



YOUR UNION. YOUR VOICE.

UCD Students' Union Limited

Student Centre,  
UCD, Belfield,  
Dublin 4.

Tel +353 1 7163108  
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**Council Five Minutes**  
**6:30pm, 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015**  
**Fitzgerald Chamber**

Council begins at 6:50pm.

Stephen Whelan	Chair of Council	Chair
Conor Rock	Arts Convenor	CR
David McElligott	Science Convenor	DME
Sinead Gaughan	Disabilities Coordinator	SG
Bill Thompson	Stage 3 Languages, Literature & Music	BT
Lidia O'Shea	Stage 1 Architecture	LOS
Emma Costello	Internal Promotions Ents	EC
Maeve Kelly	Doctorate Human Science	MK
Éanna Ó Braonáin	Oifigeach na Gaeilge	ÉÓB
Feargal Hynes	President	FH
Michael Goldsworthy	Stage 3 History & Archives	MG
Matthew Healy	Artist Liaison Ents	MH
Matthew Carrol	International Student Coordinator	MC
Amy Fox	Education Officer	AF
Mary Cain	Stage 2 Archeology	MCa
Sinead Gaughon	Disabilities Coordinator	SG
Lexi Kilmartin	Stage 1 History & Archives	LK
Melanie O'Donovan	Human Sciences Convenor	MOD
Grace Williams	Gender Equality Coordinator	GW
Mollie Bruton	Health Sciences Convenor	MB

**Directors**

R. Breslin. | P. de Brún. | F. Carroll.  
L. Dockery. | M. Gallagher. | A. Ó Deá.

**Company Secretary**

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Anabel Castañeda	Graduate Education Officer	AC
Amy Neville Fulena	Stage 2 Economics	ANF
Sam Blanckensee	LGBTQ+ Coordinator	SB
Aaron D'Arcy	Non-Alcoholic Coordinator Ents	AD
Amy Fox	Education Officer	AF
Maeve De Say	Welfare & Equality Officer	MDS

**(a) The declaration of quorum by taking attendance.**

- Quorum declared by the chair.

*Standing Orders raised so that the Returning Officer could host the elections of both the Res Coordinator and Mental Health Coordinator.*

Res Coordinator Nominees: Chris Pritchard

Mental Health Coordinator Nominees: James Barden, Bhattarai Kundan, Andrew McKeogh.

- Returning Officer announced that Chris Pritchard was elected as Res Coordinator and Andrew McKeogh was elected as Mental Health Coordinator.

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

Minutes were accepted.

**(c) Matters arising from the minutes.**

No matters were arising from the minutes.

## **(d) Motions on notice**

### **- Rain Shelter**

**CR** – The main reason would be to assist both the disabled and elderly in getting from one end of campus to another as they may struggle with mobility. Continuing the sections pre-existing on the concourse would benefit all students.

**Chair** – Anyone against?

**DME** – There is a disabled parking bay on the corner of science, this walkway would obstruct this, it's in a great location at the minute.

**SG** – I would just like for you to retract the use of disability in your primary statement and would suggest that you contact the access office to see if they have any plans?

**CR** – Apologies I didn't mean it like that, it was just for people to take circumstances into consideration. I also presume that the plans will seek not to obstruct the parking bay.

**BT** – Previously the covered walkway was fully extended but was removed due to inappropriate activities by students, so that should be taken into consideration.

**LOS** – Would it be extended to Newstead and Richview?

**CR** – I presume it was a design fault which can be amended. Presumably it would extend to all buildings.

**EC** – This would be a very expensive project, the college has already cut back!

**MK** – It's a big project and it's understandable that the cover does not follow through to buildings like Quinn or Sutherland as they were built after the cover was completed.

**ÉÓB** – A previous speaker has not used valid points, the issues being referred to are in the past.

**Vote:** Passed.

## - Resit Fees

**CR** – Resit fees are unnecessarily expensive at €230. Even though I respect it is usually the students fault, I don't think they should be carrying the financial pressure.

**MG** – There needs to be a form of accountability present as you don't want to be seen to be encouraging a non-chalant attitude if the fee does go down.

**AF** – The repeat fee is €230 across the college do to an averaging out of repeat costs. Practical based subjects cost a lot more to be taken, and repeated.

**MCa** – I know people who have applied for extenuating circumstances and did not receive them. I understand the price of the equipment but not everyone has an easy time in college. If a student has attempted to apply for extenuating circumstances and then faces a repeat, something should be done.

**SG** – We are the only college in Ireland to have Veterinary and I appreciate this is costly but I'd like some enlightenment on the averages of prices.

**AF** – This would be the average cost for correcting a paper across the college and if we were to adapt a different system that would mean that students in Med/ Eng/ Vet etc would have their repeat fees increased to between €500 - €800. Extenuating circumstances are not just for illnesses, they also take into account lots of other difficulties which students encounter. Also. to give prospective, the Trinity repeat fee has just increased to €250.

**LK** – Students can't financially afford to resit and often consider dropping out.

**MOD** – Does it matter that 'Council Notes' and 'Council Mandates' are slightly different?

**Chair** – If you want to amend this problem you would have to defer and bring the motion to next council.

**DME** – The resit and repeat is the same anyways.

**FH** – 9A (*passed*).

**VOTE:** Passed.



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#### - Voting on Erasmus

**CR** – Lots of people go on erasmus and the elections affect you whether you are present in UCD for the year/semester or not. Hopefully we can look into the possibility of allowing students on erasmus to vote in the sabbatical elections as well as referendums.

**FH** – With the proposed constitutional changes it can be seen that we are working towards online voting, we won't be able to report before next council.

**MK** – Can students on erasmus here have a vote?

**Chair** – No.

**VOTE:** Passed.

#### - Voting on Placement

**CR** – Students on placement are not able to vote in referendums or executive elections. We'd like to suggest that a ballot box be placed in all primary placement centres.

**Chair** – Just to note that this was previously done and it changed to cut costs which should be considered when debating this motion.

**DME** – As mentioned earlier, online voting is being brought in so there would be no point in accepting this motion.

**GW** – This will be a gap filler for between now and online voting becoming real.

**MB** – There will only be a provision for online voting if the new constitution is passed.

**AC** – Who would decide the primary placement locations?

**MB** – Health Science has a number of primary centres.

**Chair** – It would all need to be cleared with services, Returning office and President.

**ANF** – Electronic systems are very easy to forge.

**BT** – There is a lot of discussion surrounding counterfeit votes.

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**ÉÓB** – There is only a provision for online voting, it hasn't been passed yet.

**SB** – Placement is a very isolating time anyway so it would be a step to get students on placement engaged. Please note that Vet students have placement too but the primary centres are not marked.

**LK** – How would ballot boxes be done without causing major disruption?

**Chair** – Usually they are put in the canteen.

**VOTE:** Passed.

#### - **Gender Recognition**

**SB** – I don't know if everyone here is following the media at the moment but currently, gender recognition is being debated in the Seanad. I am presently not recognised as a man by the state technically and for example, if I died, it would state I was a female. It is pivotal that trans people are recognised.

**Chair** – Anyone against?

**VOTE:** Passed.

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

##### **i. Constitutional Referendum**

**FH** – There are a number of changes being made in this referendum and we held open discussions last Monday and Tuesday to go through these with the public. There was not enough time to go through Council for everything as we needed to hold the referendum





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before the Executive elections as if the constitution is passed, they will be directly affected.

*FH went through the changes proposed in the constitutional referendum.*

**MH** – I have a few questions, will Ents forum still hold a seat on council? Also, for the non-quorate voting would something be passed with just 70 votes in a campus this large?

**FH** – On the basis of the Ents Managers input, it would be more productive to have more meetings with him instead of being obligated to attend Council! Ents forum would be allowed to be a class rep though. To answer the second question, there are different types of referendums, for example, policy and non-binding. The non-binding would allow Council to discuss a topic but not be mandated.

**MH** – Why were the Ents Forum not consulted about these changes? We have given apologies for council as we all have part-time jobs and aren't always able to attend. You would be taking away the Ents arm from the Union and disallow engagement with the class reps.

**FH** – Over 1,600 changes have been marked and we were under severe time pressure to meet deadlines. We have reached to past and present students involved with the Union to gauge an understanding. I liaised through the acting chair of ents forum to get feedback, apologies if I didn't speak to you personally.

**MH** – I was unaware that you had passed the role of chair.

**FH** – If the constitution is passed, the C&C officer will chair the ents and campaigns forums.

**SG** – Is there a communication and campaign plan? I see that the referendum is taking place on February 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>. Facebook will still be a good medium to use. Presumably quorum will be difficult to reach.

**FH** – We have produced leaflets, posters and videos. We are not naïve but this revised document is for the benefit of the Union. We will need help from each and every one of you. Does anyone have any questions?

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**AD** – If the C&C Officer did come back, what role would they play as chair of Ents forum?

**FH** – They would be the chief spokesperson and as they are accountable, they will report back to Council with updates. They would have one vote on the forum.

## ii. Marriage Equality

**FH** – The idea of holding this referendum is so that we have an opportunity to speak and make noise before we are washed out due to national media. The core ideas of the campaign are to influence the older generation and get ahead of the pack. If passed, it would be a very strong stance for the Union to have.

**SB** – If you are free tomorrow, pop up to Meeting Rooms 5,7&7 in the new student centre to take part in the videos and picture campaign between 10:30am and 3pm. There will be a townhall meeting in the same venue on Wednesday at 6pm with Ailbhe Smith. This will be the official launch of the #VoteforME campaign.

**GW** – We will be posterung so keep an eye on the facebook page.

### **(f) Items for Noting.**

#### **- Class Rep of the Month**

**AF** – Derrick Davis has been selected to be the Class Rep of the Month this month.

#### **- Coffee House Sessions**

**CR** – We are launching the sessions for Second Semester in the Arts Café tomorrow at 6:30pm. It's a land of homegrown talent so it's well worth checking it out. Please tell your friends about it and share it on facebook. It takes place every two weeks!





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**(g) Items for Approval.**

**- Audited Accounts**

**FH** – These were circulated previously, apologies they weren't available when expected but they need to be approved by the board before they can go to Council and we held the AGM last Thursday. Another change we made in the constitution is that they audited accounts be ready for the first council after the break.

**MK** – Apologies I didn't get a chance to look at these, is there a report on the Ball?

**FH** – An investigation was done to ensure that we will never loose this amount of money again but it's not because there is questions as to where the money went.

**VOTE:** Approved.

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

**President** - Accepted

**FH** – Take it as read but I wanted to mention that we have regained a seat on FRAMC, it is the most senior committee in the University. It is so essential that we have full speaking rights on this committee which directs funds within campus.

**MH** – What is the new venture for summer? Could you give more detail?

**FH** – There will be a trip promoted by UCD Ents to Mallorca just after the summer exams. If you are interested in organising a group to go then please contact the Ents Manager! There will be all sorts of events, boat parties etc and of course the sunshine.

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**Undergraduate Education** – Accepted

**AF** – Thank you to the reps for forwarding on cases during the exams. Regarding the SUSI grants, as of next September the library will not act as a control mechanism for fee payment.

**MK** – Will this apply to postgrads?

**GW** – Will it count for continuing students?

**AF** – Yes!

**Graduate** – Accepted

**AC** – Over 700 new international students have started college in UCD for this semester, please make them feel welcome! The postgrad ball is selling well and is taking place on February 5<sup>th</sup>. We have also now finally received news from the library that the PRC will now be opening for the postgraduate area to all disciplines, not just Arts and Human Sciences as this was supposed to happen much sooner. So glad that this is finally getting through.

**MK** – I would like more information as to why the postgraduate study area for Arts and Human Sciences students has been opened up, I do not think it is right and I believe we should fight for its retention for specific disciplines.

**AC** – I will go through more information with you after council.

**Welfare** – Accepted

**MDS** – Lots of work is being done with Clubs & Societies at the minute as we are working towards similar goals. Sex Out Loud is taking place next week and one of the main aims of the week is to promote the fact that consent comes first. The University Mental Health Policy has now been completed and it is going in front of UMT.

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**CR** – Could we get a small briefing on the Mental Health policy please?

**MDS** – It looks at how to deal with students showing varying levels of signs of distress. It also goes through the provision of supports for all staff.

**Agriculture & Veterinary** – Accepted

**Arts and Celtic Studies** – Accepted

**MH** – I have read in your report that you held a tea/coffee morning but on that morning I didn't really see you. Also you mentioned both a comedy gig and working with Draw Soc, would be great if you could get Ents Forum involved as this is what we do well.

**CR** - Will speak to you all about it at the next meeting. I was delayed for 30mins on arriving at the coffee morning and I also had class that morning. We received a great response from students and that is all that we wanted. I was approached by Draw Soc to help them and I have been planning the comedy gig for some time.

**Business & Law** – Accepted

**Engineering & Architecture** - Accepted

**Health Science** - Accepted

**Human Science** - Accepted

**Oifigeach na Gaeilge** - Accepted

**ÉÓB** – Seachtaine na Gaeilge is taking place next week, please share the event and invite friends, everyone is welcome!

**Science** – Accepted

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

**MH** – Could I get a quick reaction from the sabbats in relation to the possibility of a USI referendum taking place?

**FH** – I was approached by a former president in relation to calling a referendum but they weren't sure if it was a good idea. Tomorrow at 5pm is the deadline and it hasn't been called as of yet.

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

No motions were submitted.

**(k) Any Other Business.**

**Chair** – Just to note again, amendments for motions must be received by the secretary by email or in writing at least half an hour before council begins.

**Next Council:** Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> February at 6pm in the Fitzgerald Chamber.

**End of Meeting:** 20:00pm

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