

CMLOÉG

Executive Committee Meeting - 13 September 2021 6:30pm

Members Present:

Roísín

Clodagh

Cora

Chris Newell

Mairtín

Ethan

Sai

Orlaith

Matthew

Jack

Eímeear

Krystian

Niamh

Annemarie

Shane

Anita

Apologies:

Faye

Kirsty

FUNDING

Chris Newell - University has removed all funding for the SU

1. History of Irish University Funding - 1998 Minister for Education - free education - no fees - first capitation fee introduced at IR£35 to fund student services and activities - now student contribution €3,000
2. Contribution was used for student services, including students' unions - Every other students' union is funded exclusively through contribution cost.
3. Clubs, Societies, SU etc are student supports and should not be considered 'extras' - Key component of university life, part of attracting students, impacts rankings.
4. NUIG has had a student levy since 1997. A student levy is paid in addition to the student contribution and must be paid by the student. It is not means tested and not covered by SUSI.
5. NUIG is the only University with levy used for RECURRENT costs. NUI Galway is not comparable to any other college. For example, in DCU, the levy is approx. €40 which pays for the new student centre. UL also has a levy for a new student centre. These are capital projects. All other colleges manage to pay for student services, including clubs,

societies and the students' union from their annual budgets. Why can't NUI Galway do the same?

6. NUIG SU received the lowest amount of funding compared to other colleges in Ireland.
7. In JUNE 2021 - post referendum – NUIG has withdrawn SU funding and funding for the Student Project Fund to clear what it claims is a bad debt on a loan it gave to itself to build the University Sports Centre. The so-called bad debt is made up of interest which the University applied to the loan it gave to itself! Important to note no banks were involved in construction of the University Sports Centre. The “loan” was an internal accounting exercise in the University
8. Previous NUIG allocation (from the Student Contribution) to the Students' Union was €73,000 and approximately €40,000 towards the cost of USI membership. This is what they have removed from the Students Union.
9. 2021 - Students voted give more money to SU from levy - now that is EXCLUSIVE income. This is a charge that students have chosen to give to the Students' Union.
10. By removing funding, NUIG is effectively taking money from students to pay a 'fictional' debt which was created by NUIG.
11. The SU needs to consider if it is satisfied for the Union to be defunded by the University. Defunding is an attack on student democracy and is petty revenge by the University following the Levy Referendum in April 2021.
12. Údarás na hOllscoile has approved the proposal by the University's Finance Resource Committee (FRC) to defund the SU, despite governance issues being raised by members of Údarás regarding how the decision was made at FRC.
13. It is the contention of the SU that Údarás has not fully considered the impact of defunding the Students' Union and that the decision was a mistake, which should be corrected.
14. The defunding of the Students' Union is a watershed movement? If the Students' Union accepts this, what's next? Will less popular clubs and societies be cut? Will other student services be defunded?
15. It was suggested to lobby politicians including local Councils, TDs, and other representative bodies to sound the alarm that the Public body has removed funding from the only democratic organization in the college
16. It was noted that NUIG SU has a cash reserve which it has accumulated over the past fourteen years to ensure it can continue to function in the event of a crisis. The reserve is in an SU owned company called SCML Teoranta which appears on the SU Balance Sheet. It was noted that during the levy referendum there had been some dismay that the SU had a reserve and that the SU owned a separate company. However, the existence of the company is advertised in the SU Election booklet each year as well as being described in the SU accounts. As a company, it is also listed on the Companies Registration Office website. Chris noted that there seemed to be a tactic of creating some kind of mystery about the SU and encouraged all officers to ask questions on any element of the Union that is not already advertised.

Jack - How severe is the SU down monetarily?

Chris - €120,000. NUIG has taken money from Student Project Fund and the Students' Union to contribute to the fictional Sports Centre Debt. An allocation of approximately €60k is also being made to the Student Health Centre.

Ethan - If the decision is reversed, what will happen with €120,000? Will it be returned to capital development?

Chris - NUIG claims "The trust is gone" between the SU and the University, which is incredibly condescending. Chris will distribute a detailed word document. He encouraged all officers to read the entire document and noted that the document is free to share, however is not an official SU position. (Circulated in WhatsApp group post meeting)

Chris - Final Points: NUIGSU has new logo, use New Masks

EXEC COMMITTEE VOTE on SU Charities 2021-2022

Speakers for causes:

Orlaith - BeLonG

Annemarie - COPE Galway

Shane - Alzheimer's

Mairtín - Autism

FINAL VOTE: Official Charities for 2021-2022

- 1. BeLonG To**
- 2. Galway Rape Crisis Centre**

AOB

Clodagh – wants to increase engagement for Class Reps, organizing Lecture Shout Outs

Shane - Seeks SU Rep for Graduate Studies Board, Shane and Mairtín sit on it already, Anita nominated and agreed to join

Minutes from last meeting: approved in consensus

Meeting finished at 7:46pm