

**Agenda:**

**UCDSU Council Meeting 4**

**Monday, 22nd November 2021, 6pm**

**Venue: Hybrid - Online and Fitzgerald Chamber**

The link to the zoom is as follows: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89650049816>

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

Council was declared quorate.

**(b) Minutes of the previous meeting.**

Approved.

**(c) Matters arising.**

None.

**(d) Motions on notice.**

**Motion 1.) - [Motion 1 - Right to Choose Council.docx - Google Docs](#) - Proposed by Ruairí Power.**

Ruairí Power - This motion just addresses an issue whereby the SU has had a neutral stance on abortion services under an old motion, so this motion is to push for full decriminalisation of abortion. The abortion act is up for review in the coming weeks, so this motion would set out our view, a defined stance on decriminalisation of abortion, removal of 3 day waiting period, and remove the limit of 12 weeks up until a legal abortion can take place. Also, ensuring free contraception is accessible to all, and tracking down groups which target vulnerable women seeking abortions to try and stop them from getting abortions.

CHAIR - any speakers against the motion? No. I will take one speaker for, before the summation.

Molly Greenough - Yeah, it's easy to be happy with the result of the referendum, but we cannot lose sight of the need to continue lobbying for improved access to abortion. The current service provision is not perfect, there are still many hoops to jump through, so I would very much encourage everyone to support the motion.

CHAIR - I will invite the seconder to summate the motion now.

Niamh Scully, Gender Equality Campaign Coordinator, She/Her - I support this motion wholeheartedly and everything that Molly and Ruairí have said. As the biggest SU in the

country we need to stand up for this issue. There was a massive burnout after the referendum passed, but we have to continue to advocate for the best possible services now.

CHAIR - I will put this motion to a vote now.

*Passed by clear majority.*

**Motion 2.) - Removal of the following motion:** 8/4/19 Rent caps on Campus Accommodation" (on the grounds that legislation is already in effect). I passed a motion last year to replace this one, I just want to get it formally removed if possible. - Proposed by Ruairí Power.

Ruairí Power - We have changed what we lobby for, because we already have rent caps. The mandate is redundant, and we have a mandate that was passed last year, thus this motion is no longer required.

CHAIR - any speakers for or against? No. We will put this motion to a vote, as no longer relevant.

*Passed by clear majority.*

**Motion 3.) - [Motion 3 - Removal of motion titled Maximum final weight of 70%.docx - Google Docs](#)** - Proposed by Aoife Bracken

Basically, as we discussed briefly last week, this is very difficult to achieve. We need to campaign in a more targeted level at each faculty.

CHAIR - Any speakers against, or for? No. We will put this motion to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

## **(e) Items for Discussion**

**Item for Discussion 1.)** - Miranda Bauer: Splitting AHSS into two College Officer Constituencies.

MB - Looking to have a discussion splitting the constituencies, to ensure that both AH and SS students are taken care of.

CHAIR - We will open the floor now.

Carla Gummerson - This is definitely an issue that began when UCD split the faculties and I would be very happy to assist in facilitating a student discussion about this within the constituency.

Emma Gregg, Promotions Officer - I do like the idea. As an arts student, I have felt pretty under represented, so a split is something that I would welcome.

Ronan Cloney, AHSS College Officer, He/Him - I can also add that this isn't just a student issue, but faculty have also said that they would find it easier to correspond with us if we had an arts person and a social sciences person. So it isn't a purely student problem, it is felt by the staff as well. There are some differences between the two and it can be difficult to represent both faculties, especially if both College Officers come from Social Sciences, which has occurred in the past.

CHAIR - sounds like there is general approval from the council. I believe there is a rule in the Constitution that we have to at least inform the Returning Officer (Stephen) that this is coming up. Definitely prepare an item for approval for the next Council on this issue, but check in with Stephen in advance so you don't miss that requirement.

**Item for discussion 2.) - Ruairí Power: Facilitating exams this year.**

**Ruairí Power** - this is just an update on what we know is coming up, and to consult with yourselves about what we should be advocating for in the Academic Council.

UCD Confessions post where a student shared that their lecturer announced exams going online... Well, the lecturer jumped the gun in telling people that everything will be online.

While lecturers can choose to move some exams online, there will still be exams taking place in RDS. It will be in line with public health advice, and Simon Harris has made no indication to move exams online. The only option for moving exams online would be a sectoral approach - UCD will not move exams online by itself.

If you have symptoms, do not come to the exam. There will be resits in January, and online. The plan is basically mass resits for anyone who cannot attend their exam in January. There will be some criteria for who can and cannot attend exams, and some evidence will be required to have access to the resits.

So we want to hear your takes on it, and any views of your classmates.

Eoin Ryder, Mature Student Campaign Coordinator, H/Him - I am in social sciences and I am in some group chats with students. There is a lot of concern raised there, and reasonably so. Now, my understanding is that the exams, even pre covid, have always been fairly socially distant and that these will be spaced out well, we will wear masks and will be brought in and out in a safe manner. So, in a way, the exam hall will be the safest place to be in.

Ruairí Power - we will continue pushing for as much flexibility as possible. However, we do see that the protocols for the exams are more stringent than lecture arrangements in person.

Louise Costello, Health Science College Officer - just a question for anyone who will be a close contact, will they need to apply for extenuating circumstances?

Aoife Bracken - if you receive an official text from the HSE that you have been a close contact and to remain at home, then yes, that text would be sufficient to apply for COVID extenuating circumstances. So, if you get a text from the HSE, even at the last minute, that's okay. If you get a positive antigen test, or a positive PCR test, you can apply for extenuating circumstances even on the day of the exams or, if you are very sick, you can email later on.

Ryan Coirley, Science Stage 3 - so a lot of the concerns have been about the RDS, but what about the students sitting their exams in Newman?

Aoife Bracken - for exam support students in Newman, regardless of the supports that you are availing of, the same risk applies. For any student attending exams in Newman, if they are at a high risk to contract COVID and are in a vulnerable group, I would encourage students to contact the disability service in the UCD Access service.

Billy Egan, Science College Officer - will the exam shuttle bus be going ahead?

Ruairi Power - we are waiting to confirm with UCD what the numbers will be, but yes we will be running the exam shuttle. We may not be able

Mark, Stage 1 Masters - When you see the whole reason for the 12 pm closes, these restrictions make no sense. I really do think we need to take this into our own hands.

Ruairi Power - the government has the ultimate power to move everything online, if they wish. They have not done that for now, and each university may make their own decision about how to go ahead. UCD have decided to go ahead with in-person exams, not all institutions are doing this. We are presenting concerns as they arise to UCD management, but they are autonomous to decide how to proceed.

Sophie Boland, She her - my concern is that in the RDS hall, when you are heading in, there are only two main doors to enter through and not a huge amount of circulation. People often arrive early and hang around close to each other. And will sanitation be taking place in between exams? Will the SU also be giving out bars and goodies to students? Will they be wearing gloves doing that?

Ruairi Power - so the primary focus on making the RDS safe is ventilation systems, but we can double check to be clear on sanitation protocols. We will try to have processes in place to be able to give things out to students, and minimise the risk, but if we can't do that this year then we will abide by the rules. In fairness, the biggest risk factor will be how people travel to the RDS, but we will also investigate the sanitisation and our ability to give out calculators, pencils, pens and food before exams.

Cillian Murphy, Stage 2 Mechanical Engineering, HE/Him - do we know if UCD themselves will issue more clarity on this as well? The last email from the Registrar left me believing that a lot of people might just go in with cold symptoms, because we will still have to go through extenuating circumstances, and people may be too worried about the length of that process and how onerous it can be.

**Ruairí Power** - until the next Academic Council, they couldn't really announce what the measures will be. But once the meeting takes place and the arrangements are finalised, we will make sure that the communication is more clear. The right FAQs will be put together.

**Aoife Bracken** - we are constantly reiterating this to the Registrar and working closely with the assessment office to ensure that communications are as clear as possible and reach all students.

**Ronan Cloney, AHSS College Officer, He/Him** - I think sometimes we presume that everyone wants exams online, but a lot of my classmates in 2nd year have never had in person exams and this makes us worried about the final years of our degrees, and we would appreciate the opportunity to have exams in person now, before the very weighty exams roll around for us.

Marco, Stage 1 Science. He/Him - I just wanted to bring up a point, if the SU could communicate more clearly the fact that no shenanigans would be going on with people doing exams together, when they are online. So be clear that that is very much not permitted, because that has been problematic for some previous exams in previous modules.

Aoife Bracken - students do need to be cautious about this. For online exams, you can still get caught for plagiarism. Module coordinators do reserve the right, if there is a suspicion of mass cheating, to redo an exam or even bring it as an in person exam later. The lower levels of invigilation for online exams challenges academic integrity.

Sadhbh, Stage 3 medicine, She/ Her - and for people who are going through self-quarantine at home as a result of being a close contact. Currently, you need to have 3 negative antigen tests in order to leave the 5 day self isolation. If you do not test negative in all of those antigen tests, will that student be able to maintain extenuating circumstances.

Ruairí Power - I do believe that the burden of proof will be low, but the university will want to see some text or email/ paper trail that a test took place and it was a positive result. We can also ask for clarification on this, if a PCR test will be needed or will antigen tests be enough.

Molly Greenough - on extenuating circumstances, I just wanted to share that Aoife has a webinar coming up on it so do check it out!! I have made use of extenuating circumstances applications as a student and they are pretty straight forward. Your academic advisor can walk you through it

Mark, masters, he/ him - I do concur with that point, and COVID is a serious health crisis, and for those who don't feel safe to go in, that's totally fine. But for other students, in my course particularly, even for their mental health it would be really beneficial to go in to exams in person. The effects of lockdown and isolation have been a lot more damaging to them.

Jordan, stage 3, He/Him - in terms of proof for being a close contact - if you don't have such proof and just don't feel safe, will that be sufficient?

Ruairí Power - this is what we sought clarity on today, and if a student is only nervous about being in an environment with a lot of other people, that will not suffice. If you have underlying

health conditions, or proof of being a close contact, then you should be okay. But otherwise, based on the conversation today, I think it is very unlikely that a student who is just nervous about coming in will get extenuating circumstances.

Sonia, Stage 1, Spanish and drama - will there be any clarification posted in response to that UCD Confessions Page post?

Ruairi Power - We do have a video made to clarify this, and we commented on the post. But the comment got 150 likes, while the post has 2000 likes.

**(f) Items for Noting**

**(g) Items for Approval**

**(h) The reports of each Executive Officer**

**(Received)**

**Sabbatical Officers:**

**Campaigns and Engagement Officer - Darryl Horan**

Report was mostly taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions for Darryl?

Molly - when are you looking for volunteers for the great donate?

Robyn O'Keeffe - 1 pm to 4 pm on the 20th, 21st and 22nd, and then 10 am to 1 pm on the 24th.

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

**Ents Officer - Sarah Michalek**

Report was mostly taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

Emma Gregg, Promotions Officer - Sarah, when will Christmas Day be on?

Sarah - December 2nd, last Thursday of term.

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

**Grad Officer - Carla Gummerson**

Report was mostly taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

Emma Gregg, Promotions Officer - is the conference fund only for PhD students?

Carla Gummerson - it's generally only open for Masters or PhD who do presentations abroad, so we haven't considered that before. We can look into it.

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

#### **Education Officer - Aoife Bracken**

Report was mostly taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

#### **Welfare Officer - Molly Greenough**

Report was mostly taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

Emma Gregg, Promotions Officer -

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

#### **President - Ruairí Power (late)**

Report was mostly taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

Ryan Corley, Science Stage 3 - You mentioned something would be on while we are off in January?

Ruairí Power - Apologies, I meant to say in January, around the week that students are back on campus. Trying to get the right timing and we will be consulting people in the lead up.

Eoghan Ryder, Mature Students Campaign Coordinator, He/Him - just with regards to January rallies in person, do we also have some tentative plans in case there is a strict lock down in the new year?

Ruairi Power - we will campaign within the restrictions. However, online campaigns are ineffective, and 100-200 students at a rally is not enough, so we might do some media stunts in the lead up but the objective is large rallies from January, or possibly later.

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

**Executive Officers:**

**AHSS College Officer - Miranda Bauer**

Report was taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

**AHSS College Officer - Ronan Cloney**

Report was taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

**Health Sciences College Officer - Louise Costello**

Report was taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

**Law College Officer - Eoin Martin**

Report was taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

**Science College Officer - Billy Egan**

Report was taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

Emily Bollard, Masters, She/ Her - any joy on those bins?

Billy - no. The bins have been ordered, they are in a shed. Then I was asked to plant a load of trees and I couldn't do it, I don't have the time for them and recycling surveys. They told me that they would rather do a project towards a meaningful change, rather than bins which would just be contaminated. So I don't know where we are, I will keep trying to push for them.

Míde Nic Fhionnlaoich, Mental Health Campaign Coordinator, She/her - so they are not putting the bins in place because you, an unpaid student volunteer, cannot do a load of free survey and tree planting labour for them?

Billy Egan - I am just not sure where the project is going now. We need to stay in touch with them.

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

**Engineering and Architecture College Officer - Meserah Abdullah**

Report was taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

**Ag, Food and Vet College Officer - Maria Wall**

Report was taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed easily.*

**Oifigeach na Gaeilge - Louise Mahon**

Report was taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

## **Ents Reports**

### **Emma Gregg, Promotions Officer**

Report was taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

### **Aine Nangle, Productions Officer**

(Apologies - deferred)

### **Eoin Fagan - Ents RAG Coordinator**

(Apologies - deferred)

## **Campaign Coordinator Reports**

### **Noah Savage - LGBTQ Campaign Coordinator**

Report was taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

### **Niamh Scully - Gender Equality Campaign Coordinator**

Report was taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

**Robyn O'Keeffe - Environmental Campaign Coordinator**

Report was taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

**Míde Nic Fhionnlaóich - Mental Health Campaign Coordinator**

Report was taken as read, with some comments.

CHAIR - any questions?

CHAIR - we will put that report to a vote.

*Passed by clear majority.*

Short speech from Eoghan Ryder, Mature Student Campaign Coordinator, He/Him - I wasn't sure how to submit the report since I have only just been elected. But I wanted you to know that I have been in touch with the SU and mature student society about the Period Poverty campaign. I also want to work on a food poverty campaign.

**(i) Questions on notice.**

**(j) Questions not on notice.**

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

**(l) Motions not on notice.**

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

**(n) Any Other Business.**

**17th of January - deadline for motions**

**21st of January - deadline for Reports and any other items on the agenda.**

**Last Council before Christmas :)**