

Date & Time: 08/08/2022 @ 6:30pm

:Location: SU Office Boardroom/Zoom

## Clár

- Officer Updates
- USI Disaffiliation
- All Students vote at Council
- Suggestions/AOB

Attending: Sai (Uachtarán), Tom (Arts Convener), Joe (VP Education) Barry (LU Gaeilge), Vickie (Socs), Seanie (Gaeilge), Julia (International), Greta (Post grad), Benjamin (Mature), Michaela (Disability Rights)

Apologies:

Minutes prepared by: Seanie

- Officer Updates
  - Sai: Partnership agreement, will bring forward the exact terms next week, Microwaves around campus, looking into a compromise on lecture recordings, making sure they are available on request. Graduations.
  - Joe: Orientation for post grad an international, college has agreed to run event on the second of September, setting up meeting with international officer. Campus tours, making it more centralised instead disparate groups. Working group set up on reasonable accommodations, currently no policy which is illegal
  - Barry: Craobh an Comhaltas, now a register branch of Conradh na Gaeilge as a partnership branch. Working with USI on Foclóir Aiteach. Was on TG4, Raidió na Gaelatachata and Raidió Ciarraí, live show on campus. Campus tours are going to be available as Gaeilge.
- USI Disaffiliation
  - Sai: for feedback, not voting on it. Sai explains USI and how it works, university gets 1 delegate per 1000 students. Pay an affiliation fee, €5 for each fulltime student, €3 for part time. Next year will be paying around €96,000 for membership. Wants to get people's opinions on what people ethic.
  - Tom: have to look at lot what the USI does for us, people don't know what it does. Only real thing is meeting with Simon Harris who only gives empty promises, has only done limited things.
  - Greta: should be looking at cost benefit analysis of what the USI does for us.
  - Benjamin: Went to congress a few months ago, can be a bit of a "shitshow". Should also look what changes we can do with the current system in place. Need to ask other institutions about their opinions.

- Joe: Mixed opinions on this, for full timers they get a lot of networking opportunities, but for part timers, doesn't get a lot out of it. Will go through the costs with a highlighter and look over the detail, will prepare a cost-benefit analysis for next week.
  - Barry: Echoes what Benjamin said, there is a need for a national movement for students, from Barry's position can be beneficial, especially for Gaelge. USI have a seat on the HEA board, was putting pressure on USI to get Gaelge included in the HEA bill. Just saying little things about the USI that are good. Very few students that are involved in this.
  - Tom: Do want a national union. Feels the current one is a bit rotten at the base should reach out to other unions about putting pressure on the USI to change. Demanding the best, we can.
  - Barry: Before we consider disaffiliation should a list of reforms of what needs to happen and what we want. Should try to inform students about what the USI does. Try to make as much reform in the union before disaffiliation.
  - Sai: If we are thinking of disaffiliation would have to have a proposal before October, and referendum before February so that the SU would not have to pay next year
  - Seanie: Also, would like to mention that membership of the USI does involve membership of the ESU (European Student's Union) which is another organisation and not many people know much about what they do
  - Benjamin: How long have we been members of this?
    - i. Sai: Since 1999
  - Benjamin: Need to provide information to the students, worry about holding a referendum where there is just a headline figure and focus on that without students actually knowing what they are voting on, worries it could turn into what happened with Brexit.
  - Barry: Would like to say that Full Timers will attend USI student council, if there's anything you would like to see please ask. Also like to bring up how USI does not do enough for the North, only one officer for NUS/USI (Northern Ireland Students Union) and feels USI does not do enough there, feels the USI sometimes operates on a 26 county basis instead of a 32 county one.
- All Students vote at Council
    - Sai: would make proposal to change how council votes so that any students who attends council would get a vote at council.
    - Seanie: Would worry that there would a lot of big proposals that would require a lot of votes and could cause voter fatigue
      - i. Joe: Point of order on that, there will be a big constitutional overhaul, will be holding a referendum on the gendered language in the constitution so that issue will be cleared up. And there will be scope to make be changes.
      - ii. Barry: Would worry about putting controversial amendments in referendum about the gendered languages cause referendum might fall through.

- Tom: Does worry about voter fatigue, but current system has very low engagement at below 10%. Thinks letting all students vote could be good.
  - Joe: Does think that class reps voting is good, does want to make class reps more engaged with their class about motions and getting feedback.
  - Benjamin: Recommends to Joe about setting up a mentor system for class reps, and reward people who are engaged and are passionate/
    - iii. Joe: Likes that idea and would like to look in that.
  - Vickie: Would also like to see societies committee members voting in council because they have important things to say.
  - Greta: would like to inform students that they pay for the SU cause if people know that they pay they are normally more engaged.
  - Barry: would like to see new system of a sort of town hall style thing where people can come in and talk about issues and will have a list of discussions to talk about and would be open for everyone. And people could also ask minor things in the A.O.B. and other general topics. Feels that opening up the vote wouldn't do too much as the people who are engaged enough with the SU are normally class reps anyway, better ways to improve engagement
- Suggestions/AOB
    - Joe: What do people think about engagement working group?
      - i. Tom: Could have engagement as an agenda item every week, would like to look at breaking 30% engagement and be a leader.
      - ii. Benjamin: What kind of pool would people be selected for cause we would need to draw in people from outside to avoid groupthink. A lot of people are already on a lot of committees and it can become a bit of an echo chamber sometimes
      - iii. Barry: would like to have something put on the agenda for the agenda so everyone can go home and think about it and come back with ideas. Engagement is brought up at every meeting.
      - iv. Seanie: Would like to suggest what Malena said last week, brainstorming session for engagement, needs a focused perspective on engagement rather than what is happening now where it is brought up as part of different policies.
    - Joe: Reasonable accommodation working group Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> at 6pm. survey for people to engage with.
      - i. Michaela: This needs to be something looked at for the long term and not just the short term.
      - ii. Seanie: Would like to suggest looking at what other universities are doing, particularly what UCD and UCC are doing cause this university normally listen if they are told those particular universities are doing something.
      - iii. Joe: Trinity has a particularly good policy will send it into the group chat so people can have a look at it.

Ended at 7:23