

**NUI Galway Students’ Union Council**

**Comhairle Comhaltas na Mac Léinn, OÉ Gaillimh**

6:00pm, Monday 4th March 2019

Venue: O’ Flaherty Theatre, Concourse

**Present:** Megan Reilly (President), Eibhlín Seoighthe (Vice President for Education), Clare Austick (Vice President for Welfare & Equality), Chuka Paul Oguekwe (Mature Students’ Officer), Brandon Walsh (Societies Chairperson), Sabrina Vaughan (Students’ Union Council Chairperson), Rían McKeagney (Convenor of the College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies), Scott Green (Convenor of the College of Science), Clodagh McGivern (Convenor of the College of Business, Public Policy & Law), Roshan George (Convenor of the College of Engineering & Informatics), Alex Coughlan (Gender and LGBT + Rights Officer) and Muireann O’ Sullivan (Disability Rights Officer).

**Apologies:** Daniel McFadden (International Students Officer), Adhna Nic Dhonnchadha (Oifigeach na Gaeilge), Victoria Chihumura (Ethnic Minorities Officer), Jibran Abbasi (Postgraduate Research Officer) and Liezel Ravenscroft (Convenor of the College of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences).

**Minutes / Miontuairiscí**

**1. Introduction to Council/ Fáiltiú:**

S. Vaughan (SU Council Chairperson) welcomed for everyone for attending.

**2. Minutes & Matters Arising/ Miontuairiscí & Nithe ag Éirí Astu:**

The Chair proposed the minutes from the previous council from the 21st of January 2019. They were seconded by N. O’Brien (3BA Law). There were no matters arising from the previous council on 21/01/19.

**3. Prenominated AOB/ Réamh-ainmnithe AGE:**

Oisin Ganley (BA) Bio-degradable cutlery in Smokey’s.

**4.Speaker(s) / Cainteoir(í):**The speaker was voted in without objection.

**5.Officer Reports / Tuairisc na nOifigeach:**

Officer Reports that were sent out in the Council email were taken as read by each officer in SU Council apart from E. Seoighthe (VP for Education) who gave a brief outline of what she has been doing since the previous council.

**6. Speaker 1/ Cainteoir 1**

Christopher Mc Brearty – Mentor Connect Co-ordinator (NUI Galway)

Student Connect is a peer mentoring system to help with social integration for first year students.
There is an open call for mentors for next year.
Attend a training at the end of Semester 2, and then a refresher on the morning of your first meeting. After that to be a point of contact through WhatsApp and to forward relevant messages.
A support network in place with first year students at the centre of the network.
Awards include an ALIVE certificate, employability award etc.
Charity casino night on the 20th of March. Play for two hours, top earners to win great prizes such as 420euro worth of driving vouchers. Automatically entered into a draw for a draw

Mark Harrington (4th Computer Science) will every first year group be eligible for the programme
R: Most of them

(Marine Science first year) Never got assigned to a student connect mentor, or is there nothing for international students.
R: Intake list from international office was not given to the programme to assign a mentor for.

studentconnect@nuigalway.ie

**7. Items for agreement/ Le Socrú:**

a) Motion regarding Hate crime Legislation – Proposer: C. Keighron (Postgraduate Taught Officer) and A. Coughlan (Gender & LGBT+ Rights Officer)
*Proposal
Council Notes:* Post the introduction of the Prohibition to incitement of Hatred act 1990, very little

legislative changes have taken place in Ireland to further protect and defend minority

groups from acts of hate crime.

*Council further notes:* Despite the massive legislative changes in the last 25 years, which has led to significant cultural changes in Ireland, acts of discrimination against minority groups still exist and

are often under-reported.

*Council Mandates:* NUI Galway Students’ Union to actively campaign for adequate hate crime legislation in this country, reflecting all minority groups.

*Council Further Mandates:* NUI Galway Students’ Union to actively campaign and support adequate representation of relative groups when formulating legislation in this area.

D. Clifford (2BCT) Against – not limited to just behaviour, section 2 outlines the behaviours listed.
Vague understanding under the word of “adequate”

M. O’Sullivan (Disability Rights Officer) For this motion; Does not feel that the current legislation is adequate. Hate crimes arising (238 in 2017), rising more and more every year, primarily racist attacks. Asks for a vote to protect all our students regardless of background.

Eoin Walker (2nd Engineering) Neutral: asks how to fight or report hate crimes. How would introducing more legislation help the matter practically?

M. Dake (2 Law) For: Why hate crime is unique: a randomised act of violence can happen to anyone, but hate crimes happen to marginalized groups/ minorities. Asks for the justice system to protect those who are more vulnerable than the average citizen.

E. Finn (4th French through Irish, Human Rights) This isn’t law, that this is what the students’ union will stand for. This is a way to support those who need it.

J. Holland (Medicine) Against: What dictates a hate crime from a normal crime? Is the current legislation for violence not adequate? A system for support for these crimes might be a better solution. Motion seems to vaguely termed. Asks for clarification.

E. Hannon (4BCT) For: The act covers three sections. The law from 1989 mandates a fine of a thousand Irish pounds. Clearly need to be updated. Difference between hate crime and normal crime is the fact that hate crime is targeted towards a certain minority group.

S. Foster (2BA) Seems to be a lot of questions and appears that a lot of people didn’t read the legislation. The legislation makes it nearly impossible to prosecute or take action. We are not voting for a specific set of legislation, just voting for the right when the time comes to discuss said legislation.

J. Millton (2 Computer Science & IT) Against: Legislation includes any speech or behaviour, along with written materials. The real important part is increasing.

D. Burke (Master of Agriculture…) Was in Japan, suffered a lot of hate crime whilst there. Substantial benefits to being able to have an open dialogue to discuss and change things of this nature.

A. Coughlan (Gender & LGBT+ Rights Officer) Outlined what was and what was not hate crime or harassment.

b) Motion regarding the 27th Amendment – Proposer: B. Walsh (Societies’ Chairperson)
*Proposal
Council notes:* After the introduction of the 27th amendment that the constitutional right to

citizenship of children born on the islands of Ireland was limited to the children of Irish citizens.

*Council further notes:* That the introduction of this legislation has negatively impacted on the lives of many young people in Ireland.
*Council firmly believes:* That it is unethical and immoral to support legislation that is actively enforcing the deportation of children to countries that they have never lived in and may not even

speak the native language.

*Council mandates:* That NUI Galway Students’ Union campaign and actively support the repealing of the 27th amendment.
*Council further mandates:* That the NUI Galway Students’ Union support students that are affected by this legislation and actively campaign against the deportation of such students.

B. Walsh (Societies’ Chairperson) Limits the constitutional right to citizenship to those only
Violate the UN rights for a child ’92 and stated that this is highly illegal.

D. Clifford (2BCT) Against: If the amendment is passed then there are only two options

R. McKeagney (Arts Convenor) Applications decreasing does not mean illegal applications

M. O’Sullivan (Disability Rights Officer) Not looking to repeal, rather looking to introduce legislation. Need to make sure that children that are born here feel safe and don’t get deportated to foreign countries where they don’t feel welcome. Support all children born on this island and support this motion,

E. Hannon (4BCT)For: 1st point – searched for the number of citizens last year, 10,000
2 british citizens as not irish…. Been born here and gone to school here and are not irish as there parents are not irish.

N. O’Reilly (Final Law) For: Wants to address a child being abandoned in Ireland and parents moving away, EU Law allows you to stay in a country to support your child within Europe.
-> D. Clifford (2BCT) stated that he resents his words being taken out of context
R: All we had to was be born on this island to have citizenship, why should anyone else have to jump through hoops to attain citizenship. You don’t get to decide what island you’re born on.

M. Dake (2 Law) People consider people asylum seeking abusing a system. People go where they need to go to feel safe. People that

Motion 9(a) That the question now be put.

E. Finn (Human Rights) Refcom says that the government can introduce legislation around this issue, it just wont be a constitutional right. The idea of not deporting our fellow students. Send out a message of inclusivity as members of the students’ union.

Motion was passed.

c) USI Hustings
Candidates outlined their manifestos and then council proceeded to vote.

**8. Items for information/ Le Socrú:**a) Fourth Council in Semester 2 – March 25th

b) Sustainability Officer to be elected to Executive – will need 500 signatures for referendum
Erin (2BA Irish) asked if this role could be added onto another role
R: Role currently falls under the President
Niamh (Final Law) stated that committees with too many members become non-functional.

c) USI Congress from 1st – 4th of April in Castlebar.

d) Charity Week 🡪 Much needed funds. Bake sale taking place with multiple activities such as pie-in-the-face stalls. All societies/ clubs welcome to get involved.

e) Éalú: End of semester event that’s a big gig. In the college bar or a SISCO event, but a non-festival scale. Lack of commitment from the college.

Erin (2BA Irish) asked why there was a lack of commitment from the university.

R: Not sure
Erin (2BA Irish) added that we should just have rag week if the university does not want to commit to it’s agreement.
R: Fair

S. Foster (2BA) asked what charities the SU is supporting
R: Cope Galway and the Galway Rape Crisis Centre

f) Fund the future (campaign) SUSI has gotten a 7% cut since 2011, that has not budged since. Looking to start a nationally organised movement. SIPTU are on-board. Postgrads being used as free-labour.

g) Accommodation Protests – M. Reilly (SU President): to happen

**9. Items for Discussion/ Le Bheith Pléite**a) NUIG Levy Fee – M. Reilly (SU President)
College admitted they couldn’t find anything about the 5% interest rate, and are instead now offering a 1.4% interest rate.

**10. Prenominated AOB/ Réamh-ainmnithe AGE:**

1. Oisin Ganley (BA) Bio-degradable cutlery in Smokey’s.
O. Ganley asked the room why Sult only had biodegradable cutlery for 1 month.
R: M. Reilly (SU President) stated that this may have been to old stock, but that there is certainly a reason for it.

2. It’s Seachtain na Gaeilge this week and as a result of that there will be pop-up Gaeltachts and leaflets with chat up lines trí Gaeilge ar fáil.

**11. A.O.B/ A.G.E**

1. Student Achievement Awards Ireland – nominations to be in soon.

2. E. Finn (Human Rights) University was stealing from its students with a 5% interest rate and now it wants us to pay more.
All who spoke agreed with E. Finn’s consensus.

The chairperson then concluded the meeting at 8:57pm

04/03/19

Minutes proposed by: Sabrina Vaughan (SU Council Chairperson).

Seconded by: N. O’Brien (3BA Law)

25/03/19

\*These minutes were prepared from a contemporaneous note taken by Dara Rickard (SU Council Secretary) at the meeting Monday, 4th of March 2019 at 6PM in the Flaherty Theatre and were typed into this memorandum style document for the record of Council.

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For easier reading of the minutes some names/ titles were shortened.

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