

Comhairle Comhaltas na Mac Léinn 18-10-21

Date: 18th October 2021

Time: 18:00 PM

Location: Zoom

Minutes taken by: Ethan Wilkinson (Societies Chairperson)

Officer Reports

Taken as read by all officers, no questions. Mature Students' Officer and Ethnic Minorities Officer Reports deferred until end of meeting.

Item 6: Parking on campus

Raised by Uachtarán (Róisín)

The issue is the existence of staff only parking – belief that staff only parking should not exist, that it is unfair and should be shared between staff and students. Over 3x more students commute than staff, and even at that the latest survey was in 2019 (pre pandemic) and with the housing crisis getting worse, more people are commuting, so figures could have changed drastically. Staff only pay 5 euros more than students do (55). Students can sometimes come in as early as 2 hours before beginning of class starts and not getting parking, therefore still miss lectures. Clamping has also been a huge issue as a result. Has raised this with buildings who suggested students use more sustainable methods of transport...the next commuting survey is being circulated in November and maybe we should wait for the results of that survey and circulate it far and wide to truly reflect the student side of it and then take action.

Proposal of a protest in staff only car parks - wants student feedback on this idea.

- John Moran- Second year global commerce : Suggestion to tighten up parking spaces in student parking. Untidy parking at kingfisher (Across). Róisín says that this is not actually owned by the university so they do not have planning permission for that area.
- Paul Byrne-1st year Commerce: Agrees a good idea to put pressure on NUIG president, asks if commuting long distance students are priorities.
- Mary Patricia Corrigan- 3rd year civil engineering: Asks if not allowing staff to park during protest. Raises the point of not allowing staff will make sure classes don't run/ are late which also impacts students and says protest would be counter-productive
- Criodán Ó Murchú MSc Environmental Science- Disagrees with Mary, says students are already affected and would really send a message. Point of a protest is to cause disruption.
- Nico Amaya- Final year Financial Maths: Agrees with Mary, says more students would be put out than worth, and suggests finding another form of protest should be found.
- Discussion finished, will decide on an action once we receive survey results

Cybersystems Update:

- Pól Ó'Dochartaigh (Deputy President and Registrar) enters meeting to give updates on the cyber systems - says temporary wifi and financial systems is first priority
- Eduroam in place for staff since last 24 hours
- New network environment needed
- No evidence of any evidence stolen
- List of 50 priorities is set, will be asked to be passed on
- No time scale is available
- ISS prioritising student services
- Staff has been asked to be accommodating as possible
- Better to be thorough then quick
- Questions:
- Cian McGearailt- 2nd year Law and Human Rights: Difference between Malware and Ransomware attacks. Answer: Malware is pure damage while ransom is holding something ransom
- Cirodán Ó Murchú MSc Environmental Science- Asks about Postgrads in general and stuff to be done to be prevented again. Answer: Rejects that there has been a lack of compassion from staff and rejects the notion, making sure what they will put in place will protect the system as much as possible. No guarantee it can't happen again
- John Moran- Found lecturers, from global commerce perspective, have been incredibly accommodating and appreciates the update
- Kate O'Dwyer- 2nd Year Social Science students: Wondering what is being done with the library especially. Answer: Has been in talks to say that the library is one of the top priorities, doesn't know exactly what stage it's at. Says lecturers should be reasonable, any problems take it up with head of discipline.
- Medina- 3rd year psychology student: People online are worried about falling behind as some lecturers aren't uploading material or recordings. Answer: Procedure was made that online classes would be online and in person will be in person but materials should all be uploaded. Take it up with head of school.
- Niamh McGrath-Disability rights officer:Incognito mode doesn't always work for blackboard, and as the main source of info is wondering a schedule for this in particular. Answer: No definitive answer, says to take it up with Head of School.
- Jason Turloch- Masters and international rep: Was wondering when the renaming of a lecture hall after an international traveller taking place. Answer: At the moment it is chaired by Pól, has not been a proposal yet and welcomes a student representative. Says the committee is small, but a proposal is welcomed from anyone.
- Heather- Medicine: Asking for a timescale for databases. Answer: No definitive timescale but top of the list as libraries. Heather added all staff have been incredibly accommodating.
- Pól adds that ISS have done amazing work so far, and thanks the students for patience putting up with all IT issues currently happening.

Item 5: Student Union Funding

- Chris Newell, General Manager of the SU, is speaking
- Update in meeting pack stating all information.
- Nuig always receives lowest amount of funding in regard to all third level institutions.
- Levy referendum passed last April, university unhappy with this

- University claims there is a 5.5 million bad debt on sport center, removed 120,000-euro funding for the SU by the university.
- First time all funding has been completely removed
- Only union funded by levy alone.
- Debt is interest on a made up loan that the university gave to itself.
- 5% interest rate, charging in total an extra 8 Million euro.
- Document goes into more detail.
- No Questions.
- Adds if there are any questions feel free to send them on to Róisín.
- Róisín: States University does not care about the student body, NUIG has caused itself horrific damage in terms of reputation over the last few years. Students have already paid over 20 million for the sport center.
- Abbey O'Keefe-4th Year Medicine: Asks if NUIG has ever considered making the Kingfisher free for student use? Answer: Chris says it is treated as other commercial services are, operator pays for upkeep and fee so university may not want to lose this to provide service for free, in his opinion.
- Jason Sherlock-Masters International Finance: Membership for non student is 350 and student is 250, asks was there never really a student discount?
- Nicolas Kiely: Why did the university allow the sport center to be rented out to a private business in the first place? Answer: Hot topic currently, Róisín adds that the SU is asking for evidence that the SU agreed to pay off the loan, and the USI president will be meeting with the minister for higher education tomorrow.

Item 7: It attack and impact on postgrads

- Cíodán Ó Murchú: Says there is a lack of understanding by certain services and is unhappy with the update. Postgrads should be compensated and clearly communicated to.
- Would like to ask the SU for blanket extension as well as adding more staff to ISS.
- Ciara O'Neill- Phd: Lab based and can't access a vital service needed to order supplies. Without a timeline is tough.
- Matthew Connolly- International Students Officer: Shares the frustration and Pól was not able to provide any timeline. Unhappy that a priority list would not be provided. Agrees a blanket extension is needed
- Shane O'Connell-Postgrad research officer: Agrees with what Matthew said, thinks it's a systemic rather than staffing issue. Some people have had to resort to pirate sites and advises to stay away.
- Orla- 3rd year environmental Science: Agrees with points raised, says university should be more lenient with exams, being weeks behind on material is unfair.
- Clodagh McGivern-Education Officer: University wishes to run exams before Christmas, Clodagh would like to hear thoughts on holding exams after Christmas. Open book exams would devalue degree in comparison to other universities.

Item 8: Sustainability and the SU

- Cíodán Ó Murchú MSc Env. Science
- What are the university and the SU doing for decarbonisation?

- Róisín appreciates contribution, notes some updates from the SU regarding sustainability efforts and says that she wants to establish a sustainability strategy for the union alongside the sustainability working group once the sustainability officer is elected

Item 9:Period Poverty

- Criodán Ó Murchú
- Period poverty is a pressing issue and asks about a survey
- Róisín says a survey was held in June, 400 students took part. Survey results can be provided. Update on period products is that all bathrooms should have been supplied on campus but some clearly don't. If a bathroom is found suggested to contact Michelle Millar. Products are available in SU Office, Engineering building bathrooms and Flirt FM Bathrooms.

AOB:

No other business

END OF MEETING