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## **Agenda:**

### **UCDSU Council Meeting 3**

**Monday 29 January 2024, 6pm**

**Venue – Fitzgerald / Hybrid upon request**

#### **A. The declaration of a quorum by roll call**

The chair declared that quorum had been met.

#### **B. Minutes of the previous meeting**

The minutes of Council 3 were put to a vote and clearly carried.

#### **C. Matters arising**

There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

#### **D. Items for Approval**

None.

#### **E. Motions on notice**

None

#### **F. Items for Discussion**

- a. Prioritising International Students' Accommodation On-Campus (document attached)
  - Simran Khatri, International Student Coordinator initiated a discussion on potentially prioritising some on-campus beds for international students, rather than the current lottery system. SK is seeking a meeting with Estates and asked for people's opinions. SK outlined the disadvantages faced by international students vis-a-vis other student groups.
  - Stage 1 Economics Rep appreciated the sentiment but wondered about students from rural Ireland, who have just as much a need for a level of prioritisation. A concern was also raised about potential for abuse of such a system. Suggested instead that the focus could be on commutability.
  - Stage 2 Politics Rep outlined the lottery process for campus accommodation. The number of issues that arose from this system was ludicrous. Suggested the offering for returning students needs to be before the end of term.

- Stage 1 Sociology & Social Policy Rep echoed the point that students from Ireland have the benefit of being able to look for accommodation over the summer months.
- Stage 3 English & Sociology Rep said that different student cohorts have different experiences. Many Irish students do not have the opportunity to study abroad for example. Said that the struggles of Irish students cannot be negated.
- Science College Officer also highlighted the sheer difficulties faced by many students who simply have to live in Dublin, due to poor public transport and commuting option.
- Martha Ní Riada (President) outlined the current system of prioritisation in place - which is for Stage 1 and geared towards the most expensive accommodation on-campus.
- Stage 1 History Rep shared his own commuting difficulties, and that he simply could not do it every day. Not knowing if there will be available accommodation is a constant source of stress. Said the proposal is admirable, and is not blaming international students at all for the scarcity.
- Jill Nelis (Welfare Officer) said she did not understand why UCD strayed from the previous approach, which did consider commutability. Also said that currently there are not enough provisions for emergency accommodation.
- Stage 4 International Commerce Rep said action on emergency accommodation is warranted. Also said an Irish student's experience is to perhaps experience no available accommodation across four years, versus 1 for some international students.
- Stage 3 Landscape & Architecture Rep asked about the use of on-campus accommodation during the summer and whether it could be made available to international students over the summer, who could use the period to be hooked up with alternative accommodation.
- Stage 1 City Planning & Env Policy Rep spoke in favour of the proposal. Argued that despite Irish students facing legitimate challenges, there is a greater need for international students, and that Council should reject elements of nativism that says Irish students should be put first.
- Law College Officer suggested Residences could allocate those places for Emergency Accommodation, which any student can apply for by staying in their circumstances with supporting documentation to filter out those who are trying to cheat the system.
- Ag, Food & Vet College Officer spoke to issues faced by particularly isolated parts of the country, such as Donegal, the students from which incur large costs as well as enduring lengthy commutes, no trains etc.



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- Business College Officer flagged European students who are not counted as International Students, and need to be factored into the conversation.
- Engineering & Architecture College Officer flagged that there are students from Dublin who cannot live at home for various reasons. Rejected the idea that different student cohorts fighting over a small number of beds; and that students instead should get on the streets, and challenge UCD and the Government over inaction.
- Gender Equality CC commended the proposal but said it perhaps did not grasp the nature of how difficult commuting to college is for so many.

b. UCDSU support for MAP (Medical Aid for Palestine) (document attached)

- Miranda Bauer (C&E Officer) brought the proposal as it involves working with a charity.
- Stage 2 Science Rep asked for more information about the types of support that could be offered.
- Business College Officer asked whether there could be more information about where the money goes; Chair confirmed a request for a donation would have to be in the form of a motion, but this is more about general collaboration, and the process of the Union's ongoing support for the Palestinian people, as well as Council's BDS policy.
- Science MSc Rep said this sounds like a reasonable way that the SU could support Palestine, without displacing focus on the nominated RAG Charity.
- Graduate Officer suggested that working with an entity aligned with UNICEF would be a suitable approach given their legitimacy and the previously entrenched views on Palestine/Israel.
- Chair reiterated if it something is really going to have a bigger impact on the resources of the Union, it should be brought to Council in the form of a motion.



## **G. The reports of each Executive Officer**

### **College Officers**

Tsing (Social Science) presented her report. Work has focused on meetings, holding a College Council, seeking a successor. There were no questions on her report and it was carried.

Simon (Business CO) presented his report. Said the fountain in Smurfit works again. The rest of the report was taken as read. There were no questions on his report and it was carried.

Tara (Ag, Food and Vet CO) presented her report. There were no questions on her report and it was carried.

Aoibheann (ILO) took her report as read. There were no questions and the report was carried.

Tia (Health Science CO) asked for Reps who may be interested in succeeding her to come and talk to her. Next College Council is Tuesday 13 February. There were no questions on her report and it was carried.

Erin (Science CO) spoke to her report. There were no questions on her report and it was carried.

Cillian (Arch and Eng CO) took his report as read. Stage 3 Architecture Rep asked about a material shop in Richview. There is a new Head of School in situ who needs to be met with. The report was subsequently carried.

Aisling (Law CO) is working on a survey for students on ERASMUS and planning a voter registration drive. There were no questions on her report and it was carried.

### **Sabbatical Officers**

#### **Campaigns & Engagement**

Miranda highlighted work ongoing with meetings and committees, eligibility of international students to run for Sabbatical positions and the student accommodation survey.

Commuter Breakfasts have also been launched and will run throughout term on Tuesdays.

Highlighted that nominations for Elections will open on 13 February.

Work is also ongoing on Rainbow Week. Council asked what will be ongoing. Crafting and drawing, a drag bingo night, and a panel discussion - topic TBC.

There were no further questions and the report was carried.



## **Education**

Spoke to the work that went on for the Exam Information sessions, as well as the different approach taken to Trade Union Week just before Christmas.

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There were also Library Breakfasts and pizza provided during revision week.

Money has been secured from UCD to provide more shuttle busses for the next three years, and Sarah successfully advocated to get Simon (Business CO) on to the Business College Board. Sarah's report was carried.

## **Graduate**

Spoke to prioritising a quality student experience for Smurfit students, and that this is about leaving a legacy. There is also a Women in STEM event coming soon - 8 February at 5PM in Smurfit. There was a query about whether the venue is wheelchair accessible. This will be confirmed.

Marc has been advocating for a gym in Smurfit and this looks set to go ahead for September.

A question was asked about Marc's expenses, information he will provide in his next report. A further speaker said Council should be understanding of reasonable taxi journeys as Sabbatical Officers work demanding jobs. There were also queries about the format of the Officer Reports used. Chair clarified that there is no agreed format and that it is up to Council what it approves and what it rejects.

Marc's report was subsequently carried.

## **President**

Update focused on Palestine solidarity and the University's response to the ongoing crisis. There is also work ongoing for Elections and the UCD Ball.

Key meetings included meeting with Dublin Bus reps and the Raise the Roof Campaign.



Stage 2 Science Rep asked for more information about the response of the UCD President. It is not the position of the University to call for a ceasefire. Science MsC Rep asked if any other HEI had taken a stance. This is not the case, and that it had been discussed within IUA circles. Events at Harvard had been flagged. MNR said we should not be looking to America for guidance. Hypocrisy was highlighted in relation to the stance taken by the college when Russia invaded Ukraine. A meeting will be arranged about next steps. This will take place next Wednesday, 7 February.

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Martha's report was subsequently carried.

### **Entertainments**

Highlighted the student partnership forum meetings ongoing. UCD Xmas Day and Xmas Market raised €672 for DRCC. Met with students partnering with UCD Global. Assisted Welfare Officer with the protest on disability payments reform. Details on a Drink and Draw being finalised.

BSc Nursing (Children's & Gen) Stage 2 and Stage 3 rep asked about the First Aid course and whether a cert will be provided, which it will.

Neo also confirmed that the Union's BDS policy has in effect ended UCDSU's partnership with Dominos.

Neo also gave as much information as he could about the status of the UCD Ball. He has been in touch with a few societies about potential performance slots.

There is big interest in the First Aid training and Neo will investigate whether more of these can be put on.

Neo's report was subsequently carried. Neo's report from Council #3 was also passed on this occasion.

### **Welfare**





Flagged that the submission date for the Green Paper on disability reform has been pushed back. Jill is continuing to work on this. There was also a town hall held on this subject and Jill thanked attendees.

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There are plans afoot for Consent Week and Rainbow Week. Consent Week will be like SHAG Week Part 2.

There is also an accessibility survey in the works.

Stage 3 English & Sociology Rep asked the availability of period products in bathrooms, which have been missing for some time. Also asked about the status of the proposed conference on period poverty.

No further questions were asked and Jill's report was carried.







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**H. Questions on notice**

**I. Questions not on notice**

**J. Motions not on notice**

**K. Items for noting**

- a) Vacancy: Mental Health Co-ordinator role
- b) UCDSU Executive Elections 2024

**L. Submission of motions to be on notice for next meeting -**

Next Council is on 19 February. Motions need to be submitted by 12 February at 5PM. Other items are due by 16 February, all Officer Reports by 14 February at 5PM.

Chair also asked for any intent for holding a referendum to be brought before 12 February.

**M. Any Other Business.**

EDI sub group about Men coming up. People interested should ask Marc (Graduate Officer).

Aoibheann (ILO) highlighted the Coiste Gaeilge/Irish Committee and asked for interested people to come forward.

Meeting adjourned at at 8:04