

Additional Services to Members

As a representative body, **USI** has immense power and standing, and has fought hard to establish itself as a formidable lobbying organisation within the political arena. In order to secure the long-term viability of the union, incentivise membership and ultimately be in a position to reduce affiliation fees, USI needs to embrace the countless opportunities available to provide additional services to its members.

As a former Ents Officer, Operations Manager and a Director of UCD Students' Union Services, Gary possess the commercial skills needed to roll out an inventory of additional services to COs.

Gary, as USI President, will:

- Introduce a **National Student Discount Card**, offering exclusive discounts to students in COs, fully sponsored and personalised with CO officers' details, as well as space for local advertising.
- Launch a central **online ticket purchase and printing system** allowing COs to sell event tickets online using credit and debit cards without the traditional expense of management overheads.
- Introduce a **centralised ENTS booking system** to allow COs to attract high calibre acts at a reduced price for events such as Freshers' Ball, Rag Week etc.
- Establish a **monthly club night** across the country to raise funds for both USI and COs.
- Investigate NUS's bulk-buying service, securing discounts for COs on purchases for shops and bars.
- Negotiate a list of **preferred suppliers** on phone contracts, printing etc, to secure discounts.

Experience & Achievements

(09-10): President, UCDSU

(09-10): USI Finance Committee

(09-10): Student Rep - Governing Authority, UCD

(09-10): Student Rep - Finance Committee, UCD

(09-10): Director, UCD Student Centre Ltd.

(08-09): Entertainments Vice-President, UCDSU

(08-10): Director, Students' Union Services

(08-10): Student Rep, Academic Council, UCD

(07-10): Director, UCD Ball

(07-08): Operations & Events Manager, UCDSU

(06-07): Communications Officer, UCDSU (*part-time*)

(06-07): Station Manager, Belfield FM (*part-time*)

(05-06): Class Rep, UCDSU

- Secured a refund of €180,000 that was overcharged to students by UCD.
- Raised an additional €120,000 for the UCD Student Welfare fund.
- Increased UCD Class Reps by over 50%
- Presented before the Joint Committee on Education & Science about student support and the Student Services Charge.
- Increased student representation on various university committees.
- Secured a €50,000 investment in 'chill out' spaces throughout the campus.
- Rolled out Staff/Student Committees in every school in UCD.

About Gary

Gary Redmond is a 23-year-old from Arklow, Co. Wicklow. He has been involved in various levels of student politics for over five years, and has studied Computer Science. Gary is the current President of UCD Students' Union and has presided over one of the most important and successful years in the Union's history.

Gary has previously served as Entertainments Vice-President, full-time Events & Operations Manager and part-time Communications Officer of UCD Students' Union. In his spare time, Gary is a keen sports fan and enjoys nothing more than relaxing at the end of a long week watching Manchester United, Leinster, Ireland or even Wicklow on their rare outings in Croke Park.

Gary, as President of USI, will be a strong and experienced hand at the helm of what will undoubtedly be another turbulent year for students and for the country. Gary offers unrivalled experience, unmatched results and an unparalleled understanding of the issues affecting students.

www.garyredmond.ie

Vote Gary Redmond No. 1 for USI President

**Vote Gary Redmond No. 1
For USI President**



**Vótáil Uimh. 1 Mar
Uachtarán**

The problems students face – and how Gary plans to tackle them

Having been a sabbatical officer for two years, Gary is at the coalface of the student experience and understands the needs and problems of students. Gary brings incomparable experience and a proven track record of delivering for students.

Gary, as USI President, will deliver for every student across the country and fight for a more equitable and higher-quality student experience, based on the roadmap for progress outlined below.

Access to Education

To the fore of USI's campaigning agenda must be 'Access to Education'. Students face enormous non-academic problems in not only reaching higher education but also surviving during their time there.

Grants/Student Support Bill

Issues: Every year, grants are delivered late with applications subjected to red tape and incoherent policy in over 60 bodies responsible for their administration. Next year, this will get worse as a system on the brink of collapse reaches bursting point.

Gary, as USI President, will:

- Continue the fight to enact an amended Student Support Bill - ensuring fairer financial appraisal for independent under-23s, a centralised grants authority, and standardised assessment criteria.
- Lobby for the introduction of a simplified online application form and an earlier opening date to ensure that grants are processed and paid for the start of term.
- Seek the nationwide rollout of electronic payments (EFT) and introduce monthly instalments.
- Demand that the entitlement to grants be returned to students on the BTEA.

Student Services Charge (SSC)

Issues: The Student Services Charge (SSC) has risen 900% in 14 years and 67% in 2009 alone. The €1,500 paid by every student is being directed into core academic services such as libraries to offset cuts in the state grant. Institution heads have admitted that this is "fees by another name".

Gary, as USI President, will:

- Demand a concrete definition of 'student services' to stop diversion of money.
- Fight for tax relief on the SSC, costing the State a maximum of €18m a year, and reducing the ultimate cost of the SSC by €300 – a small price to pay for increased access to education.
- Continue the fight for an immediate freeze and seek the ultimate abolition of the SSC.

Tuition Fees/Student Loans & Graduate Tax

Issues: Another fight on a graduate tax or student loan system is not far away. Access to education is the only way to rescue the country from its economic mess – to succeed on the world stage, Ireland needs to have world-class graduates. If a graduate tax system hasn't worked in Australia and New Zealand, it's not going to work here.

Solutions: Gary will lead a concerted campaign to end the threat of tuition fees once and for all. Through smart campaigning and strategic lobbying of key politicians and public bodies, Gary will generate national momentum around this issue.

NUS - USI

USI was one of the first bodies to see that co-operation across the divide in the North could effect positive change for the common good.

Gary is acutely aware of the unique needs of Northern students. **Gary, as USI President,** will continue NUS-USI's work lobbying the Northern Ireland Executive to end top-up fees once and for all and increase levels of student support to ensure equal access for all students.

Organisation, Training & Communication

Affiliations: USI must present a united front. Every CO must be an active member. Following the success of NUI Maynooth's affiliation referendum, Gary will prioritise the re-affiliation of other SUs, highlighting the benefits of being with USI. With this, USI can once again deliver equal representation for every student in Ireland.

Training & Support Network: One of the most practical benefits local COs get from USI is UOS (Officer Training). Gary, as USI President, will enhance the networking environment for sabbatical officers. He will expand the scope of UOS and offer semi-centralised Class Rep training programmes to better share USI's expertise with CO class reps. He will also expand on the successful Activist Academy introduced this year.

Public Image & Communications: As a professional organisation, USI needs to be viewed seriously both at home and abroad. Gary will commission a top-class website to act as a central resource for all Irish students, and will oversee comprehensive rebranding of USI, including the adoption of a new logo and branding guidelines.

A Cohesive Student Movement: As a current CO President, Gary knows how important inter-union communication is across the country. Gary, as USI President, will increase communication between USI and COs, and hold fortnightly conference calls and use internet technologies to maximise information sharing.

Campaigning & Lobbying

In shelving third-level fees, USI scored a major political victory and proved itself to be one of Ireland's most potent campaigning groups. It is vital to maintain this reputation and to further press the student agenda.

While large scale student demonstrations are an important aspect of any campaign, USI must be innovative and utilise a multi-faceted approach to campaigns. This includes the use of lobbying, internet media, photocalls, press stunts, print advertising, grassroots, social networking, etc. to create a smart campaigning student movement.

Gary, as USI President, will:

- Ensure that USI campaigns are focussed and intelligent, by commissioning nationwide polls to gauge opinion on pertinent matters to identify how best to target USI's lobbying.
- Undertake a National Student Survey, which will give USI a better insight into the opinions of its membership on the ground and hard data to be used in policy formulation.
- Ensure that USI is at the heart of the Quality Assurance process, and fight to ensure that a local CO voice is heard at every level in the feedback and QA process.
- Déan a dhícheall chun an feachtas 'No Béarla' a chur i bhfeidhm go forleathan i ngach coláiste agus ar gach campas.
- Investigate the feasibility of rolling out the highly successful WITSU model of tackling anti-social behaviour across the country.
- Dedicate resources to the Environmental Officer to ensure the success of CO environmental campaigns and to re-inforce USI's own national environmental campaign.
- Establish a cross-sector taskforce to investigate students' legitimate expectations on having the NUI award their degrees and ensure protection of the NUI brand internationally.

Postgraduates: In the current climate, USI's postgraduate campaigns have had to take a back seat to the fight on ensuring the continued freedom of undergraduate education and the campaign for universal access. Gary will ensure a renewed focus and drive to the fight for greater postgraduate rights and lower tuition fees.

Charities: Despite the financial strain under which students find themselves, USI must be mindful of the relative privilege its members have in enjoying a high-class education. Gary will hold regular co-ordinated nationwide charity events in aid of worthy local causes around the country.