



**NUI Galway
Students' Union
Comhaltas na Mac Léinn
OÉ Gaillimh**

Students' Union Executive Committee meeting
6:00 pm, Tuesday, 1st October 2019
Venue: Board Room, SU Office

SU Exec Meeting 01/10/2019

Present: Clare Austick (President) (She/Her), Cameron Keighron (Vice-President / Education Officer) (They/Them), Brandon Walsh (Vice-President / Welfare & Equality Officer) (He/Him), Sachi Sinha (Convenor of the College of Engineering & Informatics) (She/Her), Pádraic Toomey (Clubs' Captain) (He/Him), Alex Coughlan (Disability Rights Officer) (They/Them), Scott Green (Students' Union Council Chairperson) (They/Them). Avery Fenton (International Students' Officer) (She/Her), Oissine Moore (Societies Chairperson) (He/Him), Kenny Cooke (Convenor of the College of Science) (He/Him), Dheeraj Gudluru (Postgraduate Taught Officer) (He/Him), Torri Chihumura (Ethnic Minorities Officer) (She/Her).

Skype: Morgan Queeney (Gender and Lgbt+ Rights Officer) (They/Them), Erin Mac An Tsaoir (Oifigeach Na Gaeilge) (He/Him).

Apologies: Emily Tock (Postgraduate Research Officer) (She/Her), Chuka Paul Oguekwe (Mature Students' Officer) (He/Him), Clodagh McGivern (Convenor of the College of Business, Public Policy & Law) (She/Her), Aisling Fitzgerald (Convenor of the College of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences) (She/Her).

Absent: Mairtin Mac Gabhann (Convenor of the College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies)(He/Him).

These minutes were prepared by Scott Green (Students' Union Council Chairperson) during the meeting.

Agenda

1. Proposing last week's minutes

Last weeks' minutes were proposed by Padraic and then seconded by Cameron.

2. Newly elected officers welcome

Dheeraj came in and introduced himself and everyone introduced themselves in turn.

3. Full-time officer updates and work progress

Cameron- Attended the Comedy Hypnotist with Clare and Brandon. Their casework has mainly dealt course withdrawals and course changes etc the deadlines for which just recently passed. There are 20 undergrad exam appeals left afterwards postgrad exam appeals will begin. The student digital pathway/ student records system has now been opened for a consultation about changes to how it works. The current system is close to breaking however the suggested consultation adaptations probably won't be implemented until 2023. Digital literacy skills plan is being trialled in NUIG and GMIT. It launches in 3 weeks on Oct 14th which ties in nicely for a presentation at first council. Class rep training was extremely well received and was attended by 125 reps. There are currently 240 reps in total elected and registered.

Brandon- Casework has been particularly heavy in recent weeks. Brandon has done a lot of Break the barriers promo with lecture shout-outs and videos etc. He has also been busy with the planning of mental health week with an example event being given of the event which will focus on mental wellbeing.

Clare- Has also done a lot of 'Break the Barriers' promotion; media, lecture addresses, putting up a blackboard announcement, making sure that the posters had a visible screen presence in an attempt to diversify from previous years methods of information dissemination. There has been very good media for all the work we've done, and she stressed it's important that the issue was still raised even if protest itself is cancelled. Clare gave an all staff address and noted that in the university's strategic plan, of the five core values 2 out of the 5 values are a result of a student push so it's important we continue to present on issues and bring them forward. She attended the 'International Dresden Dialogue' where Dresden is hoping to be the European Capital of Culture for 2025. There will hopefully be an on-campus event for Galway 2020 called Eye on the Edge. She was also at a Fianna Fail gathering talking about student issues. There was an indication of pro-student funding ideas. There will be a second call for Student Projects Fund due to lack of student presence/ability to apply over summer. One thing the Union and the library want to tackle the fact that not all students have laptops and that the college desktops not always available-The plan is to apply for a laptop "rental" scheme which see the library have laptops that students could take out if they needed it. She has also been working to get more water

fountains on campus as they're required.

4. Part-time officer updates and work progress

Padraic- Hosted a second Clubs forum, has had three meetings with Mike Heskin, and meetings with various people about preparing for clubs ball including Chris Newell, Joanna Brophy and Ellen Kelly (previous organiser of sports ball).

Avery- Has been gathering information about international jobs, GNIB etc to produce a pamphlet for international students to be placed in hub central. She has also been looking at the environmental impact of having so many international students and looking at what the college can do to counteract this. She's also talked to Brandon about going to meetings with Tonya Watts about emergency funds for international students. She's talked to Daniel McFadden (last years' International Students' Officer) and they're working towards a plan in January to get together and help absentee voters get registered to vote.

Kenny- Hosted many class rep election. He has been alerted to an issue with the McMunn theatre, namely roughly only 50% of the seats are useable. An email will be sent to Professor Kevin Sullivan Head of Microbiology as apparently the issue has to be ticketed by a lecturer.

Dheeraj- Elected in the previous week. He's eager to represent postgraduate taught students in any capacity. He brought forward a query about GNIB fees-Avery will take on the issue. Another student raised issue about lack of supports available for people with learning disabilities-Alex signposted the DSS, NUIG have said they "wouldn't be able to provide support". He also raised a timetable issue within a postgraduate programme that has clashing modules.

Sachi- Got in touch with professors about examinations on Thursday due to a clash with the Break the Barriers protest. A class rep has been in touch with an issue about IT building computers being slow tickets could be raised but this was attempted last year but nothing happened. Kenny adds that Block E suffers from a similar issue, Cameron suggests we get on to ISS, Brandon suggests class wide ticket lodging at the beginning of labs/lectures.

Alex- Meeting with DSS team with a focus on accessibility forum prep. They're currently waiting to hear back from IMPACTE about an application for the upcoming AHEAD conference. They've also been in touch with VP Welfare & Equality for mental health week, mental health day, and disability week.

Scott- Helped facilitate class rep training, distributed officer reports and gave info about deadlines and layout. They've had people discuss motions, have heard about a potential Young Sinn Fein referendum, a potential motions include the creation of a sustainability officer position on the executive, a stance on Brexit, and a living wage on campus. They've been preparing minutes for executive meetings and also helped out with a handful of class rep elections. They also attended a meeting of the USCG.

Oissine- Attended a USCG meeting and will be travelling to the BICS forum. He also emailed societies about Break the Barriers.

Torri- has been talking to Brandon about future events and helping for mental health week.

She's been invited to do Union work at Irish Women's Forum youth event on the 16th of October. She's also assisted with consent training and condom packing.

Erin- Has done research into a written commitment from the college about promising to provide services in Irish, Cameron states the new NUIG 2025 scheme may include it. He has a Caifé na Gaeilge meeting tomorrow and has also organised training with Conradh na Gaeilge.

Morgan- Continuing work with counselling centre LGBT+ training for counsellors they've received no responses of yet. Rob Partridge is willing to give training in LGBT+ matters, James McCormack must confirm and then training should be confirmed. They've done some casework referring people to either the Vice President of Equality and Diversity office or emailing lecturers personally.

5. Break the Barriers

The protest has unfortunately been cancelled due to the weather warning that is in place. There may be a local action or another national event but it remains to be seen. Clare will keep the executive updated.

6. PTO training/deaf awareness training

Looking likely that it will be a Sunday afternoon/evening, Clare will do up a poll soon. There is a student here willing to train us in deaf culture and that will take place soon. It centres around giving us skills to interact in an appropriate way with students with hearing loss.

7. Class Reps

Access and part time course reps will be elected soon. There is currently 8 PHD reps the goal is 12 to have 1 for every 100. A new push is coming for elections before the first council. Camerons' advice is to make sure you take down the email yourself or digitally for ease of access later, many issues are stemming from reps not being contacted again. Training was well received. Cameron will be going to Advertees on Thursday for garment scouting. If there are any queries about hoodies send them to Cameron.

8. Mental Health Week

The timetable nearly done and is being sent off for finalising tomorrow. There is a lot of club and society involvement. The main event for volunteering is the connection café on Thursday (10th October 5-7pm) which is Mental Health Ireland workshop. The theme is suicide prevention and is all about opening the discussion around the topic. The little things posters will be rerun this year, they have the contact info for different services on campus on them.

9. Caife na Gaeilge

Over the past week students and staff have been emailing Clare. John Gill has said the college would pay for the last three invoices that SUCCS sent, not addressing the future of the café (management fees and any losses incurred). Discussions are still ongoing between SUCCS and the University. Erin will help with getting students to email in complaints.

10. Constitutional review

Alex asks for updates and whether we want large scope consultation/input and if we do that we'll need time. Cameron says it can be aligned with second council/AGM nicely and it would be a good place to start particularly for wider consultation. Clare says the process may not involve rewriting the whole thing. Cameron says if we open it up everything including executive makeup/composition. The last year it was amended was ten years ago so a lot of the review would focus on tidying up and modernizing the constitution. Cameron envisions something like the University strategic plan consultation. Clare says it will be written by the Union's solicitor based on input received.

11. Abortion Services in the Health Unit

The issue has been raised by multiple students that the Health Unit doesn't offer abortion services despite our relevant stance. The three sabbats met the director of the Health Unit and raised this same issue. There are multiple issues within health unit already and if this service is to be provided, they need at least two people trained to do so. Currently they provide info about and referral to abortion services. This is definitive funding issue.

Alex will investigate the Student Project Fund T&Cs and will contact the Health Unit if it's a possible funding source.

Oissine mentions they also cut funding for STI screenings meaning they are now 15 euro.

Clare explains it was funded by student project fund for the past three years but that has now expired. The director is looking into funding options or making use of contacts.

12. A.O.B

Erin will take charge of 14th October Memorial event for those affected by stillbirth or child loss.

The GCCN met last Wednesday. Cameron attended although in a different capacity to their Union role. We are treated as an organisation, but we would have to assess if it's wholly applicable or beneficial to us. Cameron will send info about the GCCN in the coming weeks.

During class rep training a parking issue was raised. It was suggested that we could begin looking into changing the parking permit regulation so that staff carparks become student carparks (or free to use to students) after 5pm.

Padraic was informed that from the 7th of October GMIT students can no longer be members of NUIG clubs. Padraic clarifies that insurance is not an issue and that he has a meeting with Molly Dunne GMIT head of sports coming up. Clare foresees GMIT taking the lead and us supporting them.

Mike Heskin will attend the next clubs forum and will take questions from those present.

Sachi brings up that an international undergraduate students' scholarship would be beneficial to international students as most international scholarships are for postgraduates. It's brought up that University wants them to have funding but currently there are no provisions to do so. As it stands there are around ten shared scholarships for post and undergraduate international students. Dheeraj mentions that other universities have more substantial scholarships but that isn't the case here. They'll have a conversation with Avery about this.

Erin mentions potentially sending students to the Extinction Rebellion event since Break the Barriers has been cancelled.

Scott brings up that many of our services charge 50cent for hot water a practice which only started two years ago and has left many students disgruntled. Clare will investigate possible solutions suggestions included those that bring their own cup aren't charged and Dheeraj mentions the possibility of electronic water coolers that also dispense hot water. Unlikely due to cost associated with them but Clare will look into it.

Oissine has been in touch with the auditor of Cumann na Gaelach who has said they have a meeting with someone in relation to Caife na Gaeilge and that they'll update Oissine afterwards.

With no other issues or concerns, meeting is concluded at 19:15 pm.

Minutes proposed by: Avery Fenton (International Officer)

Seconded by: Cameron Keighron (Vice President for Education)

Date: 07/10/19



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