



Union of Students in Ireland
Aontas na Mac Léinn in Éirinn

USI National Council Report

Online

Report on National Council Thursday 26th November

National Council 4

- USI Support for the Le Chéile Campaign [President] - Passed by consensus
- Digital & Distance Learning Position Paper [VP Academic Affairs] - Passed by consensus
- Support for Dying with Dignity [TU Dublin SU] - Passed By Consensus
- Deplatforming and Rejecting Fascism [TU Dublin SU] - Amended but Passed by Consensus
- USI to be in Solidarity with Movements in Africa [Maynooth Students' Union] - Passed by Consensus
-
- Congress Director [President] - Passed by consensus

Dublin Region Working Group

- USI will attend class rep / student council meetings once invited to attend
- Pink Training end of the month - exciting speakers and interesting event
- Power of disability conference in January
- World kindness day 13th November spread positivity - USI doing stuff
- Issues around licensing fees for academic resources online e.g journals etc Library association of Ireland heading the campaign
- International Students being used as "cash cows" - USI seeking lower fees for them
- Have we had international students on to us on this issue?
- Student nurses pictures - can get them expelled!!! (If any identifiable images logo etc)
- Student spaces (students with unideal living conditions) - exams in these spaces?
- Dublin Region Christmas Party, mince pie morning 11am 1 hour, and then event in the evening! (thursday 10th or friday 11th)

Academic Affairs

- Library Association of Ireland statement - Electronic content prices have increased in fees by a crazy amount and the libraries are unable to afford them and therefore students can't access the resources
<https://www.libraryassociation.ie/irish-librarians-call-for-action-on-the-electronic-content-crisis-facing-libraries-and-library-users/>
- Lecture capture - Pushing universal design for Learning. Can follow up with Marie directly. NUI Galway can record all their lectures due to a privacy policy being passed and Kevin will circulate documents on lecture recording. Trinity 30% of Lectures are recorded and captioned.
- Semester 1 Exams -
 - Long online exams for 2.5/3hrs but issues with accreditation with Law courses.
 - Issues that not enough care is being done for students with disabilities and exams.
 - Reasonable Accommodation is being taken care of for students with Disabilities? - Can follow up with Marie USI equality on this
- Book into spaces for students to take exams if they live in unsuitable places for taking exams. Trinity is looking into it and MSU have got these spaces but students are using them for taking interactive classes.
- Semester 2 Delivery - Some Colleges have already decided whether teaching will be online or blended learning
 - Putting value on connecting with learners.
- College Awareness week webinar - 24th November - Free webinar should be great!
- CORU Consultation Response - being submitted tomorrow afternoon
- QQI QA Reviewers Pool - Get students, they get paid. Send it onto them
- Exam de-stress for success campaign, Kevin, Craig & Claire. Online campaign being developed.
- Recorded webinars on De-colonisation in Practice
<https://www.guildofstudents.com/blackvoices/decolonisationinpractice/>

Postgrad Affairs Working Group

- Survey with postgrad students launching spring 2021.
- Questions will reflect covid ie technology, communication, positives around blended learning, funding issues around covid & postgrads
- QQI event
<https://www.eventbrite.ie/e/empowerment-and-partnership-in-student-engagement-tickets-125311432869>
- Research and Graduate education committee update
- Research Grants - How are they being distributed? No answer at current but update at later meeting
- Deloriate award - Form of funding which is more accessible for early stage researchers ie 1 or 2 years
- Postgrad building capacity
- Survey closes over the Christmas break - Do we need to fill out?
- Postgraduate taught fees

- Post Grads have lost dedicated postgrad spaces despite their fee's being allocated towards the space.
- There needs to be more transparency as to where postgrad fees are going. Postgrad fees continue to increase. This line of questioning could lead to the marketization of education which USI is strongly trying to avoid. Unregulated fee's need to be inquired about like PG fees and international fees. Advised to seek FOIs.
- #Can'tGetHome Campaign
- Campaign is taking place on the 14th of December

Gaeilge Working Group

- TUDSU- trying the adoption of an Irish language policy. Asked group for help on facebook. Might set up sub committee if needed
- Nationally; students have been asked to go on placement/go to Gaeltacht for 2 months but now it's reduced to 1 month and has been made so that EVERYONE who studies a language has to go on placement/be submerged in the language. (issues arising cause of covid)
- Seachtain Na Gaeilge; ideas needed for online. Can email Clíodhna.
- Bonn Na Gaeilge; Progress has been done. Colleges to share other ideas with each other. Check in again before end of December.

Equality and Citizenship Working Group - Pádraic

- NCAD being refused to have sanitary bins in the men's bathrooms, NCAD are refusing to pay for the cost of the bins being collected (NCAD SU has offered to contribute to the cost), NCAD Staff say they won't be comfortable in bathrooms that are gender neutral and are refusing to even look at the issue of having sanitary bins
- fixing gender issue on SAF form
- pink training action to support the people affected by the data leak
- campaign to help migrants access higher education, USI will be selling "tote bags and t shirts" to raise awareness and funds
- USI to lobby on the 27th amendment
- USI Get them home Campaign to support international students
- voter reg closes 25th of november
- support for international students stuck in the country over the holiday

Campaigns Working Group

- USI VP Campaigns updated on Education for all campaigns. He asked for SU's to keep working on the campaign, that very few TD's had signed the pledge. He asked SU's to keep reaching out to TD's, ask for meetings, and get a yes or no answer on whether they support it.
- NCI President asked VP Campaigns for support for SU's to be able to lobby their own college/university to get involved in the campaign and make a stance in favour of the campaign/pledge
- WITSU asked VP Campaigns if he had thought about contacting trade unions and whether they could get involved in supporting the campaign and lobbying

- VP Campaigns said he had met representatives from SUs about the student nurses and midwives campaign and hoped to have something ready before Christmas
- IADTSU informed of a situation in Budapest where the government are accused of removing the autonomy of the University of Theatre and Film Arts, installing a new board with an indefinite term of office that are loyal to Prime Minister Orban, in an alleged attempt to to reshape Hungary's public life to fit his own nationalist and conservative agenda. IADT have asked USI to take a stance in support of the students and staff protesting at the University, some of whom are colleagues in the European Students' Union.