

US students oppose censorship of IYSSE by Macquarie University in Sydney

Our reporters
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Statements continue to be sent to Macquarie University in Sydney, opposing its refusal to affiliate a student club of the International Youth and Students for Social Equality, despite the IYSSE meeting all the requirements.

Management's claim that the IYSSE has the same aims as the pseudo-left Macquarie Socialists club has been refuted by both organisations. It is persisting in blocking the IYSSE, demonstrating that political censorship is at work. The IYSSE has established a change.org petition to mobilise opposition. Sign it today!

Below are statements from the IYSSE at New York University and a student in Chicago insisting that the Macquarie management end its anti-democratic attack and affiliate the IYSSE club.

From NYU:

The IYSSE at New York University denounces Macquarie University's blatantly political attempt to censor the university's well-established IYSSE club. We commit ourselves to the fight for the club's re-affiliation and call on all those who defend democratic rights to do the same.

Our club is closely familiar with the argument that the IYSSE is "too similar" to other "socialist" clubs on campus to merit club status. We were denied club status multiple times in late 2016 and early 2017 on the grounds that we were too similar to the International Socialist Organization (ISO), despite our record of opposition to that now-defunct organization.

We were also told that the university lacked funding for new clubs on campus. This was a blatant lie; in fact, NYU is an immensely wealthy university with close ties to the military-intelligence apparatus, which we

comprehensively exposed in a three-part series of articles in 2018.

Ultimately, we were able to acquire club status, and our club president was elected to the student senate partly on the basis of our demands for an overhaul of the draconian club application process at NYU.

Since our club was founded, we have held large public meetings on the history of the October revolution and the Fourth International, the rise of fascism, and the historical falsifications of the New York Times' 1619 Project. We have exposed plans for racially segregated student housing at NYU, justified on the basis of identity politics, and we have intervened in the strikes of graduate student workers at NYU and throughout New York City, calling for independent rank-and-file committees and support for Will Lehman's campaign for United Auto Workers president.

Most recently, we held a successful meeting as part of the IYSSE's international meeting series, "The War in Ukraine and How to Stop It," in the face of threats and attempts by pseudo-left and far-right elements to disrupt our meeting.

In the years we have been active, we have won a number of students and youth to the fight for socialism and Trotskyism, the Marxism of the twenty-first century. We have dealt significant blows to the pseudo-left, including the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA), and the noxious atmosphere of identity politics and upper-middle-class careerism that pervades the university.

It is abundantly clear from our experience, and from the experience of the IYSSE around the world, that the presence of an IYSSE club on campus transforms its entire political dynamic. Macquarie University is doubtless well aware of this, and any notion that its

comparison of the IYSSE to Socialist Alternative is mere ignorance should be dismissed out of hand.

We demand that Macquarie University authorities reverse their politically-motivated decision and re-affiliate the university's IYSSE club. We call on workers, students and young people around the world, including students at New York University, to join this fight and submit their own statements denouncing Macquarie University's attack on the right of students to organize and express a genuine socialist perspective.

From Chicago:

The rejection of the IYSSE's club affiliation by Macquarie University is a blatant denial of the most basic democratic rights. It is an attack on students' right to organize and to have independent politics. The decision clearly shows that the University is in support of war and militarism. As a student and IYSSE member I strongly urge the University to reverse their previous decision and allow the IYSSE at Macquarie University to form a club.

The rejection to affiliate is not accidental. It is consciously intended to block students from hearing a genuine socialist perspective. In a world characterized by immense inequality and on the brink of world war, the politics and perspective of the IYSSE will resonate with large layers of students and young people who oppose the capitalist system.

The action taken by Macquarie University is not an isolated or individual event. It is part of a larger wave of attacks against the IYSSE and its politics, centered around our opposition to the US-NATO war in Ukraine against Russia and our opposition to the AUKUS war drive against China.

Similar attempts at censorship have occurred at campuses throughout the world, including recently at Humboldt University [Berlin] where the IYSSE's campaign for student government has come under attack by far-right forces. Attacks against the IYSSE's anti-war movement have also taken place in Canada and Sri Lanka. The far-reaching implications of these attacks cannot be understated. It is a crackdown on democratic rights, and a sign of the intensification of imperialist propaganda in universities across the globe.

Should the IYSSE not be allowed to affiliate at Macquarie, it would represent a sharp and disastrous

turn to the right. This would be dangerous to students not just in Australia, but to students and workers globally. It would establish a dangerous anti-democratic precedent against the socialist movement.

We must prevent the universities from becoming mouthpieces for imperialist war propaganda. The IYSSE must be allowed to freely operate on campuses across the world.

Fabi – Chicago IYSSE member

We call on all readers to support the fight to defend the IYSSE at Macquarie University by sending letters of protest over the rejection of the IYSSE's affiliation to the Student Engagement, Inclusion and Belonging division of university management at studentgroups@mq.edu.au, and CC iysse.macquarie@gmail.com for publication on the WSW.



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