



TU Dublin Students' Union
Student Council Officer Report 22/23
Tuarascáil Oifigeach Comhairle na Mac Léinn
Aontas na Mac Leinn, Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta,
Baile Átha Cliath 22/23



Officer Name: <i>Ainm an Oifigeach</i>	Louise Kavanagh	Email Address: <i>Seoladh Riomhphoist</i>	Deputy.bc@tudublinsu.ie
Officer Position: <i>Seasamh an Oifigigh</i>	Deputy President	Period of Work: <i>Treimhse Oibre</i>	July 1 – Oct 19, 2022.

Key Points Since Last Meeting

Príomhphointí ón gcruinniú deireanach

Hello student council! I just wanted to wish you all a huge congratulations on your appointment to student council. I am so excited to work with you this year and make some real positive changes together for your university experience. I am an open book and happy to hear any comments and take questions as they come.

Training

Training was provided by TU Dublin SU (TUDSU) staff over a six-week period. We covered topics including safe talk, disclosures, media training, anti-bias and anti-racism training with Black and Irish. Typical onboarding activities such as human resources, meeting the current staff, team building and learning about the Student Union structure and the university. I spent two days before I began the term with the outgoing Deputy President that gave me important insights into the role.

Significant resources were spent this year on providing social media training, social media marketing and branding training. An external expert came in to provide a half day training on social media marketing. An entire week was spent planning and generating ideas for the year, along with allocating responsibilities to officers with an interest in generating social media content, articles, and content in general for the various TUDSU platforms.

USI – National Council

SUT and SUT+ aimed at giving Student Unions (member organisations) the necessary support and guidance to build the SU team for the year. A lot of the same topics were covered during these events as the internal training, but we had the advantage of bonding and networking with other student unions across the country.

We attended National Council (NC) in Coleraine, Waterford. Other than Dublin, we stay overnight in accommodation and spend time in working groups discussing issues on campus locally and in our specialist groups. I am part of the Dublin Region, Academic Affairs, Equality and Campaigns working group.

Campaigns

Supplemental Exams – We held a stand on campus in C Block and supported students while offering refreshments and snacks. We acted as an information point and offered calculators to students in need, the latter being available throughout the year if required on loan. As a first campaign, we learned a lot and the feedback was positive.

Don't Drop Out, Drop In – The aim was to have stands with local student services on hand throughout the week to offer guidance and information to students. It was a very busy time in Blanchardstown, and it was not possible to get stands arranged but I was able to support many students during the campaign, and still am today. The deadline is October 31st, and I will continue to work as a signpost for students in need.

Spill Da T

Free tea and coffee, biscuits and other freebies to students along with simple, fun games and activities to aid conversations and interaction.

We are week 4 into the initiative and the feedback has been positive. It is still early days so a lot of the activities are trial and error, but we are learning what works well on each campus and will adapt in future to suit the needs of students. Spill Da T has been a great way for students to meet new people and make friends too, so I hope the



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initiative stays around for many years to come.

Freshers

Over 60 events across all three campuses, and also Two evening events In the Black Wolf during Freshers – Let’s Get Quizzical (Hosted by Alternative Experiences) and a student social night. A third event was planned but cancelled due to poor ticket sales.

Evening events in Blanchardstown are not as popular as on campus. Events in Dublin City Centre will happen regularly where every campus can attend going forward.

TUDSU + Student staff

We were delighted to employ students to work during these events, and music was provided by a student who again we paid a living wage. The ability to support students during the current climate has been a real win and it has worked out so well that we have a regular staff who will continue to support the union paid throughout the year.

Orientations

Orientations with mature students, access students, Erasmus students and apprentices, along with general orientations took place throughout September in Blanchardstown.

I attended every orientation accompanied by Brian Jordan, President and a special guest Sierra Mueller Owens, Dublin Region Officer with USI.

I supported many students who missed sessions, had timetabling issues, student id, in particular supported students with additional learning needs book appointments with NLN and student services to access supports early on.

Some great conversations with incoming first years and I am delighted to see such an interest in the work of the union, and many students are interested in representing their communities, and faiths. This is amazing to see the level of care and empathy coming through, especially post covid.

Due to circumstances beyond our control, first years started later than expected so we had to hold orientations in the sports hall which has no AV equipment so we could not offer the same experience across campuses. In Blanchardstown, I worked with the university so we could accommodate as best we could. There is so much information fed back to the students that I didn’t want to overload them, so I had a stand ready in the C block and made sure to be as visible as possible for any questions.

Welcome Video

I was asked to take part in a video message to incoming first years along with President, David Fitzpatrick of TU Dublin. It was a great exercise in building a profile within the university and relationships with senior management.

Class Reps

was responsible for planning the recruitment campaign across the education team.

This involved delegating tasks on a weekly basis from August to prepare our database, social media campaign, researching and implementing exclusive discounts for students and deciding on how best to allocate the budget. With the support of our colleagues in TUDSU staff, I believe that we have executed a successful and mostly fluid campaign. Special thanks to my colleagues Niamh and Saoirse, who showed great commitment and professionalism across the board. We are almost signed off on the class rep training night away and will be opening registration shortly.

I am particularly proud of the elections in Blanchardstown. I have spent the past three weeks holding in person



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elections and so many students showed interest. Our student council nominations had 27 applicants for 15 positions. Blanchardstown has many talented students willing to share their experiences to support others, to advocate and to speak up for student rights.
 Current elected reps: 91/125

Student Council Handbook

Deputy presidents were mandated to create a student council handbook which was mostly completed by the time I took office from the previous term.
 As I am a new officer with no experience with student council, I was able to offer insight into how a brand-new student councillor might view the document.

Constitutional Discussion Panel

We have an upcoming referendum, and as an executive team we held a series of meetings to come to an agreement on the new officer structure along with any constitutional changes that would be involved. Again, huge thanks to James and Brian, President for getting this over the line and ready to present to students for feedback. We met as a working group with student representatives from all campuses, while Brian sought legal advice and worked closely with TUDSU electoral commission to ensure that students are presented with the best option forward for the future of TUDSU.

Partnership Agreement

We are currently working on building a working partnership that will strengthen relations across the university and the student union. We also discussed location specific issues such as microwaves, common rooms, class rep training and will meet again soon. We are looking forward to a positive and engaging partnership for years to come. Members of this group include myself, colleagues Brian, James, Adam, General Manager Mary, and members of the University Executive team, lead by Dr Mary Meaney, Registrar and Deputy President of TUD.

Activism

On the Blanchardstown Campus there are a host of historic issues that have become part of my remit. I worked with estates and the cleaners to reopen the microwave room in the Croí building.

There is a wider conversation happening with the university on moving the microwaves to the canteen. Experiencing push back from the canteen operators who do not want this happening.

Transport to campus has always been an issue. The estates team in Blanchardstown advised that they have been in ongoing talks with the National Transport Agency since before COVID. I took issue with the shuttle bus not being regular enough. The team have made changes but there is not enough push back. I have arranged a student forum, inviting the team so we can record student complaints about the lack of transport.

The common room In Blanchardstown has been long known for antisocial issues, a lot of it comes from non-students. I am working with estates to upgrade the security system, hold regular events, have a bigger presence, and spend time daily in the common room. There are big plans to improve the space structurally and facilities. I sent out a form in the most recent class rep meeting for feedback on what students want to see. I will work with Brian, President and provide updates regularly on progress.

We are currently waiting on an assessment to furnish the common room with better quality furniture and mirrors to



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remove any blind spots to deter activity.

Cost of living is a huge issue for us all. I have been involved in multiple campaigns since September to protest with students, USI. I spoke at a rally in Blanchardstown Centre, with the Cost-of-Living Network D15. They have come to campus twice since to offer advice and information to students. I attended the protest in Dublin City with USI and on the 13th of October, I coordinated the Blanchardstown Campus student walkout.

I invited every local councillor and TD in Dublin West to attend. I received apologies from some, but notably we had attendance from the Socialist Party, and Sinn Fein. Ruth Coppinger and Paul Donnelly TD spoke, along with me and a third-year student. This has sparked great interest in students who wish to do more as a union. The student forum is one action we are taking, along with bringing a motion to student council to protest collectively and march to the Dail. I spoke to Pheonix FM after the walkout to raise awareness also.

I invited Socialist feminist movement Rosa to campus to raise awareness on health, equality, body autonomy and ending gender-based violence. There is a march on 29th October, to remember Savita Halappanavar that USI is supporting. I will be asking for TUDSU to support this ongoing issue.

I have spoken on several occasions to the canteen operator on issues such as price increases, affordability of food, limited menus for vegan, halal and intolerances/ allergies.

I am receiving more and more complaints on the issues already raised so will make a priority this year to work with the university on how we can support students. On a positive note, I secured food vouchers from the canteen to provide free meals to those who are most in need.

There is a limited amount each month. Student services and the chaplain will link students in with me.

TUDSU Board of Directors

I am a member of the TUDSU board of directors as the Deputy President, along with students from across TUD and external members.

I am a member of the HR and Remuneration Sub Committee and was on the hiring panel to fill the positions of Student Advisor, Interim General Manager, and Education Executive.

We are hiring new external board members, I will on the Nomination and Process Committee for this venture

I am also part of the Finance, Audit, Risk (FARC) subcommittee which approves budgets for the year and manages risk. I am very grateful to be given the experience with these roles.

Governing Body

I am also a member of TU Dublin Governing Body as a student representative. This is the highest decision-making board in the university and is a ministerial appointment (Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science) so I am very grateful and dedicated to representing students at such a senior level. I am part of the FARC subcommittee that will meet soon. I have attended two Governing Body meetings so far in this term.

Working groups

- University Education Model
- Digital Education Policy
- Digital Education Subcommittee



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- University Programs Board
- Academic Calendar
- Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion
- Academic Board Blanchardstown

These groups meet every 2-3 weeks depending on the urgency. I am expected to contribute to these groups as the student representative. Groups like these are always looking for student input and are a great way to see what the university are doing well for students.

Community Outreach
 Garda Clinics were held regularly pre COVID to build community in Blanchardstown, for students to know their local Garda and to offer practical support to students such as stamping forms and marking equipment for security. As an initiative with the chaplain, we met with the local community Garda and arranged for him to come out through the semester. The launch has been postponed to November due to unforeseen circumstances.

Yoga for students
 Launch delayed due to unforeseen circumstances with instructor. Yoga classes have been arranged for students. Small donation per class will go towards our charity partner Irish Motor Neurone Disease Association.

Motion upcoming
 I have a motion in drafts with USI welfare working group asking NC to mandate that we decommission or reformat the Operation Transformation TV show due to the harmful nature of the show. It promotes disordered eating, fat shaming, excessive and fast weight loss with no aftercare and ignores calls for the show to be reviewed. I am bringing this motion to student council also and ask that we do not support the show, that we call for USI to lobby the Dept Health who fund the show, RTE to review the shows format and to raise awareness

Meetings Attended (and Number) Tinrimh Choistí agus Cruinnithe (agus Líon)	Priorities for Next Period Tosaíochtaí don chéad tréimhse eile
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<p>Crossover Training (1st May – 31st June) In-house Training (1st July – 22nd July) USI SUT (11-14th July) Comms Week (8-12th August) Workplan Meetings (x3) Weekly Exec Meeting [TAM] (x12) National Council (x1) USI Campaigns WG (x1) USI Education WG (x2) TUDSU CLG Board (x3) TUDSU CLG FARC (x1) TUDSU CLG HR + Renumeration (x1) Interview Panels [SA, GM] (x6) Class Rep Meetings (x1) Executive Referendum Meetings (x2) Constitutional Discussion Panel (x4) UET Meeting (x1) Orientation Sessions (x12) Governing Body (x2) Governing Body Induction Training (x1) Clubs, Societies + SU Meeting (x1) USI Dublin Regional Officer Meeting (x1) TUDSU * ISSU * USI Meeting (x1) ISSU regional council (x3) Team Photos & Videos Day (x1) Team Campus Tours (x3) Student Walkout Preparation (x2) Student Services Introduction [City] (x1) Media Training (x1) Safe Talk + Handling 'Disclosures (x1) Healthy Campus Meeting (x1) Common Room Activities Planning (x2) Our Student Voice Meeting (x3) Class Rep Recruitment Meetings (x10) Class Addresses to Elect Reps (approx 100) Class Addresses (150) Pheonix FM Interview (x1) Bye-Election Discussion (x1)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Common Room refurbishment 2. Continue with activist events 3. Improve representation across campus 4. Cost of living and getting to college 5. Referendum 6. Partnership agreement 7. Student Charter
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Cost of living network meeting (x3) Blanch Estates meetings re facilities (x3) Chaplain* Garda meeting (x1) Academic Board Blanch Meeting (x1) UEM Meeting (x4) NLN and Peer Mentor meeting (x3) UDL Meeting with Margaret Kinsella (x1) EDI committee (x1) Academic Calendar Meeting (x1) Digital Education Policy WG (x2) Digital Education Subcommittee (x2) Workplan Meeting (x4) Freshers Planning (x3) Black Wolf meeting (x1) Captain Americas Meeting (x1) University Programs Board WG (x1)	
Events/Activities Attended Tinrimh Imeachtaí / Gníomhaíochtaí	Annual Leave Taken Saoire bhliantúil



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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • USI Crossover National Council (16th - 17th of June) • Training (1st July – 22nd of July) • USI SUT (11th – 14th of July) • Comms Week (8th – 12th of August) • USI SUT+ (17 th – 19th of August) • Orientations (8th – 29th of September) • Blanchardstown Social 6th October • Let's Get Quizzical – 10th October • 	5 holiday days
Mandates (Complete/In Progress/Uncompleted) <i>Sainorduithe (Déanta / Ar Siúl / Le Déanamh)</i>	Comments <i>Ráitis</i>
Don't Drop Out, Drop In (Completed) Student Council Handbook (Completed)	n.a
Gifts Received <i>Bronntanais a Fuarthas</i>	Personal Expenses <i>Costaisí phearsanta</i>
Free lunch and dinner at SUT, SUT+ and NC Laptop Bag, coffee cup, pen, notebook Officer uniform	Mobile phone case and screen protector and charger €21.19 Taxi (Governing Body Tallaght, August) – €40.00 Taxi (Governing Body + return to blanch, October) – 30.20 + 20.60= €50.70 Megaphone for Walkout - €70.06



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Any Other Matters
Aon nithe eile