

Executive team meeting.

Apologies from:

Leighton Gray, Campaigns and Engagement Officer

Tadhg Ó Maoldhomhnaigh, Oifigeach na Gaeilge.

Present

Sabbatical Officers: Conor Anderson (CA), Sarah Michalek (SM), Ruairí Power (RP), Hannah Bryson (HB), Carla Gummerson (CG).

College Officers: Míde Nic Fhinnlaoich (MNF), Marta Geszczak (MG), Sophie O'Leary (SOL), Liam Coyle (LC), Corey Power De Jong (CPDJ), Lauren Maunsell (LM), Lucy Reid (LR), Emily Moore (EM)

Agenda

1.) We have been contacted by a Stage 3 Science class rep who would like to source some goodie bags as prizes for a quiz night, and before I can approve the request, I need a budget for it to come out of. We might also talk about upcoming plans for events/contests and how best to support them.

2.) There have been a record number of disciplinary cases (something like 400 as of today) in the Residences. Could we brainstorm how we might want to address that, if we want to at all?

3.) Executive updates and discussion on emerging issues

Approve minutes of the previous meeting.

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CA - Goodie bags from SU shops - could they come out of the Science college officer budget? Depends on how much.

- EM is waiting to hear back from the student, and she will liaise with Leighton (LG) on the matter.

CA - second matter, came up at the Res Review group - shockingly high level of disciplinary cases. Students are partying and disregarding RAs.

- This time last year they had 160 issues.
- This year they're past 400.
- Feels that students who are partying and acting the bollox

MG - it's less everyone, more the same groups are doing it over and over, in her experience as an RA.

SM - would encouraging socially-distanced take away pints be okay? Or does that also promote groups of students meeting up and going out?

CA - I'm so frustrated, because we knew that this would happen. And the University did nothing to prepare for this situation.

RP - one student emailed with a suggestion to set up social bubbles, especially for very small groups in different apartments. Res review said it will consider this on a case by case basis, but only for students who are alone or in two's.

CA - the only thing we can really do is a social media campaign.

SO'L - I live in Ashfield, and I would hear students at like 2 am nearby screaming and laughing - but I always forget in the morning. It happens often, and security does try to break them.

SM - we can't force people not to meet, but we can try and find alternatives for people, maybe?

EM - and what are the repercussions? What are the consequences?

RP - it depends. Carla might be better at explaining it.

CG - ranges from a talking-to to a 50 euro or 250 euro fine. And it ranges on how bad you've been, how often you've broken the rules. But like Conor said, students are isolated, they want to be with their friends - they're having people from next door mostly! Now, there have also been people coming in from the outside. But, if it's the same people over and over, I don't think we can change their mindset. They're bored, they've nothing else to do.

RP - we've been working with Sarah on trying to encourage safe meeting up, coffee trucks and what not. Recognising that people will want to meet up. The Res review will want it to get more militant in how they'll respond, especially with uncooperative students. We are trying to get tangible alternatives for how they could meet outside.

CA - yeah, I have no further suggestions.

CG - and to be fair, a lot of these students haven't read the student code and what not, so they are not prepared for what they will be facing, what questions they'll be asked and dignity and respect. Like, res is trying to be nice where they can, but you can't expect them to keep going that way because they're putting people at risk. We do need to have a presence.

EM - and we need to be careful to be balanced. Not to be like, we are with UCD fully on this, but that we are trying to be sound and that we care about students, but also about their safety.

RP - we might set up a meeting with the res reps in the SU to hear their perspectives as well.

SM - and we can also do it in person when we are in res. Although there are limitations for how long people can stay at our events and what not.

CA - so the temp of the room seems that there isn't a lot that we can do.

SM - yeah, we can't force people to do anything. But, we can make a video.

MNF - yeah, but with a video we need to be careful with the tone. We don't want to be seen to talk down on students.

LR - yeah, we don't want to be seen to talk down to the students. These are young people, trying to be responsible. A lot of them are low risk and not trying to harm each other.

CA - yeah. We knew back in August that this would happen.

Minutes of the last meeting, proposed and seconded by Ruairí and Sarah.

Exec updates:

Carla - 18th nov speed quiz is coming up! 23, 24, 25 - the conference fund will be open for students to apply and I will be raffling them off. Trying to make it as fair as possible.

- At a couple board meetings - smurfit BM, great to see a class rep on it. They're very aware of the isolation that's going on. It feeds into the right to disconnect.
- Then case work, one or two have been lengthy. But yeah, that's me.

Sarah - yeah, I was sick for a large part of last week. But anyway, I did the workshop last thursday, we gave away tickets and there's another giveaway. No workshop this thursday because Ruairí has one.

- An event with some societies coming up!
- I met with the Ents forum, who are excited for the year ahead.
- I'm working on the mural that will be up in the student centre.
- Someone commented that Michael Collins should be one of the figures on the wall over Miggeldy.

RP - what about Constance Markievich?

MNF - or some of the 1916 people who went to UCD? Or other revolutionaries?

SM - Or Hannah Sheehy Skeffington.

SM - and then, Brian O'Driscoll or Jack Charleton. And Katie Taylor, and Mary Robinson.

RP - just because he died recently and it might be nice, maybe Jack Charleton.

CG - but Brian O Driscoll went to UCD.

SM - cool, that's pretty much my update!

RP - Okay, I'll do a quick one

- A workshop on Thursday with Dr Caroline West! I'll be plugging that on socials. We will also have some talks on medicinal cannabis hosted by a UCD students.
- The right to disconnect policy - we got really good feedback and submitted it. Then, on communication by lecturers with students - Jason Last said that it would be more appropriately raised at the Education Group, so the sabbats on that group will do that at the next meeting as an item of AOB.
- Deadline for the December governing authority meeting is tomorrow, and we will be putting forward a motion that the university has to lobby for a publicly funded model of higher education.
- I've signalled my intent to raise it with the secretariat, so I have until next week to submit the paper for the meeting.

HB - I'll go next.

- Got a lot of case work. Starting to put general class issues together through an online tool, just so we can keep a better track of them.
- Looking into the workload at the minute - what people are getting and what they should be doing.
- And the Education Group meeting and the Governing Authority this week.
- And we'll have to start looking at the Academic Council next week, because it's coming up on the 26th of this month - so if you want to bring anything up, let us know. I'll probably bring up workloads.
- Sorry, can't think of it all on the spot, but that's the main bits.
- Oh! And on the new grading process - there will be no provisional grades this term. So the no-disadvantage approach that was pushed last year cannot be used.

CA - I have some updates specifically for you.

- Liam - I just emailed you a list of demands by the Smurfit students. They have their letter and 490 students signing up to it.
- And Emily - I met with some psychology students over the weekend who are looking to organise as well. Oh sorry, it's under Sophie and Lauren! That's 6 first year psychology students who sense unfairness, but don't have demands yet. We will be working on that next weekend. They're at the stage of drawing support from their fellow students.
- With graduate entry medicine students - we've seen no movement so far, they are gearing up to email TDs and politicians.
- We do have reporters ready to go with more stories about students organising - so let's keep the revolution going!
- And another secret thing coming up next Wednesday! Keep an eye out.

- If you hear students about fees and organising - tell them to keep it up and keep connecting.
- And, I will try to do a meeting with the lads in the no detriment group as well!

- On grade review - you need to raise issues/ appeals now! Not wait. Address the individual provisional grades as they are issued.

MNF - how will this work with final exams?

LC - and how are students supposed to know?

EM - this will cause a lot of issues. Even with totting up grades, and not being able to appeal them will be very problematic.

HB - those kinds of issues will be possible to fix - if an assessment is missing, or you need an assessment complaint/ appeal. Like, if there is a procedural issue with your grade.

SM - so no provisional results, but you can still appeal them?

CA - well, you will only be able to appeal final assessments, not the continuous assessments. And you won't have the two weeks to decide whether or not to appeal your grades.

LR - why are they doing this?

CG - it's to give the lecturers more time with your work. Otherwise, they would have to get everything corrected sooner.

- So there are points as to why they are doing it. It's something that we will have to get the word out to students about!

RP - should we find out more about the ramifications of this, and scope out exactly why the university is doing this, what are the risks, and then put some queries forward to the Education Group.

CG - yeah for sure, I can put those forward and get clearest information.

MFN - are we able to prep an FAQ or explainer on this, for our constituencies? So people who are disappointed with grades that they got so far, that they know to raise it sooner rather than later.

HB - so if you're unhappy with a grade, it's good to try and resolve it at a local level. But, the university won't reassess anything, unless there was a procedural thing wrong.

- Eg if you have submitted an exam and it was perfect on your end, but the brightspace submission messed with the exam somehow. Or, you were interrupted in the middle of an exam and you never got the time back (like, a fire alarm in the building you were in). Those kinds of things would qualify for appeals.

CA - the other thing I'd say - if students have questions, push them to the extenuating circumstances, as soon as possible!

SM - and encourage students to chat to their lecturers! I had a very positive experience with a lecturer in first year, who just increased my grade because they recognised that what I received wasn't fair.

CG - and on that point, I have slides about it and I can get together and email the person who sent me the slides and get some FAQ piece running on this. And once I know word for word what the message is, I'll do a short video on it. No problemo.

EM - Had college council last week and a lot of issues were coming up! Hannah was there too. I spent the last week just trying to compile them. Most of them can be resolved at the local level, but others are bigger.

- On communication - we have groups for the different stages in undergrad, but no group for post grads. I wanted to ask how is engagement on the instagram from AHSS? Because the fb groups are very slow.

SO'L - the instagram is kinda quiet. The group chat is hopping! But Lauren and I are thinking about getting engaged by giving out some just eat vouchers.

EM - yeah, I'm trying to get approval for vouchers too!

SO'L - covered most updates

LR - challenge with accessing email, but engaging with reps otherwise. Met with Ag Soc, and they want to collaborate on an event, which is class

LM - good contact with reps, and finally got an updated email address for the college!

MFN - had a good meet up, and another one this week. Generally, things are quiet.

MG - struggling a bit with the online environment, but doing my best to get a college council off the ground. Email is quiet, but looking to put together some giveaways too to prompt engagement.

CA - and please, don't be afraid to lean on me or other sabbats if you're struggling. We are paid to be here, so do reach out.

SO'L - really recommend joining the UCDSU discord to recruit more reps for your group chats!

MG - I will try the discord, and maybe try an instagram account too.

LC - business college council coming up.

- Feedback for the Business Programme Board, and compiling feedback from the staff student forums
- Commerce international students got in touch - they reached out to a class rep and they want a discount/ compensation for not getting their erasmus for the spring semester. It was supposed to be mandatory, to go to China, but the school of business is only offering two replacement modules in return for full fees. They want to

be refunded for 2 modules worth, because the school is clearly not putting in enough effort to facilitate them.

HB - how much did they do last semester?

LC - the standard amount, I believe it was 10 credits. And other students in that programme are equally frustrated.

- On library fees - the library keeps trying to impose fees on the student who has been in touch with me on this issue.

HB - there is a UMT library group and I just got the contact details of who runs that group!

RP - on the issue of library - students are asking about that on the instagram actually (while I'm moderating it in Leighton's absence)

HB - still closed, but we are pushing for it!

RP - okay, I'll pass it on!

HB - keep bringing it up on programme boards, I would say. People need weekend hours to study.

CG - yeah, and colleges remain open over the weekends, there are spaces there that could be used. Maybe we can tell people to utilise the college, if it would be of some help in the meantime. It's not the library's fault - they are doing above and beyond and don't have any more resources.

RP - maybe we can find out how much resources the library would need for those extra days and lobby more specifically, to meet that demand.

SM - and guys, on Christmas day! We are thinking of doing 12 days of Christmas challenges!

SO'L - I have an idea! The 20 euro just eat vouchers for all class reps - could we do that again?

SM - I don't think we'll be able to afford that, but some other challenges to involve people would be cool. Do send on any suggestions for challenges and prizes - like the best Christmas jumpers.

SO'L - or the best Christmas tree!

HB - I have some ideas from my sister!

SM - yeah, send them all on! And we can link in with the campaign coordinators too.

RP - one of them makes candles for the craic - so they could run a candle-making workshop.

MG - I think the idea will work well, especially trying to organise stuff on res to make sure that it won't be like a usual Christmas day, with issues on res!

SM - yes, on the last day we are looking to run something around res.

MNF - and we could do a baking workshop as gaeilge.

EM - I was going to say with SciSoc we ran a photography competition, 'something related to science' and that went down quite well. If it was something about holidays, keep it wide enough to include some other celebrations around that time, that would be nice!

SM - and ohh!! By the way, if anyone is taking part in the UCD100 challenge, send me your photos!! I have some great ones from Carla.

RP - anything else?

MNF - access to the SU zoom for quizzes with reps, college council, coffee events - it would actually be handier to have a separate zoom account just for us, so there would be less of a clash. Maybe it could come out of our budgets?

CG - how much is a zoom account?

EM - I think there's an annual subscription which would be quite reasonable. Even to get two accounts, so we can do more events.

CG - oh grand, I can get on to Dave about it, or Conor?

CA - yeah, I can get on to him.

CG - it's a great idea!

MNF - and it would be nice to have it for our class reps too.

CA - okay, anything else? No, cool, okay we're done!