



Minutes: TU Dublin SU Student Council Meeting

Date: Wednesday 14th December 2022

Time: 6pm

Platform: Tallaght Campus room 001 and online via Zoom

Present:

Chairperson	Graham Hayes
President	Brian Jordan
Postgraduate Officer	Jessica Perez
Blanchardstown Deputy President	Louise Kavanagh
Blanchardstown Clubs and Societies Officer	Lee Browne
Blanchardstown Entertainments Officer	Patrick Moisan
City Vice President for Welfare & Equality	Hazel Doran
City Vice President for Events & Engagement	Ian Kelly
City Aungier Street College Officer	Magdalena Seldmayr
Tallaght Deputy President	James Curry
Tallaght Clubs Officer	Sam Delaney
Tallaght Communications Officer	Oisin Putt
Tallaght Entertainments Officer	Sophie Warren
Tallaght Societies Officer	Silvie Molloy

Apologies:

Blanchardstown Vice President for Welfare & Equality	Kayla Nolan
City Vice President Education	Saoirse Daly
City East Quad College Officer	Moses Eusebio

In Attendance:

Clerk to the Council	Anna Perho
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The Chair welcomed everyone to Student Council and the meeting was pronounced quorate. The agenda was adopted by the Council.

1. Minutes	Action item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minutes from the last meeting on the 30th November 2022 were approved. 	Noted.
2. Matters arising	Action item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Student Council recognition awards. Student Council will have a prize for the most active Student Councillor of each upcoming meeting in the form of €15 one4all vouchers. Today recognition awards were also given to Jamie O'Neill for their great work on Electoral Commission and for Peter McCann for the best Christmas Jumper. Election results from last Student Council meeting were announced and Student Council appointed the following students for the following positions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Electoral Commission: Konstantin Shramko, Samantha Corcoran, Alan O'Regan and Peter McCann - Student Members of TU Dublin SU CLG: Konstantin Shramko, Amber Thomas, Callum Breen and Guy Keogh - Student Directors of TU Dublin SU CLG: Mel Sexton and Samantha Corcoran - Deputy Chair of Student Council: Jamie O'Neill Opening nominations: nominations were opened for 2 remaining positions of Student Members of TU Dublin SU CLG (one from Tallaght and one from any campus). Questions for Full-Time Officers: questions were sent via email to officers that were not in the last Student Council meeting. Ian Kelly got a question considering RAG Charity and he answered via email. Motions/policies falling: Fallen motions were presented as follows: Lecture recording during Pandemic, Student Isolation during Covid-19 Pandemic, The Abolishment of Discriminatory Blood Donation Deferral Period, De-platforming & Rejecting Fascism and Access Student Information Campaign. VOTE YES -referendum campaign was proposed to be completed as per the referendum passing and was decided so by Council. 	<p>Fallen motions were presented and VOTE YES -referendum campaign was deemed completed.</p>
3. Motions and Policies	Action item
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The following 7 motions/policies were presented at Student Council: 	



- **Policy: Drug Harm reduction**

TU Dublin Students' Union is the largest students' union in Ireland with approximately 29,000 members.

As outlined in Article 2 of our Constitution (2019) we act in the best interests of our members and per Article 3 (v) we work to 'promote the welfare and well-being of members'.

One area of concern for us relates to addressing the issue of drug use which is becoming more widespread in the general population according to data from the European Monitoring: Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction, as follows:

"Available data suggest that drug use has become more common among the adult general population aged 15-64 years in Ireland over recent years. Fewer than 2 in 10 adults reported use of any illicit drug during their lifetime in 2002-03, but this figure increased to approximately 3 in 10 in 2014-15"

Trends would assume that since this, numbers may have further increased. There is currently a lack of understanding in Irish culture regarding harm reduction and due to this there is no effective response to drugs in Irish society. Drug harm reduction aims to reduce harm associated with the use of drugs, and do not fail based on abstinence.

The Union recognises that drugs are illegal but believe that harm reduction should be viewed as a middle ground where people with widely differing views on drug policy can agree with one another regarding practical immediate ways to reduce drug-related harm among users.

The Students' Union wishes to promote the safety of students by providing accurate and relevant drug harm reduction information.

To act upon this the Union will:

- Lobby TU Dublin to work towards having a policy on drug harm reduction
- Collaborate with organisations which already run drug harm reduction initiatives
- Provide drug harm reduction information in all campaigns related to drugs

Proposed by: Hazel Doran, VP Welfare & Equality for City Campus,
Seconded by: Louise Kavanagh, Deputy president for Blanchardstown Campus

Policy passed unanimously.

- **Motion: T Fund**



Student Council notes:

That according to TENI, 78% of trans people in the UK and Ireland have thought about ending their lives and 40% have attempted suicide. For many people, beginning and continuing social transition brings significant relief. College is filled with financial stresses and for many transgender students, name changes and other transition expenses are not an option, even though they are life-saving. Social transitioning is the social portion of a transition, in which a transgender person makes others aware of their gender identity. Some parts of social transition can include: Telling people about your gender identity, changing name/gender (if applicable), getting clothes that allow them to express themselves etc.

Student Council comments:

The work of other Students' Unions such as NUIGSU and DCUSU for the introduction of the 'T fund' for social transition, aiding students financially with elements of social transition which may include gender affirming items, such as makeup, and dysphoria relieving items like chest binders.

Student Council mandates:

The VP for Welfares to look into the feasibility of creating a fund in conjunction with the Equality and Diversity and Inclusion office within TU Dublin, for Trans*, Non-Binary and Gender Non-Conforming students

Proposed By: Hazel Doran, VP Welfare & Equality for City Campus,
Seconded By: Louise Kavanagh, Deputy President for Blanchardstown Campus

- **Motion: Disordered eating awareness**

Student Council Notes:

There are no current campaigns by the Student Union to address and raise awareness of disordered eating.

Student Council also Notes:

While there have been awareness campaigns about other mental health issues, there has not been any campaigns in recent times to raise awareness of disordered eating and what supports are available to students around this issue. Anorexia – a restrictive eating disorder – has the highest fatality rate of any mental illness. A main characteristic that frequently accompanies this disorder is perfectionism or high expectations of self. Many college students feel the pressure to get good grades, and this can further exacerbate restrictive eating patterns. Bulimia, binge eating disorder and emotional eating patterns can also contribute

Motion passed unanimously.



significantly to both mental and physical health problems. These symptoms will again be exacerbated by the extrapolating pressures brought on by being a student and dealing with the cost-of-living crisis. Many people with some type of disordered eating behaviour are less likely to receive help from a doctor as the doctor will put it all down to their weight, this can lead to the non or misdiagnose of other ailments. All types of disordered eating patterns are vulnerable to be exacerbated by internal and external pressures.

Student Council Believes:

As the cost of living crisis continues to grow, more and more students will have to make decisions between buying food and paying rent. This is not only dangerous to those with a existing eating disorder or difficulty, but also creates a ripe environment for an eating disorder

Student Council Therefore Mandates:

The VPs of Welfare run a campaign during semester two of this year to raise awareness of what disordered eating is, and what supports are available to students.

Proposed By: Samantha Corcoran, Seconded By: Courtney Maxwell

James Curry proposed 9C to delete the part “during semester two of this year” of the motion. 9C passed.

9C passed, motion amended.

Motion (amended): Disordered eating awareness

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Student Council also Notes:

While there have been awareness campaigns about other mental health issues, there has not been any campaigns in recent times to raise awareness of disordered eating and what supports are available to students around this issue. Anorexia – a restrictive eating disorder – has the highest fatality rate of any mental illness. A main characteristic that frequently accompanies this disorder is perfectionism or high expectations of self. Many college students feel the pressure to get good grades, and this can further exacerbate restrictive eating patterns. Bulimia, binge eating disorder and emotional eating patterns can also contribute significantly to both mental and physical health problems. These symptoms will again be exacerbated by the extrapolating pressures brought on by being a student and dealing with the cost-of-living crisis. Many people with some type of disordered eating behaviour are less likely to receive help from a doctor as the doctor will put it



all down to their weight, this can lead to the non or misdiagnose of other ailments. All types of disordered eating patterns are vulnerable to be exacerbated by internal and external pressures.

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As the cost of living crisis continues to grow, more and more students will have to make decisions between buying food and paying rent. This is not only dangerous to those with a existing eating disorder or difficulty, but also creates a ripe environment for an eating disorder

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The VPs of Welfare run a campaign to raise awareness of what disordered eating is, and what supports are available to students.

- **Motion: Operation Transformation**

Student Council Notes:

Operation Transformation is a weight loss TV show aired by RTE and sponsored by the Department of Health under the 'Healthy Ireland' Campaign. It has been estimated that RTE received over €500,000 over a two-year period. Operation Transformation say that their aim is to promote a healthy lifestyle for participants and viewers but, is an entertainment show that promotes unsustainable weight loss, encourages disordered eating behaviours and cultivates weight stigma.

Student Council Further Notes:

National eating disorder organisation 'Bodywhys' noted in their statement regarding Operation Transformation that fact that hospital admissions for young people with eating disorders have risen by 66% and that shows like Operation Transformation can have a detrimental effect on mental and physical health. It is also well known that many students are young people who may be vulnerable to the messages that are promoted by these weight loss tv shows. The emphasis on dieting, body weight and shape does little to long lasting weight loss and health goals.

Student Council Recognises:

Bodywhys and grassroots activists like intuitive.eating.ireland and binge.eating.dietitian have campaigned and petitioned RTE and the Department of Health in recent times to decommission the show or offer a more inclusive approach to the show, changing the focus from weight loss to a more holistic view to lifestyle changes.

Student Council Regrets:

Motion passed unanimously.



RTE, the producers of Operation Transformation and the Department of Health have done little to engage with the campaign. RTE has effectively ignored the experiences of previous participants who shared stories of the lack of support during the airing of episodes and aftercare. Research shows that dieting does not result in long term weight loss for the vast majority of people. Operation Transformation does not provide follow-up studies to monitor long term success in its participants.

Student Council Mandates:

The Executive Team to discourage the University and external organisations from promoting Operation Transformation across TU Dublin.

Student Council Further Mandates:

The VPs for Welfare to work with the VP for Welfare in USI on providing information about the effects of disordered eating to students by the end of semester 2.

Proposed by: Louise Kavanagh, Deputy President for Blanchardstown Campus, Seconded by: James Curry, Deputy President for Tallaght Campus

Motion passed unanimously.

• **Motion: Letter to the Board**

Student Council Notes:

Three sabbatical officers have resigned from their posts in quick succession.

Student Council Notes with Concern:

Three sabbatical officers across two campuses have resigned from their post in the union in quick succession. While this type of situation may not be unheard of, it is certainly unusual and raises concerns over the functioning of the union and the working environment. One of these officers was a returning officer, so it cannot be said that the workload of the position was not understood.

Student Council Believes:

Sabbatical officers work tirelessly for students, contributing significantly to the quality of our university experience. It is our due diligence as student councillors to ensure that those we elect feel supported in their work environment and capable of carrying out their mandates. When several sabbatical officers resign before the end of their term, this results in not only a higher workload for the rest of the SU team, but will ultimately influence the quality of the work that can be carried out by the remaining officers and therefore warrants these concerns being brought to the Board of the Directors



of the Students Union. An examination of the work environment and practices of the Union will provide valuable feedback so that any prominent issues can be resolved, and more supports can be put in place in the relevant areas for sabbaticals going forward. It is pertinent to identify areas of concern that can be addressed and resolved, and can establish better work practices going forward to avoid the same situation happening in the future.

Council further notes:

If these concerns are not addressed and there are further resignations, it would be extremely regretful to not have acted sooner.

Student Council Therefore Mandates:

The Chair of Student Council to write a letter to the Board of Directors highlighting the recent resignation of several sabbatical officers, and suggest looking at any potential issues that may have contributed to multiple staff departures.

Proposed By: Samantha Corcoran, Seconded By: Lile Gavin

Mel Sexton spoke for the motion.

- **Motion: Increased Functional and Accessible seating areas**

Student Council notes:

TU Dublin is the largest university in the country with nearly 30,000 students, most of whom are fulltime and therefore in classes or on campus 20+ hours a week.

Student Council also notes:

Even with this large student population, seating and recreational areas are limited across many of the campuses. The rest areas currently present also may not meet the needs of students in terms of accessibility, access to power outlets and the availability of lower density seating areas for students with sensory issues.

Student Council Mandates:

The executive to lobby TU Dublin to install more functional and accessible seating areas across all campuses. The exec must give updates on this by the last student council of the academic year.

Proposed by: Alannah Grace, Seconded by: Hazel Doran, VP Welfare & Equality for City Campus

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Hazel Doran and Annabel Biddulph spoke for the motion.

Motion passed unanimously.

Motion passed unanimously.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Motion: Sensory Spaces on Campus <p><u>Student Council Notes:</u> That there are currently no sensory rooms across TU Dublin for neurodivergent students.</p> <p><u>Student Council Further Notes:</u> The Athena Swan Action Plan points out in 3.2.15 to have accessible quiet rooms in each campus by the end of 2025 but it has no mention of sensory spaces.</p> <p><u>Student Councils Regrets:</u> While there are quiet spaces on each campus, the spaces are not necessarily suitable for students who are neurodivergent.</p> <p><u>Student Council Mandates:</u> The VPs for Welfare & Equality and the Deputy Presidents (to be moved to the VP for Welfare & Equality and the Campus VPs when the new Constitution is in act) to lobby the University to work on sensory spaces across each campus, with support from EDI.</p> <p>Proposed by: James Curry, Deputy President for Tallaght Campus, Seconded by: Brian Jordan, President</p> <p>Jamie Murphy, Louise Kavanagh and Annabel Biddulph spoke for the motion.</p> 	<p>Motion passed unanimously.</p>
<p>4. Standing items</p>	<p>Action item</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> USI Update: No update was given. TU Dublin Update: President gave an update. Gym in Tallaght is opening soon. President had a meeting to have the same services on all campuses as they are currently different on different campuses. They are planning to take the City approach on all campuses, students can access all campus gyms with the fee (and it will stay free on Blanchardstown Campus in non-peak times). President is also working on getting committees set up about all student services. Question: when is it put in place? President will give an update in the next meeting. Question: What are the peak times? President updated that they are being planned at the moment. Campus Development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - City: no updates - Blanchardstown: Deputy has been in contact with the University about campus renovation, estates are excited about the idea of mural. Common room is closed due to antisocial behaviour (vending 	<p>President to come back to Council with updates.</p>



<p>machine was broken) for Christmas. Antisocial behaviour and safety was discussed on Blanchardstown and other campuses – the Executive is working on safety across all campuses.</p> <p>Tallaght: Deputy will contact supplier of benches that are due to be put up on Tallaght Campus. Deputy also gave an update on safety issue and CCTV. Antisocial behaviour was discussed, Deputy said that people who vape will be banned from SU building and if there is illegal substances the security will be contacted. A question was asked about problems in the carpark that can cause damage to cars, Deputy will contact estates about that.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Class Rep Recruitment: President gave an update about the second phase of recruitment. The numbers at the moment are as follows: Aungier Street: 61% (last meeting 54%) Blanchardstown: 93% (last meeting 93%) Bolton Street: 94% (last meeting 78%) Central Quad: 54% (last meeting 53%) East Quad: 53% (last meeting 53%) Tallaght: 56% (last meeting 56%) 	<p>Deputy for Tallaght to contact estates about car park.</p>
<p>5. Questions for Part-Time Officers</p>	<p>Action item</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postgraduate Officer: Jessica Perez • Clubs & Societies Officer (Blanchardstown): Lee Browne • Entertainments Officer (Blanchardstown): Patrick Moisan • Aungier Street College Officer (City): Magdalena Seldmayr • East Quad College Officer (City): Moses Eusebio • Clubs Officer (Tallaght): Sam Delaney • Communications Officer (Tallaght): Oisin Putt <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Question was asked as why Oisin Putt didn't give their report. He said that he had technological problems submitting it. • Societies Officer (Tallaght): Silvie Molloy • Entertainments Officer (Tallaght): Sophie Warren 	<p>Reports taken as read.</p>
<p>6. Questions for Full-Time Officers</p>	<p>Action item</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • President – Brian Jordan <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - President updated that 6904 euro is the total amount raised for RAG currently. - Student Councillor asked about lack of submitted officer reports. President updated that he will talk with officers about this and agrees that it is important to give them on time. - Student Councillor asked about the spelling of their name and President spelled it correctly. - Student Councillor asked about exam timetables and what could be done to improve them. President answered that the Executive are working on it on different committees. Current problems have to do with understaffing in TU Dublin. A motion 	



can also be brought to Council but this is also currently being worked on.

- A Student Councillor made a joke about koalas as the President was dressed as a koala due to RAG.
- Deputy for Blanchardstown thanked President for his work and asked for an update on the goals for next months. President updated goals as follows: Partnership agreement, Student Charter and Funding agreement. There are also shared goals for the team such as welfare campaigns and RAG.
- Student Council asked about where Wormy, the TU Dublin SU mascot is. Unfortunately Wormy is not in Tallaght.
- Student Councillor asked if University offers part-time jobs for students. Deputy for Tallaght answered that there are student ambassadors, there are also jobs listed on TU Dublin SU website for PTOs and SU also hires student staff. Student Councillor asked about where the SU jobs can be found and President gave an update on it.
- **Blanchardstown Deputy President – Louise Kavanagh**
 - Student Councillor asked about the second roundabout and a speed bump there on Blanchardstown Campus, it is used as a crossing – and if there could be an official crossing there. Louise said that she can contact estates about it.
 - Student Councillor asked about a speed bump on campus that is higher than the other ones and whether something could be done about it.
 - Student Councillor asked if there’s anything that can be done about timetabling for exams. Louise answered that the lecturers can be asked about this.
 - There had been a question about vending machine taking students money. Louise will contact TU Dublin staff about it.
 - Louise thanked new Blanchardstown Part-Time Officers and Samantha Balan for their work.
- **Blanchardstown VP Welfare & Equality – Kayla Nolan**
- **City VP Welfare & Equality – Hazel Doran**
 - Student Councillor asked about volunteers for SHAG week. Hazel said that any student is more than welcome to volunteer for the events.
 - Student Councillor asked where did officer get their jumper (DIT-jumper). Hazel answered that she is a mature student and it’s vintage.
 - Student Councillor asked about Social Justice week sleepout on Grangegorman campus and why there was no sleepout on Tallaght Campus. Hazel answered that there was a PAN-campus approach so there was only one sleepout across all campuses.
- **City VP Education – Saoirse Daly**
- **City VP Events & Engagement – Ian Kelly**
 - Student Councillor asked about Christmas market on Grangegorman Campus and what happened on it. Ian updated

Louise to contact estates about crossing and speed bumps and vending machine.



<p>that there were people who signed up but on the day no one showed up. He also had covid the week before and said that he will push things forward more in the future.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Student Councillor asked about marketing the events and whether they could be marketed more. Ian said that he will work on the communicative aspects. - Student Councillor asked about upcoming events. Ian is planning for second semester, there is e.g. RAG ball coming and more on campus events coming up next year. - Student Councillor asked about collaboration with societies and overlapping with them. Ian updated that he has had meetings with societies and there is a lot of collaboration in the works currently. • Tallaght Deputy President – James Curry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - James thanked all Tallaght part-time officers for their great work on the Tallaght Campus - Jamie O’Neill asked about what’s Jennifer Farrel’s title. Brian filled in that the title is Head of Student Services. James updated that work on canteen protest will start in second semester. 	<p>Officer reports taken as read and questions from Councillors answered.</p>
<p>7. Reports from any other bodies</p>	<p>Action item</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aide Memoires – The Executive (all officers) • Verbal National Council Report – Deputy for Tallaght updated that last National Council took place last week. Council went well and the Sensory room motion for today came from there. Two motions were submitted at USI and were passed. Next National Council takes place next year. There is another planned walkout/protest for second semester with USI. 	
<p>8. Any other business</p>	<p>Action item</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Student Council recognition award from this Student Council meeting was given to Samantha Corcoran. 	<p>Clerk to contact winners with prizes.</p>
<p>9. Date of next meeting</p>	<p>Action item</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wednesday 8th February 2022 6pm on Bolton Street Campus 	<p>Clerk to send invite.</p>