

Agenda:

UCDSU Council Meeting 5

Monday, 7th February 2021, 6pm

Venue – Hybrid

Physical: Fitzgerald Chamber UCD Student Centre

Digital Link: (<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85180513327>)

The Chair welcomed the Council.

(a) The declaration of a quorum by roll call.

Chair: Any comments in relation to the minutes?

Approved by majority vote.

(b) Minutes arising of a previous meeting.

(c) Matters arising.

(d) Library Curation Group presentation

Ursula Byrne from the Library – presentation regarding the refurbishment of level 3.

(e) Business College Officer Election

(f) Chairs Decisions

Chair: The last Council was abandoned, as a result of two circumstances. Firstly, there was an issue with accessing Council documents as a result of the shift from Outlook to Gmail and a delay in making the documents available in a Council pack to you guys and secondly, we couldn't move the date because of scheduling difficulties. It was logistically easier to abandon the meeting and go ahead today. If anyone would like to ask questions or challenge that decision, this is your opportunity to speak up and have that discussion.

MCL Stage 2 - how does this affect future dates for meetings?

Chair: future dates are unchanged. The meeting was not moved, it was abandoned, so the remaining dates remained unchanged.

Chair: Since there are no questions from the floor, I will presume this was okay. We can move on.

(e) Motions on notice.

Chair: Before we move forward, I wanted to share some reflections on this issue. As a council member and former sabbatical officer, I have sometimes felt Chairpersons have been too strict with regards to standing orders and rules around Council, not always being empathetic towards how sabbatical officers might struggle with submitting reports on time during busy periods, and likewise with items and motions to be added to the agenda.

However, having said that, there are some officers who consistently submit reports late and have taken much advantage of that leniency. At this stage, I do not wish to call out names or to take any actions towards individuals who have taken this leniency often, however if the behaviour continues, I might have to take action. I would be interested in hearing what Council thinks about this, and if you believe that some of the deadlines should be changed, or that I should be more strict in applying the standing orders, please let me know.

1. Student Support Services – Molly & Ruairi

Proposer: Molly Greenough

MG: The contents of this motion are pretty straight forward. The only difference is that the motion was calling for a task force, and one is up and running now. The motion just discusses how the Counseling Service is at breaking point and in need of more resourcing.

Chair: Any speakers against the motion? No, but we have a question.

DKO'T, Disability College Officer: Can we have an explanation why the number 5 was selected?

MG: We felt this was an attaining target to start with, looking at international best practice, and aiming for a successful number.

Chair: Any further questions or speakers against? We'll put it to a vote.

Passed by a clear majority.

2. Addition of Expiring Mandates to Agenda – Darragh & Eoghan (2/3rds majority req)

Chair: This is a motion to amend the standing orders. In order for it to pass, it requires a two-thirds majority. So I will trigger a mandatory count.

DKO'T, Disability Campaign Coordinator: the motion will oblige the C&E Officer to include expiring mandates to Council. It's just because the policy book is long, and sometimes things can fall through the cracks, and Council should be aware that good mandates which may need renewing are about to expire.

Chair: Any speakers against, or questions?

Ruairi Power, President: My issue is that the Policy book is too long. It will be impossible for me to fulfill my mandates. Any member of Council can review the policy book on our website, they are arranged in a chronological order, and if members of Council want to renew them they can. However if the book is so long that people are losing track of what is in it, it makes it a very difficult document to work with. Since we are often adding mandates to it, perhaps we should also allow mandates to expire.

DKO'T: All that this motion is doing is encouraging people to see that mandates are about to expire. If people don't want them to continue being in the policy book, they can still let them expire. This is just about the Council being more aware of it.

Chair: Any speakers against, or questions?

Darryl Horan, C&E Officer: How would deadlines for submissions work?

Chair: The intention of this mandate is that, let's say we are at Council 4 and a mandate will expire between Council 4 and Council 5. All mandates that will expire between Council 4 and Council 5 will see them as ITEMS FOR NOTING on the agenda at Council 4. So, anyone who sees them on the agenda will be able to include them as items for a discussion or vote at the next Council. However, as an item for noting, there would be no debate or vote about it.

Robyn O'Keeffe, Env Campaign Coordinator: College Officers, Campaign Coordinators and Sabbatical Officers are all aware of the mandates that they have to fulfill. This is part of our training and we take that responsibility. If one of our mandates is about to expire, we will put it to a vote. I don't think it is necessary to amend the standing orders to achieve this.

Chair: Any speakers in favour?

Eoghan Ryder, Mature Students Campaign Coordinator: I can definitely see both sides. I don't think anyone is at odds here really. I think what Darragh is trying to get at here is good book keeping, and I think that can only benefit all of us really.

Chair: Thank you, speaker against?

Ryan Coorley, Science Stage 3: I just wanted to ask, will it be a work intensive mandate?

C&E Officer: I usually only think about Council on a Friday afternoon, so this might take 30minutes on a Wednesday afternoon, or 15 minutes even, for me to make sure that anything due to expire is included in the next Council pack.

Chair: Any speakers for? Any speakers online? Okay, darragh you can summate.

DKO'T: It will be 15 minutes out of Darryl's week, which will help us out an awful lot. Especially for Council members that don't have other roles as well, because then they might only attend Council and not review all of the Union documentation on a regular basis. This will keep everyone updated.

Chair: We will put it to a vote now.

Vote not carried. 57% majority, not 66% reached.

3. Support of the UCD Disability Inclusion and awareness society (diasoc) – Darragh & Kin

Chair: Darragh, floor is yours.

DKO'T: Presented the motion.

Chair: Any speakers against?

MNF, Mental Health campaign coordinator: From the position of a campaign coordinator, who does not have a society backing the role, and someone who had a committee seat on the Cumann Gaelach last year as Oifigeach na Gaeilge, I do not support this motion. I think it gives too much power to a society to shape council policy, we would have to support activities of a society, and they may or may not be in line with Union Council Policies.

Chair: Any speakers for? Or questions?

Molly Greenough: Is the society fully developed and functioning at the moment? I just wanted to say that mandating an officer to work with a society that isn't fully formed yet can create a lot of issues. This was my experience in my role, so I would advise caution.

DKO'T: This society isn't fully formed, but this is because students with disabilities have been disadvantaged by the pandemic. So it is still registered with the societies' office, it isn't in a very strong place for the moment, however I am the incoming auditor of the society and hope to bring it back to strength. I believe that support from the SU would go a long way to helping!

Chair: Any speakers for? Or questions?

Yousef, Arch Stage 1: Question: What activities and campaigns to envisage happening? And would this mean that every disability campaign coordinator will be the auditor of DIASOC?

DKO'T: This would only mean close affiliation, not automatic chairpersonship. And the intent is just to support and engage students with disabilities, so that is what the activities would be about.

Chair: Any questions or speakers?

CG: Firstly, students for sensible drugs policy is not a society, so they are not under that remit. Now, as the Mature Students campaign coordinator, they are quite close to the same society. I don't think that is written anywhere, it is just a practice. Now, I would echo what Mide was saying - we have no control over societies. That doesn't mean we do not support them, but perhaps a formal mandate is a step too far. Although the sentiment of the motion is great, it can perhaps be achieved even without the mandate.

MCL Stage 2: My concern is that it seems very broad. If it was more specific in what the SU would be supporting DIASOC with, perhaps that would be better.

Chair: I am inclined to end the discussion here. I will hand over to Darragh to summate.

DKO'T: I can understand the issues with the vagueness. I just think the utility of having the motion outweighs the vagueness. It's about the importance of societies and UCDSU collaborating with them, and helping DIASOC exist.

MNF: Procedural motion 9 (n), the motion not be put.

Chair: Do I have a seconder? Yes, Robyn O'Keeffe. Grounds for the procedural motion?

MNF: I think the motion as it is presented is not in an acceptable format, and the proposer also admitted it. As it stands, the motion is not in shape to be included in the policy book. If it was rewritten, perhaps it can be submitted to the next Council.

Chair: I accept that procedural motion. Darragh, you have a right to reply.

DKO'T: If people don't think the motion is ready, I would usually prefer an amendment, however if Council feels that the motion should be removed from voting, feel free to vote for the procedural motion.

CHair: All those in favour of the procedural motion that the motion not be put to the floor, vote now.

9(n) passed, motion will not be put.

(f) Items for discussion.

1. 'USI Re-affiliation' – Ruairi Power

RP: I wanted to be upfront about our recent lobbying. We do well in the media, but the national lobbying and engaging with government officials, we are not in the room. Only USI are. They have strengths and weaknesses, their engagement is low, but the same can be said for UCDSU. We are struggling to get in the room with ministers - USI have monthly meetings with Simon Harris, so I wanted to put this to the room.

Chair: Anyone got something to say? People online?

CG: I would be of the mindset not to reaffiliate. I do not see much changing since the last referendum. Cost was one element, but it was also about the accountability of USI and transparency issues, and this has not changed. I was there in 2017. Now, in terms of the lobbying, Ruairi is right and we are left out a bit. However, I don't know if that weighs up against the money that would be spent which we could spend here in UCD. Furthermore, the transparency issues are still quite concerning to me. I do see some benefits, but they do not outweigh the cons for me.

Emily Bollard: I think it would be beneficial maybe if a presentation was brought to Council. A lot of us were not around the last time this referendum happened.

RP: Yeah, and I would be very much in favour, but I would rather USI come in and deliver that.

Cillian Murphy, Engineering: What is the cost, and what amount of the SU budget would go towards it?

RP: It would be 5 euro per full time student and 2.50 euro per part time student. We would have to have a conversation with management about how that would be collected, I don't think it would be viable for that to be taken from our current capitation.

AB: I essentially have an issue with the delegation system of USI. The way they elect their full time officers is through a delegate system at their congress. As far as I see, there is no movement within USI to change this system, and I don't like it. I think it further disengages them from their membership.

Ryan Coorley, Science Stage 3: In the past decade, there has never been more of a reason to be active on the national stage, to have a foot in the door to tackle these issues with other Unions. If sabbats are in favour, I think we should be too.

MNF: I think the arguments criticising USI can be made about UCDSU too, although they are often made louder against USI. However, if we are on the outside, we can't fix the issues. I am far from decided either way, but I do think there is a discussion to be had about rejoining.

DH: We are all here at half seven at night, we all see a value in an SU. USI is the national union, and many of the issues which we are working on are national issues. We cannot make a lot of changes on them, because we are not active on the national level to the same extent as USI. We are not in the room with ministers; we are not in the room with other SUs. And these things are part of my mandates and my role. So, in order to fulfill my role, I am in favour of us rejoining USI.

MG: I am not gonna lie, I do not know where I stand on this, it is a nuanced issue. What I want to know is, have any of you ever in your day to day college life ever heard about USI? Judging by the low level of knowledge in our Council, I would guess that the student population doesn't know much about it either, so it will be a tough referendum to run for either side.

DKO'T: 5 euro per student is about 140k. What does UCDSU stop doing, if we join? And can we get someone from USI to present about it.

RP: On the cost, it is a significant cost, so we would have to discuss with management how it would be paid. As far as USI coming in, that is for Niall as Chair to consider.

Billy Egan, Science College Officer: Does the delegation system mean that sabbats would be missing from meetings on campus?

AB: So the delegation system is for electing the sabbatical positions. So, each SU can decide themselves how they put together their delegations for congress.

RP: And we would always have a seat, for example with meetings with ministers, if we are affiliated to USI. We would have voting rights on policy decisions. And then the delegate voting system would just be in place for electing the USI team for the following year.

Chair: I will review the standing orders. If an external USI speaker is invited to speak, I will need to decide whether I will allow it or not. But, I will ask Council for an indicative vote on whether Council would allow that.

Majority of hands raised, to be inclined to allow a USI speaker to present to Council.

MG: I think that in your judgment, if you are bringing someone in from USI, you should also bring in someone who does not like USI.

RC, AHSS College Officer: Firstly, I think it would depend if USI would come in to lobby or to present themselves. Would it not be better to have sabbats who are for and who are against to also share their views in a more structured manner?

Chair: I am not sure if the structure of council allows me to do that, but I will look into it.

DH: I would prefer if Council had a say in who would come in to speak against USI.

2. 'Consent' – Molly Greenough

MG: I included this in my report, but essentially we booked an active consent workshop on the 23rd Feb, from 6 to 7 pm. It would be good to see a strong Council turn out there! And, the university has set up a subgroup for rolling out active consent training next year, so I am delighted to see it!

Matthew Amenda: Where will it be?

MG: Theater L!

3. 'It's Not Me: It's UCD- February 14th Protest' – Ruairi Power

Hope to see you there in numbers! Bring dates! 12 pm outside of O'Reilly Hall!

We have a Whatsapp group too.

Matthew Amenda: The university comments about ghettoisation are ridiculous. I will make my entire class know!

DH: Yes, please tell your classmates! And grab some leaflets and hand them out.

Caillum Hedderman, Student Residences Campaign Coordinator: Thanks to everyone who came to our student accommodation town hall last week, but that is only the start. Please let everyone know, we need bigger numbers! And please reach out to me if you need any support

MG: THIS IS THE SUPERBOWL OF UNION POLITICS!!!WE NEED YOU THERE! WE cannot reach every student without your help!

Ryan Coorley, Science Stage 3: if everyone of us took 2 to 3 people there, it would make a massive difference. Class reps can be really effective in this promotion, so let's do it!

Marko Cleary, Stage 1 Science: Can we get UCD Confessions involved in this?

Chair: there seems to be a lot of support, so we might move on.

4. 'Draft Student Partnership Agreement For Feedback' – Ruairi Power

RP: Just looking to have the ascent of Council.

AB: If you have any comments on the document, please email me or Ruairi before the end of business tomorrow.

5. 'Disability and Neurodiversity' - Darragh Kane O'Toole

DKO'T: Presentation on Neurodiversity (in Council folder).

Chair: Any questions or contributions?

Matthew Amenda, Masters in Library Science: This is a subject that is important to me, I am in that orange category. And for a big part of my life I felt that this was something that made me lesser than other people. However neurodiversity does not make you less, only different, and that is a very important message.

6. "Distance Learning Policies across UCD" - Matthew Amenda

Matthew Amenda: Thank you for letting me have this, despite the last minute submission. The title here doesn't quite do the subject justice. Earlier this semester, we received a message that it was UCD policy that distance learning would be phased out. My constituents are immunocompromised, or live with immunocompromised people, or struggle as a result of high rents and all of the other issues which we have already discussed. We are upset about this. I have brought this to the School's attention, and they asked for the letter that students signed, expressing concern about this. And it turns out, this was not a UCD policy at all, only our school was phasing it out. The letter which they responded to us with is just unbelievable. And the registrar actually wants to increase and continue hybrid learning options. The head of our school seems to be lying to us. So I wanted to know, has this happened to others, and how can we remedy the situation?

Chair: Matthew has highlighted some inconsistencies between what UCD has announced and what his school is seeking to implement. Would anyone like to come in on this?

AB: So, I actually have a meeting arranged with Carla and Ruairi with the ALL center with regards to recording lectures. The university has been very resistant to this prior to the pandemic, however Access and Lifelong Learning are very much on board with this. Now, UCD management have not yet had a chance to discuss how the changes in national regulations related to covid will affect education on campus, so yes, it seems that some schools have jumped the gun in phasing out hybrid learning. This is a challenging issue to push across campus in a uniform way. Now, if you have a need to gain access to lecture recording, or recording devices, do reach out to us or to ALL. On a case by case basis, we can give a hand to students. But that is the main thing we can do for the moment, while we wait for UCD to come out with a wider policy approach.

(Same constituency student): My experience has been more positive in the school. My lecturers are prioritising in person delivery, however still allow recordings to take place.

Aubrey Soba, Graduate Entry Medicine, Stage 1: A lot of my constituents are also struggling with this. The online learning is being phased out despite the fact that some students are still sick, or commuting, or have awkwardly timed lectures.

Caillum Hedderman: We had similar instances. We had a lecturer who refused to use zoom, even last semester. We had worked with him to assist in the use of the software, and that

helped, however some issues remain, for example lecturers who walk around without a mic, affecting the recordings.

Speaking rights handed to non member of Council: Ian Fuller, BCL Stage 1: Last week one of our professors refused to take a zoom recorder, even though someone was missing the lecture due to self isolating.

Chair: I am uninclined to get into individual issues, but we can take one more speaker.

Robert, stage 1 law: That was myself bringing that issue up, and the lecturer was very resistant.

Chair: Definitely bring this to your sabbats!

Eoin Martin: This has been a big issue in law, and in the business school too.

Chair: and no, lecturers are not contractually obliged to provide lecture recordings, no. I would encourage further questions to be brought to the sabbatical team, who have more in depth knowledge on the issue.

(g) Items for noting.

1. Splitting the AHSS constituency - Miranda Bauer

MB: We are working more actively now on splitting this constituency, so we just wanted to share this. If anyone has feedback to share with us, please do. We have a google form to gather it, so if you would like to contribute or chat to us about it. Just reach out via email!

(h) Items for approval.

(i) The reports of each Executive Officer, Campaign Coordinator and ENTs Forum Officer.

- Disability Campaign Coordinator - Darragh Kane O'Toole - Taken as read,

Chair: Any questions? Put it to a vote.

Passed by a majority.

- Mature Student Campaign Coordinator - Eoghan Ryder - Taken as read.

Chair: Any questions? Put it to a vote.

Passed by a majority.

- Science College Officer - Billy Egan - Taken as read.

Chair: Any questions? Put it to a vote.

Passed by a majority.

- Louise Costello - deferred report to the next council.

- Eoin - deferred report to the next council.

- AHSS College Officer - Miranda Bauer - Taken as read.

Chair: Any questions? Put it to a vote.

Passed by a majority.

- AHSS College Officer Ronan Cloney - Taken as read (also, AHSS ball!)

Chair: Any questions? Put it to a vote.

Passed by a majority.

- Louise Mahon - Irish language officer - Taken as read

Chair: Any questions? Put it to a vote.

Passed by a majority.

- Welfare Officer - Molly Greenough - Taken as read

Chair: Any questions? Put it to a vote.

Passed by a majority.

- Education Officer - Aoife Bracken - Taken as read

Chair: Any questions? Put it to a vote.

Passed by a majority.

- Graduate Officer - Carla Gummerson - Taken as read

Chair: Any questions? Put it to a vote.

Passed by a majority.

- Campaigns and Engagement Officer - Darryl Horan - Taken as read

Chair: Any questions? Put it to a vote.

Passed by a majority.

- Ents Officer - Sarah Michalek - Taken as read

Chair: Any questions? Put it to a vote.

Passed by a majority.

- President - Ruairi Power - Taken as read

Chair: Any questions? Put it to a vote.

Passed by a majority.

(j) Questions on notice.

(k) Questions not on notice.

(l) All discussions deferred to the instant meeting from any previous meeting, which discussion shall include the hearing of the report of any committee of Council and the taking of any vote consequent upon such report or discussion.

(m) Motions not on notice.

(n) Submission of motions to be on notice for next meeting.

(o) Any Other Business