

Students at Sydney's Macquarie University speak out against political censorship of IYSSE

Our reporters
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The International Youth and Students for Social Equality (IYSSE) at Sydney's Macquarie University continues to receive statements of protest against the political censorship of its club on campus by the university management. Nearly 600 have signed an online petition demanding the immediate reaffiliation of the IYSSE club.

Macquarie University is continuing to block the affiliation of the IYSSE, despite its having met all stipulated requirements.

This anti-democratic decision was based on the fraudulent claim that the IYSSE shares "the same aims and purpose" as another club on campus, the Macquarie Socialists linked with the pseudo-left, pro-war Socialist Alternative.

Despite the complete exposure of this false assertion by the IYSSE, the university is continuing its refusal to affiliate the IYSSE, demonstrating that the decision is of a political nature. The IYSSE is the only genuine anti-war, socialist club on campus and held a critical meeting, less than two months before its affiliation was denied, advancing a revolutionary internationalist perspective against the US-NATO proxy war against Russia in Ukraine.

Macquarie University management is acting on behalf of the pro-war interests of the Australian ruling elite in attempting to block the IYSSE's perspective from reaching students and youth. The IYSSE internationally has been subject to anti-democratic attacks from right-wing, state-aligned forces including university managements and student unions precisely because it represents the alternative to capitalist militarism, which threatens a nuclear catastrophe.

IYSSE campaigners have spoken to students at

Macquarie University about the attacks on the club and the attempt by the university to silence anti-war opposition.

One international student from Hong Kong said that the discussions with the IYSSE on the threat of war were eye opening.

"This conversation has been a wakeup call for me," she said. "I could have begun my studies in another country. Not many Hong Kong people chose Australia, but I chose here because I thought this is a relatively peaceful country. The First and Second World Wars didn't happen on Australian soil. But then I find out there are hidden agendas here. I may not fully understand the gravity of this issue but this is an education for me."

The student continued: "If you guys are being censored purely on your views then I don't think this is acceptable. Growing up, we are taught western society is good, it's democratic. But obviously there can be an ugly reality to that. We have to be aware of the hidden agendas behind government policy, or media propaganda and think on our own feet."

Agreeing with the IYSSE's fight to build an international anti-war movement, the international student said she was wary of the various justifications used by capitalist governments to launch wars.

"I don't think war is good. In this day and age, it is really archaic. It is a waste of manpower, of potential strong young lives who die or get injured on the battlefield. As humans we all have a desire to live in a safe and harmonious environment but sometimes you see your ruling class go overboard and say we have to invade this country and you're like no, why do we need that? Just provide us with food, housing, education

first, then settle the other things.”

Another international student emphasised the importance of the IYSSE’s fight to raise the political consciousness of students on campus.

“The club is a good thing. The university should help the club to educate people, because this club tells people about things that are happening internationally, and I think a lot of people don’t know about that... If they are educated by this club, it would be beneficial to them.”

A second-year ancient history student told the IYSSE: “I am not a fan of political censorship in any way, no matter whether I agree with you or not. I agree with anti-war sentiment, there is no reason to censor anti-war views, if anything that makes you pro-war! I hate the war in Ukraine, I hate war in general. I don’t see any point to it.”

IYSSE members explained to the student that the US-led war against Russia is one prong in Washington’s broader geostrategy targeting China, the student agreed.

When asked about the danger of nuclear war waged by the US and its allies against Russia and China, he said, “That’s the elephant in the room. We’ll have to just wait and see and hopefully people will come to their senses.”

An IYSSE member warned that the threat of war comes not from the intentions of individual leaders, but the objective economic conditions under capitalism. The IYSSE campaigner explained that the ruling elite won’t come to their senses and that war can only be ended by the world working class and youth intervening to end capitalism—the system which leads to war. The student said, “I think some intervention is required, and what better place to start than universities?”

Another international student protested the university’s decision to refuse the club’s affiliation on the fraudulent claim that the IYSSE shares the same aims as Macquarie Socialists.

“This is far from the truth as currently we see in the crisis in Ukraine. The IYSSE have been holding anti-war campaigns whereas Macquarie Socialists support the US-led proxy war. This makes the IYSSE distinct in their beliefs from other clubs and if anything, such endeavours should be praised and supported,” the student said. “Now more than ever, we need efforts from all sides to stop conflicts around the world and

voice such opinions which the IYSSE strongly stand for.”

The student noted the fact that Macquarie Socialists released a politically hostile statement rejecting the assertion that the two clubs share the same aims and purpose.

“The Macquarie Socialists have already provided their statements of the differences. Needless to say, it is a shallow judgement on part of the management to put a halt on the activities of the IYSSE. We urge the university management to revoke their claims and allow the IYSSE affiliation.”

The IYSSE is holding a meeting to protest the ongoing political censorship of its club and demand the immediate affiliation of the IYSSE. Students, youth, academics and workers should join this event to fight against the attacks on opponents of war and to defend democratic rights on campus. Details are:

End political censorship at Macquarie University! Affiliate the IYSSE!

Time: 5 p.m. Thursday, 7 September

Location: 14SCO T5 Theatre, 14 Sir Christopher Ondaatje Ave, Macquarie University

Or join the online livestream via Zoom. Register at this link.

Get in touch with the IYSSE to find out how you can be involved:

Email: iysseaus@gmail.com

Facebook: facebook.com/IYSSEaustralia

Twitter: @IysseA

Instagram: @iysse.aus



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