

Agenda:

UCDSU Council Meeting 4

Monday, 30th November 2020, 6pm

Venue - Online

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

The returning officer opened the election for the remaining position on the ents forum - production officer.

Also, shared information on bi-elections.

(b) Minutes arising of the previous meeting.

Minutes approved.

(c) Matters arising.

No matters arising.

(d) Motions on notice.

Motion 1 - Revenge Porn Mandate

Leighton Grey (LG) - Change the name to image based sexual abuse, but same motion.

Questions and comments:

- A friend of mine has let me know that an ex bf was holding images over her head and threatening to share with the college. So I'm hugely in support of the motion.

Summation, Ruairí Power (RP) - yes, we want to act. Lots of people are affected. We also have a panel discussion on this issue tomorrow.

Chair - so Leighton proposed a procedural order VII to amend the title of the motion, and to change the term revenge porn to IBSA.

RP seconded this proposal

Chair - we will put this to a vote. *The amendment was carried.*

The amended motion was passed by a clear majority.

Motion 2 - Online Voting

LG - This motion is just a technicality, so we can have class rep bi elections online.

No questions or comments.

Summation, LG - it's just needed by the constitution. Thanks

The motion was passed by a clear majority.

Motion 3 - Website Accessibility

Ed Leonard (EL) -This motion is to include accessibility tools for the website, for students with vision impairments.

Questions and comments:

- The wording seems ambiguous, like there are two separate mandates here. About the SU website and UCD websites.

For

- It's not unheard of to have mandates with multiple parts, and we should lead by example!

Against

- I think it should be two mandates, but also accessibility is device based so we need to do more research. It's about individuals having tools on their devices, not changing the website.
- Would the fonts mentioned include ents promotional materials?

Chair (answering) - no, I wouldn't read it in that way. It's more about the content on the website.

- I think apart from the tools that people need on their individual devices, I think there are ways of making the website more accessible in its design and format, and we should do that.
- Plain view is an add on you can get with chrome! And implementing it to the website would be great.

Chair - any further speakers in favour?

- I agree with the first speaker, these issues aren't so separate and we should lead by example and lobby ucd to follow in turn. And agreeing with the following point made, apart from software that people need, we need to consider maximum accessibility regardless of device.

Procedural order 7 - usually tools work off what is provided on the website. So maybe it would be good to have alternative texts and whatever else is needed to satisfy these accessibility tools - and add that specifically to the mandate.

Chair - that is a good proposal, but I would say it's already in the motion. It isn't exhaustive in the examples of what should be done, so your suggestion can absolutely be implemented under the current text.

In favour

- We represent all students, so regardless of their access to software we should provide as accessible a website as possible. I also know that mandates in the past had multiple actions and areas of focus, so it should be kept as a single motion.

Against

- the cost of delivering this is also potentially very high, so we need to take this into consideration!

Summation, EL - thank you for the great conversation on this. Again, we should be leading by example. Our job is to make the lives of students better, so we should strive to do that in any way possible.

Chair - we'll put this to a vote now.

The motion was passed with a clear majority.

Motion 4 - Supporting Students on Placement

Shane Brereton (SB) - A very topical issue at the moment!

Proposal under order 7 - to add social workers to the motion.

Chair - we'll have a vote on that amendment - and it passed easily!

Summation, SB - thank you for the support for this motion.

Chair - we'll move to a vote.

The motion passed with a clear majority.

Chair - We will take a moment to hear the report from Sarah, the Ents Officer, so she can leave the meeting early as it's her graduation night.

Sarah Michalek (SM) - ten days of Christmas, going well!!! Please keep participating and donating!

Chair - any questions arising? No, move to a vote.

The report has passed.

(e) Items for Discussion

Item 1 - Proposed by Ruairí Power - UMT and Student Levy (notes in Council folder in drive)

Ruairí - A one off rebate - but students will pay in the future. Pay with further funds, or delays in delivery, shutting down facilities etc.

I do not support this. They want a letter from the SU on this, but this could be held over our heads. They don't want to use the fee surplus, they want to create a loan with students. It's a bad deal!

Chair - fyi, it's a discussion, we will not be voting on it. The sabbats have a lot of info on this. They can't share all of it, but they can share some, so do ask your questions.

If this is an open agreement, this sounds very worrying going forward! We don't know what they can do with it.

Chair - next speaker

This is a dodge deal indeed. It would leave a very bad legacy for this year's SU.

Don't they already have the power to increase the levy arbitrarily?

RP- it is not within the gift of the UMT to do this, they need the SU to agree. But if we sign this deal, and they could potentially curtail student enjoyment of services as a ground if we don't increase the levy, we'll be caught in trouble!

Hannah Bryson (HB) - The levy goes to the capital developments, but also all the activities and the services in the student centre. Just to highlight that the SU and societies are still being supported, and the gym will come back.

From a legal perspective - never sign something when you don't know the consequences. They could turn around and cut healthcare funding and other services and hold this over our heads!

Just a question on the HEA and the levy. But this answer from the UMT sounds threatening! We absolutely should not agree!!

We absolutely should not agree with this. The services in the student centre, such as counselling, are already under funded! Why would we sign off on permitting UCD to further cut funding to these services. We can't accept this

As Ruairí once said, they spend more on travel than mental health!

(Exclusive from the council chat - it's like when Trump asked Mexicans to pay for the wall!)

Why can we not receive the HEA funding as a source of the rebate? And is the levy money ring fenced - so if that 50 euro remains, will it certainly be used to improve facilities next year?

RP- HEA funding in their opinion, it would be inappropriate to distribute because year on year, sometimes there are surpluses and sometimes there are deficits.

And I believe it will be ring fenced .

Conor Anderson (CA) - it's a really bad deal, but they can still spin it that the SU voted against giving money back! Just a word of caution - but in a way, it's an embarrassingly bad offer. And it shows they are playing ball, kist by putting an offer forward.

Think about why they offered this - by paying us back, they could use this as an excuse in the future for why services are under funded. And if we reject it, they can say the SU is against financial support for students.

The terminology is kinda tricky, could a law or accounting student review this? Do we get this kind of advice?

RP - exec does have access to legal advice, so we can seek it to pursue this further.

Again, quick question, so the reason that there is a surplus in the operating budget, is it because of covid?

RP - not necessarily!

CA- just to be clear, this information is on public record in the times - they are in a massive surplus!

Chair - thank you for a thorough discussion. This may need to become an emergency motion, if Council wishes.

RP - can I propose an emergency motion that we reject this.

Chair - I'm happy to have an indicative vote on it. Ruairí - if you work away on this and send it in before the end of Council, and we can put it to a vote under motions not on notice.

Item 2 - Proposed by Conor Anderson - Student Organising (also further notes in drive)

1.) Is Council comfortable with the direction these campaigns are going, in particular the demands? For reference, those demands are: For Graduate Entry Medicine students, a freeze to fee increases alongside a decrease to current fees and a breakdown of where fee monies go; for Smurfit students, a 30% rebate on fees paid this term; and for nursing students, access to student housing for working students who are at risk of Covid exposure to stay in while quarantining/awaiting tests alongside action from the University on the lack of pay for work.

2.) If Councilmembers are comfortable with the direction, are they willing and able to promote similar campaigns in their own schools?

3.) Are there any reservations or disagreements with how the Sabbatical team is supporting this kind of student organizing?

I agree with all of that. And I just wanted to ask, what about no detriment? Everyone is asking me about this, are we still working on it for next term?

CA - I have been trying to engage with students on no detriment, but it hasn't coalesced. This is partially due to timing, partially due to a lack of trust in the SU for how the last process ended up working which I have done my best to take responsibility for, and lastly the no detriment approach from last term is off the table, so this may not even be possible. Sp right now, there is no university wide campaign for no detriment, because it would likely fail.

I do like the direction of all of the campaigning. I think perhaps it would be more effective if the SU took a more leading role, rather than a following role. Last year, it was great for the SU to support the fix our education campaign, and to see student leaders from it on the sabbatical team, but I would have hoped that the SU would then take a more leading role in campaigning. We would be more effective as leaders. The SU has paid sabbatical officers and staff, and it is much more than what students can do themselves.

CA - taking a supporting role at the grassroots level has been a strategic decision, completely intentional on my part. I thought it would actually be more effective this way. It's okay to disagree, but I just wanted you to know it's all on purpose - putting the students first, and following that.

Coming to term 2, it will be increasingly difficult to call for these supports without political support. Will this be addressed?

CA - indeed, these student groups have been meeting with TDs, pushing for PQs, and we are definitely trying to keep addressing the government.

Will we be picking the rent increase issue back up?

CA - yes of course. The idea here is to support these grassroots campaigns in as many colleges as possible, to give ownership over actions and campaigns to students and tailor demands. And then, to progress with university wide demands and issues once we have that base. The engagement with the current student campaigns and demands is much higher at that grassroots level than any engagement with the rent protests last year.

Just to answer the no detriment issue - it helps a lot when students actually tell the SU what the issues are and actually want to back the demands and lobbying. If we don't have students on the ground and being a part of campaigns, we can't achieve real change. That's why grassroots first is an important approach.

On the current strategy - I'm happy to hear that there is a higher rate of engagement on these 3 campaigns. But their demands are quite specific to their schools, and also, in

many courses and subject areas a lot of students may not have the skills, the confidence and the time to run similar campaigns. We need to be led and supported - and we have paid elected officers who ran on manifestos of organising campaigns for us! And yes, we have our responsibility as reps to engage our constituencies. We could do so much more and so much better if class reps were in better contact with their classes, and stronger university wide lobbying and campaigning by the union. People in my course for sure would benefit a lot from university wide campaigns, rather than these very specific local campaigns.

Chair - we have spent a lot of time on this point, so we will move on now. But thank you for the lively discussion!

(f) Items for Noting

(g) Items for Approval

(h) The reports of each Executive Officer

Sabbatical Officer Reports

- Conor Anderson

A lot of progress on the campaigns.

Meeting with Richard Boyd Barrett.

Media about UCD finances. And more media coming.

Worked with a TCD officer to draft a motion for USI to support UCD GMed students.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- Hannah Bryson (late)

Apologies for being late, I was quite sick for last week. I'll take it mostly as read, but just so you know, we will be doing an exam stand online, some support at our front desk, and we will try to organise some form of study breakfast before exams, however we won't be able to run the library breakfasts.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- **Sarah Michalek**

(done earlier)

- **Ruairí Power**

Thank you Oscar for the library point at the last council meeting - we are happy that the library will be opening on Saturdays!

Great panel discussion about students on placement.

We have had some shut downs from management on the right to disconnect policy and discussing supporting public funding at the governing authority. So it isn't easy, but we are taking actions and once we have more written responses from the university we will publish responses to them publicly.

Chair - Questions!

How can someone suggest something for a panel discussion?

RP - just contact me or Leighton.

Can you tell us why they have shut down the right to disconnect policy?

RP - i was guided to present the issue at a committee, but the response was that I had conflated staff and student issues (which I disagreed with). We were not fully shut down, but told to establish a committee on this issue and our proposal did not pass.

Chair - any further questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- **Leighton Gray**

Mostly as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed

- **Carla Gummerson**

A lot of take up on the conference fund!

Much of similar tasks. Meetings, speed quizzing.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report? With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed

College Officer and Oifigeach na Gaeilge Reports

- Science College Officer

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- Oifigeach Dlí

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- Business College Officer

Just to acknowledge that Council has been quite long, and I wanted to commend all the class reps for their commitment.

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- Health Sciences College Officer

Thank you to the reps who joined the zoom college council. Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- **Engineering and Architecture College Officer (late)**

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- **Lauren, Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences**

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- **Sophie, Arts Humanities and Social Sciences (deferred)**

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- **Oifigeach na Gaeilge (deferred)**

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

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

Deferred to the next meeting.

Campaign Forum Reports

- **Residences Campaign Coordinator (late)**

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- **Gender Equality Campaign Coordinator**

Not present, deferred to the next council meeting.

- **Diversity and Inclusion Campaign Coordinator (n/a)**

Not submitted, deferred to the next meeting.

- **Mental Health Campaign Coordinator**

Hope everyone does well in exams and has a good Christmas.

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- **Mature Students Campaign Coordinator (late)**

SSDP - if anyone wants to get involved, please get in touch.

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- **LGBTQ+ Campaign Coordinator**

Not submitted, deferred to the next meeting.

- **International Campaign Coordinator**

Not submitted, deferred to the next meeting.

- **Environmental Campaign Coordinator**

Not submitted, deferred to the next meeting.

Ents Forum Reports

- **RAG Coordinator - David Dinca**

Not submitted, deferred to the next meeting.

- **Promotions Officer - Emma Gregg**

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

- **Non Alcoholic Event Officer - Steven King**

Not submitted, deferred to the next meeting.

- **1st Year Promotions Officer - Louise Costello**

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

Not submitted, deferred to the next meeting.

The report passed.

- Ents Reps Coordinator - Ruth Goulding

Not submitted, deferred to the next meeting.

(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.

Council 2 report of Emily Moore, UCDSU Science College Officer.

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

Council 3 report of Lucy Reid, UCDSU Ag, Food and Vet college Officer.

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

Council 3 report, Gender Equality Campaign Coordinator.

Defer.

Council 3 report of Paula Martinez, Diversity and Inclusion Campaign Coordinator.

Defer.

Council 3 report of Josh Kerr, LGBTQ+ Campaign Coordinator.

Defer.

Council 3 report of Liya Ye, International Campaign Coordinator.

Defer.

Council 3 report of David Dinca, Rag Coordinator.

Defer.

Council 3 report of Ruth Goulding, Ents Rep Coordinator.

Take as read.

Chair - any questions arising out of the report?

With that, we'll put it to a vote.

The report passed.

(l) Motions not on notice.

Ruairi - to reject the proposal from UMT on a partial student levy rebate, to be financed by the student centre budget going forward, as discussed by Council on the 30/11/2020.

Proposal from the UMT - Does Council support it?

And, all those against? That rejection has passed comfortably. I believe that is a strong indicative vote for your executive officers to bring forward to negotiations with UMT.

50/70 against the UMT proposal.

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

Motions by the 11th of January 2021.

Reports and other items by the 15th of January 2021

(n) Any Other Business.

Bubbles for students in res next term?

RP - we support this, and so does res actually, so we are working together to see if it can be brought in, in line with government restrictions.

I'm struggling to get my hands on procedures for student complaints in general.
Where can I find them?

HB - yeah, it's all online, but you need to know the terminology and what to look for. Student conduct, student code, and some others. The department in charge of it in UCD have made a summary pdf, I can send it to Joanna to add it to the documentation for the next Council.