College of the Arts Student Union (VCASU) is committed to universal student unionism and believe that voluntary student unionism, if implemented, will emaciate the student experience at Australian universities. We believe that Voluntary Student Unionism is not only anti-democratic and driven purely by ideology but is part of a movement against acknowledging students as the primary stakeholders of universities.

VCASU membership is undoubtedly small in comparison to a number of other student representative organizations but our members have very particular needs and we believe our constituency is well serviced. VCASU is a revenue neutral, not-for-profit, service-based association that exists to provide support and services for students on the Victorian College of the Arts campus. As we have one of the nations highest voting turnouts in Student Union elections the organization is truly representative in its makeup.

VCASU Office Bearers make significant contributions to policy development and student representation within the Victorian College of the Arts. Student office bearers sit on numerous committees and councils including but not limited to VCA Council, Board of Studies, Student Support Services Committee, Academic Board, Library, IT, Post Graduate, Resource and Finance Committees.

Amongst the services and events imperilled by Voluntary Student Unionism at the Victorian College of the Arts are the Proud Annual Acquisitive Art Exhibition, Battle of the Bands, The Melbourne Environmental Arts Festival, Orientation Day (including the publication Orient Express), Discovery Day and the future viability of our campus publication Spark.

Of great significance to our student population is the potential loss of our Cultural Activities Grant (CAG) programme. The CAG programme supports the creative engagement of our students in public events. The grants of \$100 for individual projects or \$200 for collaborative projects are of great assistance to our students and the programme is in great demand.

Also of great significance to the students is the delivery of numerous priority care services including Accident Insurance, Legal Service & Dental Service, Advocacy Services and guidance through Grievance and Appeals procedures.

Victorian College of the Arts Student Union feel strongly that the introduction of Voluntary Student Unionism will silence the student voice on Australian campuses and create untenable business models on the student organizations that continue to exist. We feel that a model that will require student organizations to place resource emphasis on membership retention will fatally compromise the delivery of essential and cost effective services to students.

In unity

Jim Rimmer
Community Development Officer
Victorian College of the Arts Student Union

WattSpace,

University of Newcastle Union

Watt Space, the student gallery of the University of Newcastle, held its first exhibition in September in 1989 with funding from the Students Representative Council of the University of Newcastle. The shop front gallery in Watt St Newcastle moved to University House, King St Newcastle in 1996 with 5 separate exhibition spaces. Over the past 16 years the University of Newcastle Union Limited has been the prime sponsor of the gallery, with the School of Fine Art annually donating approximately 25% of the modest running costs.

From 1989 to the beginning of 2005 over 3,800 current students of the University of Newcastle have exhibited their artwork at the gallery across over 600 solo, group, curated, graduating, invitation, prize and open shows. Between 1989 and 2005 there has been an annual average visitation of 12,000 per year totalling 180,000 overall, with sales of student artworks for the same period totalling approximately \$288,000.

Watt Space exhibits the work of current students of the University of Newcastle and aims to capture a diverse range of current and emerging arts practice in its exhibition program including sound, film, installation, performance and all forms of 2D and 3D work. Residencies, collaborations, multi media performances and community based events all form part of the Watt Space exhibition program linking the gallery with the Newcastle and Hunter arts communities. Since 1989 the gallery has established a deserved national and regional reputation as a premier student art gallery.

Students who exhibit at Watt Space experience important and relevant professional arts practice in their involvement in the submission of their exhibition proposal, the selection process, induction for exhibition hanging and gallery management including invitations, press releases, opening night organisation and exhibition de-mounting.

Students are also able to build on their exhibition experience through curating exhibitions, becoming student representatives on the Watt Space Management Committee, being a Watt Space Volunteer or applying for the annual part-time position of Watt Space Gallery Assistant.

Many Watt Space students who have taken advantage of these opportunities have gained valid and worthwhile art gallery work experience which has led to professional positions and employment in the gallery sector in both artist run spaces and regional galleries.

Without funding and infrastructure support provided by the University of Newcastle Union the future of Watt Space is extremely bleak with the gallery being forced to consider enormous cutbacks and to cease functioning at its current high level of success. This funding has provided the continuity of the operation of the gallery as a site of professional arts practice solely dedicated to emerging and developing artists of the University of Newcastle and as such plays and has played a vital and integral role in the first steps of many artists and arts sector practitioners past and present.

Anne McLaughlin
Director
WattSpace

Sydney College of the Arts Student Association

Sydney College of Arts Student Association (SASCA) has maintained a gallery in Rozelle called Newspace since 1998. In this time we have averaged 25 shows per year in which 850 students have shown their work over this period. So important is this gallery to the students that a mandate remains for us to keep this gallery operational, although it takes up to half of SASCA's Annual BUDGET. The gallery is run by student volunteers this giving valuable experience in gallery management.

With the introduction of VSU Newspace will close. The student and the Rozelle community will be robbed of a very valuable asset.

In 2004 the College handed over some space to SASCA to run another gallery in the foyer of the college to give the college a student feel. Considerable student funds were allocated to make this gallery and the college entrance presentable. Since exhibitions have been presented on a weekly basis by an active student volunteer committee.

Exhibition space has been in such demand by the student members and space limited in Newspace and later exit that in 1999 a grant scheme was initiated to assist students to have show elsewhere. Approximately \$6000 of grants have been distributed each year.

SASCA provides food for many starving students. Arts students being who they are more inclined to spend money on Art materials (a huge cost not covered by an outrageous Hecs fee) than food. Hence SASCA is obligated to provide a student kitchen with free bread cheese vegemite etc and tea or students will starve for art.

We also provide a \$20 loan scheme to help students over a hard time. SASCA is also able to refunding fees to those whom show hardship.

SASCA after spending all its income on the above SASCA has no funds to fritter away on political activities used to justify VSU on an ideological grounds.

SASCA provides its funds to the student arts community. This would be lost or seriously diminished under VSU.

Gregory Stevens
SASCA Business Manager

Arts & Volunteering, UNSW Union

My name is Andrew Johnston and I am the Student Project Coordinator for Arts and Volunteering at the UNSW Union. I am a former student of the University who was able to gain the skills and confidence I require in my current job while volunteering and becoming involved in the arts as a student.

In my current role I am responsible for coordinating the annual Artsweek festival, running the Smart Arts workshop series, managing and administrating a pottery studio and a gallery space, supervising a literary program including the production of the long running 'unsweetened' journal and coordinating the Oral Blitz volunteer program. There are also numerous other functions that I fill as the need arises including promoting the benefits of volunteering and personal development to students.

For the Artsweek festival in 2004 we trained 16 volunteers in curatorial skills, teamwork, leadership and cross cultural communication. Over 2,200 students attended the events and workshops held throughout the week with students participating in everything from orchestral concerts to celebrity debates and life drawing classes for free.

The Smart Arts program was introduced this year. 20 students took part in the 6-week long workshops with professional artists in the areas of film making, music and digital photography. The exhibition series attracted over 130 students.

The Pottery Studio is operated by 2 full time volunteer potters in residence who maintain and operate a studio that serves over 100 students per semester and provides a venue for regular 8-week pottery classes in hand building and wheelwork. It is free for student use and provides a much needed avenue for relaxation on campus.

The 'unsweetened' literary program is focused around the production of an annual journal that is edited and designed by a committed group of volunteer students. A prize, judged by professional writers and university staff, is awarded in conjunction with the UNSW Bookshop to the best and highly commended entries in four categories. This year over 140 entries were received for the journal and prize. The literary program also offers a series of free workshops, readings and author events through the year.

The arts programs on this campus encourage diversity, self-expression and bring colour and life to the community. They embody students with confidence and in some cases help them to form social networks and develop communication and teamwork skills. However, these programs do cost money to run. Arts materials can be expensive and paid administrative and curatorial support as well as venue resources must be subsidised by student fees. This is not dissimilar to the various government and community grant application schemes that operate in the wider community. It is a simple fact that while the arts is undoubtedly valued by our society, the economy does not naturally support it. It is for this reason that various checks and balances are put in place to protect the arts and provide our nation with an opportunity to a) reflect on itself, b) record its history and c) entertain itself.

Using student fees to support the arts is the way this is done in the university community. The government's Voluntary Student Unionism legislation threatens this vital support mechanism. Without student fees, there may be no Artsweek, no free workshops, no volunteer training and no encouragement of self expression. Resources such as the gallery space may start to disappear as they are cleared for more profitable ventures and the student community as a whole will suffer the effects of a barren cultural landscape. Universities and the students that occupy them are traditionally hubs of creative thought and expression, but with no resources to provide our students with the means for their expression, we risk losing some of our greatest creative minds to boredom and depression. You never know what you've got until it's gone.

Blitz Magazine, UNSW Union

Blitz is a 'what's on' magazine for students of the University of New South Wales. It is apolitical and unashamedly promotional. This sometimes earns it derision from those who fail to recognise what a critical role it plays: as a bridge between the creative output of the UNSW community and the entire student population. Of any type of student publication, a promotional magazine like Blitz is aware of just how active the arts are on campus, and is thus aware of how much we stand to lose under VSU.

Student media plays an important role not only as part of the arts community, but also as a service to the arts community. It is true that it has never been easier to publish our work; through the internet text, sound and images can be internationally accessible for a ridiculously low investment in time and money. VSU might not completely destroy students' ability to create art, but to blithely say that art will go on is only half an argument. After all, what is art without an audience? We can write, act, produce, paint, sculpt, compose or design anything we like, but it does not attract eyes and ears through some magical force. Art needs people, and the beginners - university students by their very definition - are especially in need of some service to promote their work.

Student media is one such service. It can reach the eyes and minds of a large, young, diverse and open-minded community and it can do it for free. It is not the only service but they are all under threat. Without these publications that VSU threatens to take away, the arts may go on but much, much more of it will do so unread, unseen and unheralded.

Ben Smyth

Editor - Blitz Magazine

University of New South Wales Union

The Tertangala, University of Wollongong Student Association

The Tertangala, the undergraduate journal of the University of Wollongong Student Association, provides an invaluable platform for aspiring writers and artists. Beyond employing a staff of four part-time employees, it has provided valuable income over the years to hundreds of student writers, photographers and artists.

In encouraging creative submissions, the Tert, provided free of charge to the student population and broader community, represents a valuable avenue for the region's writers (many studying writing at the University) to be published.

It also provides coverage for arts events in the region, including reviews, interviews, a gig guide and arts notice board section.

Previous Tert editors have included playwright Vanessa Badham (Winner of 2004 London Fringe Festival Award) and producer and director James Beech (Producer of Linda Jaivan's play "Halal el Mashakal". The Tertangala has been quoted in federal parliament and accused of depravity on WIN news.

WUSA has also been active in other areas of the arts. The council passed a motion to financially support the first Illawarra Festival of Young Authors, and may be contributing towards to publication of an anthology of new writing later this year. There are also plans to run a short film competition later this year.

Student union fees at UOW also subsidise tickets to concerts at the UniBar for students and help to run a campus band and DJ competition. The introduction of ASOL (anti-student organisation legislation) will leave a chasm in the cultural life not only of the campus, but of the Illawarra region.

Sincerely,

Lachlan Williams

Arts Ed. Tertangala

Tel: 0400 432 098

Sir Hermann Black Gallery, USYD Union

Sir Hermann Black Gallery at the University of Sydney Union, with an annual visitor attendance of 7000 per annum, has estimated that it has hosted exhibitions that have featured the works of over 750 artists within the 9 years of its existence. Some of these artists are well known but others have been represented at an early stage in their careers and that support has enabled them to find significant positions in Australia's arts industry. The gallery has been the host of exhibitions of national and international importance as well as the support base for a whole series of curated exhibitions that featured the early works of Shaun Gladwell, Brett McMahan, Maria Contis and Euan McLeod, to name but a few. The role that the Sir Hermann Black Gallery has played in the early stage of the artists careers is inestimable. Moreover, as the host gallery for the prestigious Blake Prize for Religious Art and the annual Freedman Foundation Scholarships, the closure of this gallery will leave a large vacuum not only in the university calendar, but also within the Sydney art scene. The disappearance of another student union gallery equates to the loss of the vital support network that operates for artists at post art college level. Bearing in mind that the most difficult period in an artist's life is that crucial time before they gain a reputation, it is the student galleries and artist run spaces that often rely on the grants, bursaries and sponsorships of the student unions.

The introduction of VSU will severely impact upon the activities of the gallery and sculpture terrace resulting in inevitable - closure. But even more importantly, the University of Sydney Union Art Collection will be placed under the threat of the auctioneer's hammer. This collection of art works, that dates back to the inception of the Union, is over 100 years old and is the legacy that the dead generations of students have left for the current generation who, in turn, continue to maintain the collection for the future generations. The art collection is the core or the University Union's cultural contribution the the quality of life within the university community. Again, the lack of support from the student union that will inevitably reflect on the collection with the introduction of VSU pass through to the commercial side of the art world and funding will be withdrawn - another door closes within the tenuous market of the creative arts.

All in all, compulsory student unionism has made a positive contribution to the cultural life on campus. The demise of the student unions, will result in loss of jobs, loss of opportunities, loss of culture and loss of the enormous contribution that all of the galleries and creative arts organisations have contributed to build up the vibrant arts industry that is enjoyed by the Australian public.

Nick Vickers

Sir Hermann Black Gallery

University of Sydney Union

TUNE!FM, UNESA

I am employed by UNE Students' Association (UNESA) at the University of New England as Station Manager of Armidale's ONLY youth-focussed radio station, 106.9 TUNE!FM.

On April 27, 2005 this station celebrated 35 years of continuous broadcasting - this station is the longest running community station in Australia! TUNE!FM trains more than 100 students each year in broadcasting, station operation/administration, journalism and audio production. In total, more than 150 students are involved in the station at any given time. We provide an outlet for students to express themselves, gain experience, confidence and celebrate cultural diversity in a drug and alcohol free environment.

This station is the only local outlet focussing on local youth issues. We report on issues affecting students and we play an enormous amount of new Australian music which is simply not available elsewhere. We are active participants in the Federal Government's Contemporary Music Fund (via the Australian Music Radio Airplay Project).

There are 7,400 people aged 13-30 (30% of the population) in Armidale according to recent Census data. Our internal research shows nearly 90% of UNE Students and nearly 80% of the youth population listen to TUNE!FM at least once a month. That's 6000 people in Armidale who are tuning into this station on a regular basis. That's 6000 people in this community who will be affected if VSU is implemented.

On a broader scale, if services disappear under this legislation, the local community needs to find jobs for more than 200 former employees of UNE's four student organisations (UNESA, Sport UNE, UNE Union and UNE Postgraduate Association). This includes students who are employed across this campus and people like me, the station manager at TUNE!FM. But there's also fitness trainers, accountants, admin staff, executive officers – the list goes on. These people have all invested in this community and not just at UNE. They spend money locally. Some have children who attend local schools. The impact of the loss of these people, their skills and the money they spend in this community will be enormous.

University is not just about lectures. University is about young people testing boundaries, expanding their minds and experiencing a whole range of activities - both cultural, sporting and academic. Under this legislation, students will not have the option to explore the whole range of activities on offer.

TUNE!FM receives \$70,000 (approx) each year from UNESA via the General Services Fee. The local business community contributes approx \$15,000 each year. In return, we run sponsorship announcements. However, under the Community Broadcasting Codes of Practice we are limited to running a maximum of 5 minutes of sponsorships announcements per hour. Our current sponsorship rates would need to be tripled (from \$2500 to \$7000/pa) to continue station operations. Given the size of the marketplace we operate in, it is highly unlikely we will find any sponsors willing to commit at this level.

And the impact of this legislation is ALREADY being felt. Staff who need job security due to family/mortgage commitments are looking for work elsewhere. UNESA has already lost one of it's most committed and experienced staff members. This is experience that is almost impossible to replace given that any new employee may have work for a little under 6 months!

On a personal note, I have a son who was born 3 weeks ago and my partner and I have invested in this region. I cannot see that I will find employment in this sector in Armidale. Therefore, the only alternative is to move to a metropolitan capital!

Included below is background information on the station for your information.

Yours sincerely,

Edward Campbell.
STATION MANAGER – TUNE!FM
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND ARMIDALE NSW 2351
WWW.TUNEFM.UNE.EDU.AU

TUNE!FM - BACKGROUND MARCH 2005

FACTS

TUNE!FM is currently operating at 100% capacity. That is, we have a waiting list of students of the University and members of the local community who we simply cannot fit into our current schedule. This not only includes the station's on-air operations but also behind the scenes roles including marketing, managing the record library, administration etc. In terms of the fiscal impact of VSU on TUNE!FM, the result will be complete closure of TUNE!FM, its training services, facilities, relationships within the community and loss of local news services and broadcasting knowledge developed over the past 35 years.

TUNE!FM receives around \$70,000 p.a. through the compulsory General Service Fee and with a total annual expenditure of around \$85,000, to keep the station running 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The impact of a complete loss of this income is obvious. Quite simply, under VSU, the station will not exist, leaving Armidale's Youth and UNE Students with Commercial Radio they don't necessarily want to listen to, or else Triple J who (despite their excellent service) cannot provide any kind of local input for those residing in the New England.

FINANCIAL

As a not for profit organisation, all TUNE!FM income and expenditure funds remain within Armidale community and the University of New England. Where possible, TUNE!FM uses local businesses to support its operations, using local suppliers and repairers, keeping money in Armidale. TUNE!FM sponsorship is a cost effective method for local businesses and community groups to communicate with UNE Students and the youth market of Armidale. It has certainly helped numerous local businesses over the past 35 years to access and gain income from the student marketplace.

TUNE!FM presently draws financial support from three key areas:

1. General Service Fee: The General Service Fee makes up the majority of funding for TUNE!FM, with around \$70,000 p.a. being put into the station via the UNE Students' Association. Under VSU this \$75,000 is clearly not going to be available, and what funds might be available will be scarce.

2. Sponsorship: a number of Armidale/New England Business houses and Armidale outlets of national chains. In the past, sponsors have included: McDonalds; KFC; Austar; Chaos Music; Ezy DVD; UNE Union and Belgrave Cinema; Sport UNE; The Armidale Club; Black Dot Music; The Top Pub, Uralla; Dominoes Pizza; Eagle Boys Pizza; New England Credit Union; Skydive Oz; True Value Software; Radio Rentals (Tamworth); Amcal; Southern Cross TEN plus University departments Dixson Library, Information Technology and Safety and Security.

3. Grants: From 1998 until the end of 2004, TUNE!FM received a number of grants through the Community Broadcasting Foundation (CBF). The result of these grants has been investment in TUNE!FM to the order of \$11 000 in equipment. In addition, our program "Air Time", which is distributed Nationally via the Community Radio Network to an average of 45 stations each week, has earned funding support of \$6000 over a three year period.

In addition, a number of small grants have been received from Armidale Dumaresq Council. Unfortunately a change in the conditions relating to grants has meant that TUNE!FM no longer has access to CBF grants under its present structure.

STAFFING

TUNE!FM is run by volunteers drawn from UNE Students and other young people in the Armidale community. In order to facilitate the smooth running of the station, coordinate volunteers, sell sponsorship and otherwise keep the station on air staff are employed. Staff costs are around \$46000 p.a. and consist of a full-time manager, a part-time admin assistant and occasional casual employees. The permanent members of staff are members of the New England community and their pay packets are spent within the Armidale community.

FACILITIES

TUNE!FM is equipped with two studios. Studio A is the on-air studio, and contains some of the latest equipment. Studio B is the production studio, and boasts a similar array of equipment. Almost all pre-produced material that is put to air on TUNE!FM is produced in-house by students (with the exception of some national advertising campaigns). Production

fees are also included in sponsorship rates, so again as much money as possible remains in the region.

TUNE!FM is also connected to the Community Radio Network, and subscribes to National Radio News (NRN). NRN is produced at 2MCE at Charles Sturt University in Bathurst, and is provided at low costs to TUNE!FM (and other stations on the network), providing a real alternative of the news from those heard on the ABC and Commercial Radio stations in the Armidale Licence Area.

COMMUNITY ACCESS

TUNE!FM prides itself on free and open access to the airwaves. In his speech which opened the station on April 27, 1970 the then Vice-Chancellor Professor Zelman Cowan encouraged open and transparent participation in the station, advocating principles of Community Broadcasting some five years before the Federal Government commenced issuing Community Broadcasting licences.

TUNE!FM has stuck to these principles for the past 35 years on air.

While the General Service Fee paying students of UNE must always get priority for use of TUNE!FM's facilities (by virtue of paying for the majority of operating capital via the General Service Fee), TUNE!FM welcomes involvement from other members of the Community, including Postgraduate students, UNE Staff members and members of the Armidale Community, including High School and TAFE students.

In a volunteer staff of approx 150 people, more than 25 people involved are TAFE students, still at high school or other young people in the community. These students are also given open access to the facilities of TUNE!FM with the option to express themselves on-air. TUNE!FM also hosts 15-20 work experience students each year - several of whom continue to volunteer at the station. Involvement in TUNE!FM has resulted in a number of High School students choosing UNE as their University of choice, and hence they have remained in the Armidale area, rather than moving away.

Perhaps one of the most important aspects of TUNE!FM is that the station provides a wide variety of practical experience. On-air training a support is an obvious key focus for the station, but many volunteers fulfil roles off air in production, music library administration, event co-ordination, marketing and promotion etc. Not only is this provided free for UNE students, but also to other interested members of the community. Truly TUNE!FM is providing Youth Radio for the youth by the youth.

AUDIENCE

Looking at the population figures, we have 12752 Internal and Local External Students. The last Census Information from Australian Bureau of Statistics shows Armidale with a population that includes 7,400 people aged between 13-30, which is 30% of the population.

In 2004 McNair Ingenuity Research conducted a national survey of Community Radio's Audience and they found that in non-metropolitan NSW, 80% of the population aged over 15 listen to radio in a given week, and 29% of the population aged over 15 listen to Community radio in a given week. They also found that the monthly figures are even more encouraging with 90% of the population aged over 15 listening to radio in a given month, and 50% of the population aged over 15 listening to Community Radio in a given month. (For more info see: <http://www.cbonline.org.au/>)

This evidence supports the statistics gained from the UNE Students' Association Media survey in early 2004, which found that 88.7% of UNE Students listen to TUNE!FM at least once a month, and that 77% of the youth population of Armidale listen to TUNE!FM at least once a month.

While you may hear just as many radios tuned to the ABC's Youth service Triple J, ABA research shows that 24% of Triple J listeners listen to at least one other station, while our survey shows that TUNE!FM and Triple J listeners significantly overlap. However the overlap between TUNE!FM and other services and Triple J and other services is minimal, therefore the only way to get local messages across to Armidale Youth and UNE Students is to utilise TUNE!FM. (ABA research: Understanding Community Attitudes Towards Radio Content, Australian Broadcasting Authority, 2003: see www.aba.gov.au)

Edward Campbell
Station Manager – TUNE! FM
University Of New England Armidale Nsw 2350

George Paton Gallery, Melbourne University Student Union

This year the George Paton Gallery at the Melbourne University Union celebrates 30 years of major contribution to the artistic climate in Melbourne and Australia.

Established as the first non-commercial contemporary art space in Australia, the gallery has provided the student and artistic population of Melbourne with cutting edge exhibition and curatorial practice by the likes of Stelarc, Lyndall Jones, Janine Bourke, Juliana Engberg, Judy Annear. Throughout its history the gallery has exhibited a broad range of practice from student art, emerging artists, to avant garde practitioners, to historic and educational exhibitions.

Run on a shoestring by a string of dedicated and visionary arts coordinators from the early seventies onwards. These coordinators have also run adjunct programs of installations and other art-based events in other sites around Union House at Melbourne University. The gallery and the broader arts programs have been a stimulating and essential site for students wishing to be involved in visual culture on campus, as viewers, exhibitors, curators, writers etc.

The current gallery program has sections of its programs that are intrinsically linked with Schools and Departments of Melbourne University premised on visual arts, such as the Victorian College of the Arts, The School of Creative Arts and School of Curatorial Studies. Each of these school have benefited from 'pedagogical' exhibitions programmed in and designed in coordination with students and staff.

Over the thirty years of its existence the George Paton Gallery has exhibited over 3,000 artists. It stands alongside the Union House Theatre and Rowden White Gallery as an historical cultural icon and launching stage for the careers of thousands of artists, writers, curators and other cultural producers.

As such the Gallery and accompanied Arts Programs at the Melbourne University Student Union can claim to be essential to the quality of student life at Melbourne University - one that cannot be sacrificed.

Sandie Bridie

Arts Programs Coordinator

Activities

MU Student Union Ltd*

University of Melbourne VIC 3010

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Australian National University Fine Arts Students' Association

FASA, as a department of ANUSA, relies very heavily on funding. Particularly in regards to the student grants, VSU would mean these could no longer be available. The music school ball, art school ball and the quarterly happy hours are all dependent on ANUSA funding. VSU will greatly disadvantage fine arts students and disadvantage the institutes as a whole too.

The changes and costs incurred if VSU comes in include;

No student grants – The grants are a tremendous opportunity for students. They allow students the chance to attend conferences, make recordings, tour, present concerts and stage operas, exhibitions and installations, make films, etc. This is most important to FASA students as they are highly sought after opportunities and the application standard is very high.

Fine arts students this year for example have been given grants for:

- i). Help with travel costs to New York for a music student (flute) who has been accepted to undertake a month long study at Julliard – fantastic for her and the ANU too.
- ii). Setting up a gallery in Canberra city, presenting art students work.
- iii). A digital media student to make a Bollywoodesque type film with much collaboration between digital media students, art and music students at the ANU.
- iv). 2 string quartets to the Townsville Chamber Music Festival and ANU's "Dominant Seventh" group to perform works by ANU composers at the Darwin international music festival.
- v). Female jazz students recording female compositions.

These grants are such a rare, fantastic and tremendous opportunity for ANU students – VSU means far less opportunities for them.

No school of music ball – Social event of the year as far as the faculty is concerned. Very well received by music students and provides music students an opportunity to perform in front of their peers etc.

No art school ball – Very similar to music ball, also attracts a huge following of non-visual art students too. Visual arts students also present their works at the ball too.

No quarterly happy hours – Social reward and networking opportunity for FASA students that are very well attended.

VSU means ANU Fine Arts Students would lose so many opportunities. Devastating consequences for them.

Aparna Rao
President
Australian National University Students' Association

Rabelais Student Media, La Trobe University

- 1 Rabelais on campus
 - 1.1 Rabelais as a service to La Trobe University
 - 1.2 Rabelais as a source of opportunity for student writers
 - 1.3 Rabelais as a method of communication for, with and between students
- 2 VSU and Rabelais
 - 2.1 Loss to student life
 - 2.2 Loss to educational practice
 - 2.3 Loss of link from student body to outside community

- 1 Rabelais on campus
 - 1.1 Rabelais as a service to La Trobe University

Rabelais is the student magazine of La Trobe University Bundoora. The magazine provides opportunities for students to publish, debate and reflect. With an open editorial policy, youth focused content and student editors the magazine is one of few opportunities for students to publish while they are still honing their journalism or creative writing skills. Rabelais enables information to be reported directly to the student body, including details of university changes, important dates and events, social gatherings and other campus life information.

Published 10 times throughout the academic year since its inception in 1967, the magazine offers a wide range of opportunities to La Trobe students. In addition to the regular editions of Rabelais, there are also five special editions particular to various departments of the SRC. These are Rebellious (Womens), Rebel Q (Queer), Green Rab (Environment), Indig Rab (Indigenous-Australian) and an election edition. These special editions are co-ordinated and produced by the relevant collective on campus, with the assistance of the Rabelais editors.

Rabelais is also responsible for producing the Friendly Handbook at the start of each academic year, a publication that provides important information to incoming students about their SRC, Union and University life in general. In past years this has been called the Alternative Handbook, offering an alternative information source to the official University Handbook. The Rabelais Friendly Handbook is now the only comprehensive publication for incoming students, detailing all services, areas and organizations on Bundoora campus including those from the university, union, SRC, LUPA, SARA and other departments.

In addition to the printed magazines produced by Rabelais, a website operates to archive and display student's work online. www.rabelais.org.au was launched in 2003 and has grown in popularity and usage, both as a folio example for students and as a communication method between the editors and the contributors. Rabelais is also responsible for producing any promotional or informational publications for the SRC council, such as pamphlets, flyers, posters etc.

- 1.2 Rabelais as a source of opportunity for student writers

In conjunction with the ever-growing media department of La Trobe University, not to mention further writing subjects offered in other departments, Rabelais is the most accessible arena for young writers and editors to learn the practical application for theoretical skills they are studying.

This forum allows writers to leave their time at La Trobe a more rounded writer, editor, poet, designer, photographer or artist. While classes teach young media makers the theory required in employment for their fields, Rabelais is their first step in participating in this process.

With many media personalities getting their start in student media, the benefits of first publishing opportunities, building a folio to present to potential employers and learning about the editorial process are obvious for writers.

1.3 Rabelais as a method of communication for, with and between students

Rabelais has an average print run of 3,000 copies per edition. This figure is only limited by the publication's printing budget, and rises with special editions such as the Friendly Handbook, of which 4,500 editions were printed for new students in 2005. Hundreds of student writers also contribute to the magazine per year.

Given these figures, it is clear that Rabelais is one of the most utilised services on campus. Along with the Rat Sheet, it is the only communication between students about upcoming events. It fills an even more vital service than the Rat Sheet by allowing a more extensive reflection of campus life, allowing students to submit and read detailed opinion pieces, articles about campus events and issues based content which relate to a variety of people.

2 VSU and Rabelais

2.1 Loss to student life

Without a service like Rabelais in place, student writers will not have an independent place to voice their concerns and opinions without fear of prejudice. For readers, losing campus-centric content, as well as the opportunity to hear the voices of fellow students, will mean less access to media unbiased by the need to create revenue or please advertisers.

Much like a club or society, Rabelais also has a very active group of students who participate in the making of the magazine, meeting frequently on campus to decide the direction and application of the editions. It provides an opportunity for likeminded students to meet, make friends and form professional relationships.

Without Rabelais as a form of expression, there will be less debate, reflection and creation of a campus environment.

2.2 Loss to educational practice

Without independent media on campus there is no outlet for students to learn and grow in practical application. Students still in the process of completing their degree cannot get published in the mainstream media, both because their writing is not up to standard and because without a folio they cannot get a foot in the door.

Rabelais is a first step to gaining practical experience as a writer, and published pieces make a solid start to a folio. Tutors, especially in the media department, encourage their students to write for Rabelais, noting that it is one of few opportunities to publish about subjects (especially creative writing) that would not be given space in more commercial environments.

Previous editors and writers from La Trobe have been able to transform their experience with the publication into employment at organisations such as AC Publishing, Beat Magazine, In The Mix, Triple J, Girlfriend Magazine, The Age and the ABC.

2.3 Loss of link from student body to outside community

Each edition of Rabelais is sent to a wide variety of people and organisations off campus including all student media across Australia, newspapers such as The Age, the Herald Sun, The Australian, other media such as various ABC departments, Triple J, Crikey and The Chaser, independent journals such as Arena, Meanjin and The Monthly, writing organisations such as Express Media, the Victorian Writers Centre, arts organisations such as Arts Australia, Arts Victoria, ACMI, festivals (for which we provide coverage) including the Melbourne Festival, the Melbourne International Comedy Festival and the Melbourne Fringe Festival, interested individuals including Melbourne writers Barry Dickens and Arnold Zable and for archiving at the State Library of Victoria.

Sending the editions out to these people, many of whom have specifically requested to receive the magazine, is our way of showcasing the work of La Trobe University's emerging writers. Many of our writers have gone on to be re-published in some of the above areas because of their exposure in Rabelais and have gotten their invaluable first start in the wider media.

As well as providing further publishing opportunities, sending Rabelais to a wide variety of people across Australia illustrates the vibrant, active campus we are part of. It ensures that people are aware of our students, their concerns, issues and experiences as part of the La Trobe University community.

Curtin University Student Guild

Curtin Student Guild have only been out of a VSU environment since 2002. We have an architecture club, a film club, a craft club (from the art department), a music club and a fashion and textile club. Currently we provide all our clubs and societies with the following benefits:

Access to limited free photocopying, a listing on the Guild Web Page and a link to the Student Society or Sporting Club home page; listing in the Clubs and Societies Booklet available through Guild Reception; access to free advertising on the Clubs & Societies page of Grok; free Guild BBQ Hire; use of the Club's meeting room; a mailbox through Guild Reception; Orientation Day stalls; and opportunities to apply for additional grants up to \$300.

The Curtin Student Guild also provides up to \$1000 sponsorship to each club during the year. I would envisage that we couldn't provide as much financial support if VSU was implemented but would still provide the in-kind support. The clubs and societies would still have access to the clubs and societies meeting room, clubs and socs resource room, mail boxes and lockers (if the legislation does not make Guild's pay commercial rent for premises) as well as the support of the Activities Vice President and the Recreation Coordinator. I would envisage that if VSU was implemented that the arty type clubs that we have currently would be struggling to maintain a member base as they do not have large member bases currently.

The publication of Grok, our student magazine, will possibly also be affected if VSU was implemented. We currently produce 8 copies a year with a distribution of 10,000 with 6,000 on campus and 4,000 off campus. Grok is widely read around Perth and it helps the Guild maintain links with discount providers and companies wishing to advertise in the publication. With limited money the Guild would have to look into whether we were able to produce the current number of copies and whether off campus distribution is necessary.

The number and quality of bands that perform on campus will also diminish if VSU is implemented as we will not have as much money to spend on entertainment. This will severely influence the campus culture which has been steadily growing since the VSU legislation was reversed in WA in 2002. ASF has meant that the Guild can provide more social and extracurricular activities to students and this has meant that a campus culture has developed which is beneficial to all students. If VSU were introduced this culture would slowly die which would be catastrophic for the atmosphere at the university. In 2005 we also provided our first free outdoor cinema during Orientation Week. If VSU was introduced we would not be able to provide this popular service to students.

Katie McGregor
Activities Vice President
Curtin Student Guild
Tel: (08) 9266 4578

Murdoch Guild of Students

The experience of VSU on clubs and culture at Murdoch University Guild of Students in Western Australia is outlined below;

VSU years

- Expenditure on activities was severely restricted including a wide range of cultural experiences for students- experiences that would allow domestic students to better understand the international student population and produce a more dynamic and vibrant university community
- Funds and support for sports clubs were cut, leading to a number of sports clubs ceasing operation
- Funding for clubs and societies was cut, leading to many clubs & societies ceasing operation
- No Guild funding for Orientation Day and other important festivals on campus
- A resourced parenting room was lost
- Funding for sports services and intervarsity sport was lost
- Weekly films to provide cheap entertainment for students were cut
- The cancellation of Orientation Camp
- The Guild could no longer run events like Mudslinger, an all-ages Summer music festival, because the financial position meant we couldn't take the risk
- The Guild Van (available for hire to students and student clubs) had to be sold

Post-VSU

- Clubs grants- providing up to \$1000 per year to clubs and societies for capital works or purposes that increase the culture on any of our three campuses
- Funding athletes to attend the Australian University Games and Intersvarsity Games
- Fully funding the University's Orientation Programme

Possible scenarios if VSU is passed (note - none of these are definite)

- Less support for university clubs and societies- which will greatly diminish the campus culture
- Media and administrative support to clubs would be cut, making it harder for clubs to attract new members
- User-pays for all sporting facilities, including for those who are representing the university at the Australian University Games and Intersvarsity Games
- Students participating in Intersvarsity Games and Australian University Games would need to raise more money themselves because the Guild would not be able to support them
- Not being able to supply entertainment on a regular basis (we predominantly have student bands play at the Tavern, which gives them confidence and exposure they couldn't otherwise get)
- The loss of events at the Tavern, decreasing the opportunity for students to socialise and make friends at university

Barbara Whelan

Guild President

Murdoch Guild of Students

Ph: 9360 6290

Bendigo Student Association

The Bendigo Student Association/Student Union has been the student representative organisation at La Trobe University, Bendigo since 1976. Our motto is 'making student life better' and our services reflect the non-academic needs of students studying here. One of the important aspects in this regard is the support offered to students through creative arts initiatives.

The creative arts are used by people to communicate on an emotional level. They provide a language that surpasses simple words. They reflect and form our culture and symbolize the development of our civilization. They initiate lateral thinking and encourage social awareness. They benefit us all.

Voluntary Student Unionism (VSU) threatens creative arts opportunities at La Trobe University, Bendigo on a number of fronts. The BSA currently supports students in the visual arts by organising and providing prize money for an annual art award and by providing event management & financial assistance to student art clubs. Opportunities currently exist for writers and editors through our student magazine, 3rd Degree and through our weekly newspaper spread, UniNews. The performing arts are supported through student clubs & societies where arts based clubs are common. Student bands are also supported through the 'National Campus Bands Competition', gig opportunities with our campus entertainment program and through student club events.

The opportunity to develop student's participation and awareness of the arts at university should not be restricted to those who take them on as a major. Student unions/associations provide these opportunities to all students and the benefits filter through to the wider community through the need of support services and suppliers. And it is not only the artists, actors or writers that benefit but also the audience – so to put a number on how many people are better off as a result of creative arts activities supported by a General Services Fee is unquantifiable. Suffice to say that a user pays system for creative arts at universities will reflect an Australian arts industry that suffers from a limited audience base and heavily relies on government grants to exist at all. A VSU will, therefore, not only have a direct effect on university arts activities but hinder the established arts organisations who are desperate to grow their audiences through education.

Some things are important to support for the benefit of our nation - that's why we have taxes. The creative arts fall into that category and universities are the breeding ground for the next generation of creative thinkers. A VSU will dumb us down on a number of levels and the repercussions will be enormous.

Brad Russell

Bendigo Student Association

Tel: (03) 5444 7976

University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery

The University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery opened in July 2004 but for eight years previously there had been an interim exhibition space in the University Library, ground floor. Having a community funded purpose-built building allows us to attract larger, more relevant exhibitions to engage with students, faculty, local residents and tourists. As Maroochy Shire does not have a public gallery the University Gallery acts as a defacto regional gallery for the more than 175,000 residents of the shire.

The gallery offers a range of diverse and stimulating exhibitions that also include educational talks, seminars and functions and we host nearly 10,000 visitors annually. We present exhibitions by students, staff, touring exhibitions (eg. the Jacaranda Acquisitive Drawing Awards from Grafton NSW attracted 1700 visitors alone in February this year), community artists and groups. We host the northern regions QLD Education Minister's Excellence in Art Awards each year and the Brisbane Advertising and Design Awards. We have two high schools and three primary schools bordering our campus so we are often "awash" with school students as well as university students. Students make up our greatest numbers of visitors plus we have student interns (through scholarships and international student programs) and volunteers working in the gallery. The University Gallery also owns and manages a collection of contemporary Australian art that can be viewed throughout the campus.

The University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery contributes to the cultural and creative life of the broader community as well as the University community in particular.

This VSU legislation will affect us is by potentially losing funding for professional staff to drive worthy programs and a possible loss of the opportunities for student interns in the gallery. If there is no qualified supervisory staff then the students will lose out and the scholarships will go. We do not charge for talks/seminars or openings but we may have to if this legislation is passed and our current funding is reduced/cut.

Yours sincerely

Dawn Oelrich

Curator

University of the Sunshine Coast Gallery

Tel: (07) 5459 4633

Firstdraft Gallery

Firstdraft Gallery is a volunteer artists run space for emerging artists. It is one of the most successful initiatives of its kind, celebrating its 20th anniversary next year. We support up to 300 artists per year through exhibitions, publications and associated projects.

We frequently exhibit artists in the early stages of their career who are undertaking tertiary education. These art students rely on the support of their student organisations to realise their exhibitions and projects. This assistance make take the form of financial, promotional or in-kind support without which the student would not be able to gain essential professional experince in their chosen field, make valuable contacts and gain exposure.

In the last 12 months for example, Firstdraft has held several well received exhibitions with the assistance of the exhibiting artist's student unions. These included: Dysfunctional Feed with the students of the UWS (Nov 2004), Dejavu/Jamais Vu (Sept 2004) SLIT exhibition and magazine launch (Feb 2005), Turning Tricks - the first of our emerging curator's program (April 2005), Fade in, Fade out Sept 2004) Critters (May 2004), I picked cotton (April 2004) to name a few. SASCA the student union of Sydney College of the Arts also supported the affiliated publication Runway in 2003.

Without the ongoing existence and support of student unions many artists will be unable to hold exhititions at venues such as ours and the overall cultural development within Australia risks stalling.

Firstdraft Gallery

116-118 Chalmers St. Surry Hills NSW 2010

SPACE3 Gallery

Space3 is a free artist run initiative, we currently hold weekly to fortnightly events (EXHIBITIONS, PERFORMANCE AND EXPERIMENTAL SOUND), concentrating on emerging artists (70% student based), we have been running for 4 years and in that time we would have put together over 300 events . The gallery is very popular with student events from COFA and SCA. And is strongly supported by the student bodies. The effect of the legislation would hinder students and emerging artist from exhibiting in spaces like ours as they are strongly supported by their student union's. Implementing VSU would place a greater Diaspora amongst artists and creative thinkers In NSW. We have seen this from the models placed on the other states with strong disapproval. Statistically more artist reside in NSW than any other state and the majority reside in Sydney, by implementing VSU you are cutting a life line for future artist who wish to pursue a career in the arts. We are currently under funded in the arts and we need to support a public environment of ideas to be a centre of relevance and a place of critical thought. So until the Government starts supporting the institutions that nourish creative thinking, then funding is minimal and sports always takes presidency in Australia. I'm ashamed to say the conservative times we live in always produces artists to rise to greater themselves through this struggle, this bureaucracy is daunting, why cant we invested in the foundations of our arts community. Abolish VSU.

SPACE3

151 Regent St. Chippendale NSW 2008