



### **Students' Union Council**

6:00 pm, Monday, November 2019

Venue: Large Lecture Hall, Human Biology Building

#### **Present:**

Clare Austick (President) (She/Her), Cameron Keighron (Vice-President / Education Officer) (They/Them), Brandon Walsh (Vice-President / Welfare & Equality Officer) (He/Him), Pádraic Toomey (Clubs' Captain) (He/Him), Mairtin Mac Gabhann (Convenor of the College of Arts, Social Sciences & Celtic Studies)(He/Him), Scott Green (Students' Union Council Chairperson) (They/Them), Avery Fenton (International Students' Officer) (She/Her), Oissine Moore (Societies Chairperson) (He/Him), Dheeraj Gudluru (Postgraduate Taught Officer) (He/Him), Emily Tock (Postgraduate Research Officer) (She/Her).

Alex Coughlan (Disability Rights Officer) (They/Them), Kenny Cooke (Convenor of the College of Science) (He/Him), Clodagh McGivern (Convenor of the College of Business, Public Policy & Law) (She/Her), Sachi Sinha (Convenor of the College of Engineering & Informatics) (She/Her).

#### **Apologies:**

Aisling Fitzgerald (Convenor of the College of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences) (She/Her), Erin Mac An Tsaoir (Oifigeach Na Gaeilge) (He/Him), Chuka Paul Oguekwe (Mature Students' Officer) (He/Him).

#### **Absent:**

Torri Chihumura (Ethnic Minorities Officer) (She/Her).

## Minutes (Miontuairiscí) for SU Council 11/11/2019:

### **Introduction to Council/ Fáiltiú:**

Welcomed to Council.

Agenda outlined by Chairperson.

Seconding of minutes from last SU council:

Proposed by: Kiara 3SE1 Seconded by : Kelsey 1MS01 Regenerative Medicine

Acceptance of apologies passed by unanimous vote.

### **Speakers / Cainteoirí:**

Speaker 1. -Finance Update provided by Chris Newell (SU General Manager)

-Review of last years financial accounts (year ending 30<sup>th</sup> June 2019)

Income Statement, budget updates for 2019/2020

Ran through expenditure and incomes point by point.

-SU Budget Update at 31<sup>st</sup> Oct 2019

No Introduction Provided (No class stated): Will campaigns and costs incurred include protests?

→ Answered by Scott Green (Chairperson): Yes

### **Officer Reports / Tuairisc na nOifigeach:**

Written electronic reports were sent out and emailed to SU Council members.

Video style officer reports (as per suggestion and request of last SU Council) were prepared and presented to summarise recent work done by each officer since last council. (Will also be made available with transcript and subtitles.)

Asked by Zhonna Gonzalez (1<sup>st</sup> year Law): Will this be available on the Class Rep Facebook Group?

→ Answered by Scott Green (SU Chairperson): Yes. It will be uploaded and available on the Facebook Group, Facebook Page and Instagram.

### **Sustainability Working Group**

Some matters arising include:

Water coolers, 7 more water coolers were proposed, awaiting for approval of proposal.

Commercial services on campus are going towards “Meatless Mondays” to cut down on consumption.

Rose (1<sup>st</sup> year Spanish)

What is being done in order to encourage people to move towards reusable coffee cups as opposed to single use and plastic cups? What can be done?

→ Answered by Brandon (VP; Welfare & Equality): A cup initiative is organised, to steer people towards more sustainable options and incentivize people to bring their own reusable cups.

→Clare (President): Reusable cups will be handed out in 2 weeks time as part of Reusable Cup initiative, working on desensitizing students' use of single-use cups and plastic.

In the future, instead of providing a discount for people bringing their own cup, they will be charging for single-use cups.

#### Oissine Moore (3<sup>rd</sup> year Science and Societies Chairperson)

In relation to the previous thread, will the price of the coffee drop from lets say 2.50 to 2.30 plus the charge on the cup or stay 2.50 and be 2.70 with the cup?

→Answered by Clare (President): Charge will be on the cup.

→Oissine: But, if instead of providing a discount for bringing you own cup, a charge will be applied on single use cups...does that mean the price of coffee will be increased or stay the same or be dropped?

→Answered by Clare SU President: Not entirely sure. Details are not yet consolidated yet. Follow up will be provided.

#### Zhonna Gonzalez Davis (1<sup>st</sup> year Law)

Will every commercial service and business on campus (eg Business building café) be involved?

→Answered by Clare (President): In discussion with businesses on North Campus in relation to initiative, one has already committed. Charging for single use cups will be applicable to all commercial services. More information will be provided.

#### Kelsey (1MS01 Regenerative Med)

Will maps be provided outlining the location of available water coolers and fountains on campus?

→Answered by Clare (SU President): A map is already available...and will also be available through the mobile application as well in about a week or two.

### **Update from student levy working group**

There will be another working group in 2 weeks time.

No questions asked.

### **University Draft Strategic Plan**

No questions asked.

### **Online Campaign**

#TelltheSU introduced.

No questions asked.

### **Winter Conferring**

Students will have access to kitchen inside the Hub.

Large and small acoustic rooms have seating areas that can also be used.

### Kenny - Science:

The Hub can be accessed through backdoor to the Hub or through the Socs Box corridor.

### Oissine (3<sup>rd</sup> year Science and Societies Chairperson)

In relation to graduation ceremony ... Is there a possibility of moving the graduation venue to another location. Eg.: Hold the ceremony in the Aula Maxima or other location which would cause less disruptions.

→ Answered by Clare (SU President): Highly unlikely.

→ Answered by Brandon (Welfare and Equality Officer): It used to be like that, not possible now due to capacity issues. Entire conferring process was reshaped to accommodate more people and shorten length of time taken for graduations to come to completion.

### **NUIG SU Podcast**

One Galway - Brandon (Welfare & Equality)

Vision for the podcasts is to break more complex issues down for easier understanding (like the student levy, easing the transition of students to 3<sup>rd</sup> level education.) Welcoming suggestions and encouraging students who have ideas to e-mail him or get in contact.

Owen (first year CSIT): Who will be featured in the podcasts?

→ Answered by Brandon (Welfare and Equality): Hopefully guests.

Importance of getting all voices heard. Also, if there are any students who would like to talk about specific topic are more than welcome to get signed up.

### **University Sanctuary**

Clare (SU President)

NUIG is now designated University Sanctuary  
Implementation of Unies of Sanctuary

Zhonna Gonzalez Davis (1<sup>st</sup> yr Law)

What exactly do you do?

→ Answered by Clare (SU President): Campaign. We are working on creating a more accepting and welcoming environment for students from direct provision and the traveller community. Provision of scholarships, campaigns, informing students on the topic of direct provision.

### **USI Work Update**

Marie Lyons (BMW Region Officer of USI)

- Working on Mental Health campaign "Recharge"
- HSE unlimited free condoms for students initiative
- Supporting Students in Direct Provision
- DCU student's deportation order
- Anaras campaign, legalisation of abortion, equality, inclusion
- PME Irish education program
- USI-SIPTU joint agreement, information on workers right issues, can be contacted, free for members of USI.

-On climate action: calling for student ambassadors for sustainability, if anybody wants to be ambassador contact her to sign up... and join the 21-day challenge of SUI.

-5-year plan for USI available on USI social media platforms.

-Pink Training -application info can be found and will be sent out.

No questions asked.

→Brandon Equality (Welfare and Equality)

If NUIG students happen to be issued a deportation order, there will be aids in place to help the students.

(Picture was taken in solidarity of DCU student facing deportation.)

### **Pink Training**

Cameron (VP and Education Officer) invites class reps who want to engage to apply, LGBT+ pink training, encouraging students to talk to anyone on the committee executive.

### **Universal Design for learning**

Cameron (VP and Education Officer)

Expressed repeated apologies for absence due to illness, welcomed attendees...

Project kicked off in college of Business, Public Policy and Law for undergraduate students, project got extended to make this project sustainable and include postgrad students.

Applied for IUAD grant to enhance teaching and learning, were allocated a 120 000 euro to further develop this project for School of Business, Public Policy and Law, School of Mathematics and School of Physics.

Over 200 lecturers were trained in inclusive teaching practices.

Dheeraj (Postgrad Taught Officer)

Does this include the schedules of lessons and labs in the courses?

→Answered by Cameron: Yes, it includes the entire environment that makes up the learning process. The timetabling of classes and labs, the timetabling of exams, where they are held, how they are held, etc.

Main focus is on international, ACCESS, LGBT, female, transgender students, and student from non-traditional backgrounds, students with disability foreign students, etc.

→New question:

And the School of engineering will not be included? How come other colleges not been taken into consideration?

→Answered by Cameron:

Not that they weren't taken into consideration....The project initially started within the Business School. When the project first got extended the School of Maths, Physics, ACCESS and Disability Support Services expressed their interest first. There aren't enough resources and finances for the direct inclusion of every college, however they are hoping to create toolkit for all colleges, set of guidelines for all colleges.

## **Exams Office and Semester 2 Exam Venues**

Issues faced like changing of exam venues, release date of exam timetables, seat numbers, and release of exam results can not be fixed or changed at SU council right now. Supplying information for new and returning students is the primary focus. Due to Galway 2020 (Capital of Culture) events students will experience some disruptions from January to December. Some exam venues will be cancelled and changed. Eg.: The Bailey Allen Hall will be out of action for some of the days during the exam period. Disability Support Services venue will also change.

### Kara/Karen (1<sup>st</sup> year Music and Irish)

Will class reps have to go to the exams office for information about the exams?

→ Answered by Cameron: each individual student will get some information, including a link—to personal timetables.

The goal is to empower us to actively participate and interact with exam office directly if students have and specific questions or any exam issues.

### Ethan (Final Year Physics)

Enquired about the Bailey Allen Hall changes. Will exams be pushed to Salthill or will they try to keep as many exams on campus as possible?

→ Answered by Cameron: Some exams will be pushed Salthill, some elsewhere, depending on the numbers and the sizes. Trying to come up with a solution, accommodations payed, free tickets and entry to relevant events to students who experience disruptions due to whatever event is taking up space in Bailey Allen Hall. It is not the best solution but some sort of compensation will be offered. Not an ideal situation.

### Owen (???): Will the length and time of the exam period change?

→ Answered by Cameron: No, exam period is the same.

→ New Question by Owen: Will students have exams in Salthill and on Campus 2 hrs later?

→ Answered by Cameron: We asked for it not to be that way to reduce exam pressure. Buses will also be running to and from exam venues.

## **USI PG Charter for Rights**

Cameron (VP and Education Officer)

Charter has been published.

Bringing issues forward to increase supports around studies, research, college specific stipends of postgrad students and reduce the undervaluing of PhD and postgrad students and abuse of mandatory teaching experience of students (Make sure that postgrad students do not get lumped with a load of work because the lecturers do not want to do it...).

Focus is also on increasing college specific funding stipends for PhD students to come in line with the national ones.

### Dheeraj (Postgrad Taught Officer)

Puts in extra point, funding aspect of PJ Charter and documents regarding visa procedures, etc.

## **Living Wage Campaign**

Alex (Disability Rights Officer)

Motion was raised and passed during last council.

Alex outlined what the campaign will look like.

Anyone who wants to get more involved in the campaign- meeting will be on in IT 204, 18:00, 16/11/19. Encourages students to e-mail her, get involved, etc.

Question:

What do you want to see from a campaign? Any specifics or ideas?

Rose (1<sup>st</sup> year Spanish)

Is there a way to advertise or list job availability on campus? Due to the timing there are no jobs, as Galway only hires over the summer...Many visiting students are looking for work.

Niall Campbell (2<sup>nd</sup> year Soc and Pol)

Everyone should be encouraged to join the union and be part of this.

Kelsey (1MS01 Regenerative Medicine)

Pressures of applying for part time jobs which often require you to be fully-flexible...

→ Answered by Alex: Will look into the matter and could be useful particularly on campus.

## **Matters Arising / Nithe ag Éirí Astu: Issue Raised Regarding Class Rep Elections**

Speaker: 3<sup>rd</sup> year engineering class rep

By 4 weeks into semester every single class should have at least one class rep, unfortunately this has not been the case.

Raised attention to ongoing issues brought to his personal attention from students of other years and other colleges.

The individuals responsible for making sure class reps are elected in each class are the chair and relevant convenor.

Convenor of College of Science reported that they facilitated a lot class elections, however there are classes that do not have a representative. Quoted from email correspondence. There was one class rep for students attending Maths (which includes several classes) which was called “adequate representation”. It is not. Referred to Article 7, Par 11, Sub Par 3 of SU Student Constitution.

An admin assistant and staff member of the College of Business e-mailed the convenor asking for the names of class reps by Week 6. On the first SU meeting the convenor stated that elections were held between 01/07-15/10. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of October the staff member was forced to send out an email to classes asking for individuals email to become class reps. 1<sup>st</sup> Male and 1<sup>st</sup> female to email the staff member became class reps. Referred to violation of article 11. Should be noted that staff members care more about representation than the relevant convenor.

**P.O.I.:**

3BC1 Class Rep

Class reps were elected before the previously mentioned email was sent out. Elections did happen for some modules. What the previous speaker said is therefore not true.

Proposed that convenors of each school prepare a list of class representatives for every class under their relevant college by Week 12, and any convenors who do not comply be asked (on account of their three violations of the SU Constitution namely of Article 2; Article 7; Article 11 not to mention schedule 1) be asked to resign from their post and a new convenor elected.

Cameron (Education Officer)

Outlines a few things in relation to constitution and class rep elections  
Appreciates the previous speakers concerns.  
Convenors are part-time officers and full-time students, and yes, it is absolutely expected to assist in class elections. 434 class reps are elected as of now.  
Many people are elected as Class Reps but not yet registered.  
Class reps are elected just not registered  
Adequate representation of students is provided.  
It is not fair to release lists of class reps without their permission and quote from emails without the permission of all parties...  
Issues will be sorted as soon as possible, there will be a class rep registered for every class.  
There is no formal election process in place as per the constitution.  
No one should face resignation.

Dheeraj (Postgrad Officer Taught)

Speaks in support of previous speaker. We are in part-time, unpaid, voluntary positions and full-time students, with courses that are often really heavy.

Kiara 3BC1

How many students are in their college? (There are 300 in her Commerce course) How do you expect one person to go to every class and have a rep elected. Its not fair to ask either of the 2 convenors to step down, because they are doing the best they can.

3<sup>rd</sup> Yeas Engineering Class Rep I am not asking the constitution is asking. Plus convenors have in their power to delegate. There are classes with no representation that do not have a voice in this Union.

Kelsey 1MS01 Regenerative Medicine

Valid point, however just because your class does not have an elected representative does not mean you don't have a voice in this union...Meetings are open to anyone. There are ample ways for people to get their voices heard.

### Clubs Captain

Engineering is a course where there is no module choice compared to other schools, hence it is easier to elect class reps due to absence of module choice. However, it is less manageable for colleges like arts and science with a wide selection of modules to manage the elections.

### Zhonna Gonzalez Davis ( 1<sup>st</sup> year Law)

In the present moment does everyone in engineering have a class rep now? It would be the class reps' responsibility to make themselves known to their class and the SU.

### ??? (2<sup>nd</sup> year Corporate Law)

If students have a problem that needs to be addressed by the union, it can be difficult to build oneself up to bring that problem forward...if they have to be rooting out for a random class rep from another course, it is a deterrent. Class reps should be there and readily available.

### Clare SU President

Calling for resignation of officer is not reasonable.

Referenced point 14 of the Constitution, says the president can interpret the constitution in case of dispute.

Stands over her team and the union with 100 % support.

There is a constitution review coming up in the next couple of weeks.

## **A.O.B.:**

### Niall Campbell ( 2<sup>nd</sup> year Soc and Pol )

There will be a march on the 24<sup>th</sup> of November for Irish unity. A bus will be organised. SU Policy is to gain permission to ask students needing to register to declare interest for bus to run. Encourages participation.

Answered by Scott Green (SU Chairperson).

### Bridgit Molloy (Faculty of Arts and Creative Writing)

In the past there used to be cafés on campus and if you had your own cup you could get free hot water. Now cafes charge 50c for the hot water.

It seems unreasonable and bit extreme. She has spoken to different people about the issue and got several different responses and answers, hence she is raising the issue here, in need of clarification.

→ Answered: List of Cafes charging for hot water was taken and follow up will be provided by Clare (President).

### James 3BCT (3<sup>rd</sup> year CSIT)

Would it be an option to add a kettle to Hub Central and implement a similar system of hot water boilers to that of the main Hub?

→ Answered by Clare (President): Great suggestion. They are currently developing social space and planning addition of microwave and kettle into new Hub Central.

→ Answered by Scott Green Chairperson: Issue will be taken to Social Spaces committee and student services....Request has been filed.

??? (Irish)

Influence of SU on sale of graduation gowns.

Graduation gowns cost 50 euro and are compulsory for attendance. Inquiry made about availability or information on other options to get cheaper gowns, and whether the SU has influence in these matters.

→ Answer Clare (SU President) will send an email out in relation to the issue to a relevant body and will get back on the matter.

Information was also supplied on the distribution of SU hoodies, distribution of reusable cups to promote/encourage/educate on sustainability and information on Class Rep Registration.

With no other issues or concerns, meeting is concluded at 19:57 on the 11/11/2019.

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These minutes were prepared by Szilvia Nemeth (SU Secretary) for the record of council.

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