



TU Dublin Students' Union
Student Council Officer Report 23/24
Tuarascáil Oifigeach Comhairle na Mac Léinn
Aontas na Mac Leinn, Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta,
Baile Átha Cliath 23/24



Officer Name: <i>Ainm an Oifigeach</i>	Brian Jordan	Email Address: <i>Seoladh Ríomhphoist</i>	president@tudublinsu.ie
Officer Position: <i>Seasamh an Oifigigh</i>	President	Period of Work: <i>Treimhse Oibre</i>	18 th April – 19 th October 2023

Key Points of work warried out since last meeting
Príomhphointí ón gcruinniú deireanach

Welcome to a wonderful new year in TU Dublin Students' Union! I'll keep this brief, since I don't want to duplicate any of the wonderful words of our exceptional Vice Presidents. This term, the political side of the Union has taken a more structured reporting approach, which you'll see reflected in a more structured set of updates here (i.e. less of me speaking aimlessly for 10 minutes).

The Executive (full-time elected Officers) now meet weekly to provide items for noting, discussion, and/or approval. Minutes are taken by a staff member and updated to the website to enhance accountability (as requested by Student Council). Several sub-committees report to the weekly Executive meeting, as follows:

- 1) President [State of the Union]
- 2) Academic Affairs
- 3) Welfare & Equality
- 4) Communications & Media
- 5) Campus & Facilities
- 6) National Affairs & USI
- 7) Campaigns

Each of these sub-committees provide a weekly briefing note to the executive, and all items for 'approval' go through the executive ultimately. This aims to improve communication, transparency, accountability, and provide a sense of responsibility to the Executive for the direction of the Union.

President [State of the Union]

TU Dublin, according to the Irish Times & Irish Independent, has reported a deficit of 10 million, due in part to a significant drop in student numbers (approximately 10%, 2418 Full-Time Equivalents). Aside from the reputational damage done to the University (accounting errors, delays in reporting student numbers), this has potential repercussions for the Union.

Our funding agreement, signed a few months ago, is based on a 'per capita' model i.e. the more students we have, the more money we receive. The specifics of this become more complicated (verbal update to take place during the meeting), and the situation is developing rapidly, but suffice to say that next year's funding could see a significant drop. Both the General Manager and I have taken a number of steps to clarify details, resolve this, and ultimately, to safeguard our funding. In the meantime, funding for this current year has thankfully now been guaranteed as identical to the last year (i.e. approximately 1.5 million).

In conjunction with this situation, the General Manager, Deputy President and I met with the President & Registrar of the University this week. Topics included the tense relationship that is pervasive between the UET & SU, other sensitive financial documents, and ongoing campaigns. The meeting was unpleasant, disrespectful towards the SU,



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and did little to resolve ongoing concerns.

The discrepancies around the funding agreement (potential underpayments) as well as the other general finance queries (student development fund, student charge allocation, etc) have been followed up on multiple times with Denis Murphy, the COO within TU Dublin. We have been promised a response by Friday (29th September) but I have provisionally placed it onto my report to Governing Body as a failsafe given his pattern of not responding. Governing Body is fast-becoming a tool for the long-standing issues within TU Dublin i.e. poor staffing, poor communication, poor financial governance, and poor relationships between the UET + SU. While content is confidential, it is safe to say that we are in a very good position, while the President + Registrar are very shaky. Verbal update to be provided on this, but:

This was evidenced with Orientations. Orientation presentations were carried out across all sites for all incoming students, and included a slide on 'activism + protesting'. The slide reminds students that they have all the power; a member of the University took a photo of me presenting this, sent it to the Registrar, who emailed me implying it wasn't a 'partnership' approach (they have yet to provide feedback on the Partnership Agreement draft from 6 months ago).

Head of Student Services then sent a negative response the following day towards us. The SU President received advice on the SU's new Senior Leadership Team and responded in a professional, positive manner.

Academic Affairs + Democracy

Class representative recruitment is tracking well; the method of election was unanimously agreed by Electoral Commission, the communication strategy is underway, and budgets have been approved. Class representative training budgets have been approved, the content is being enhanced, and the venue has been provisionally booked.

All other campaigns (e.g. Supplementals Campaign) and tasks (e.g. assignment of Officers to Academic Governance committees) are either ongoing or completed. Part-Time Officer training took place on the week of the 4th September, with the content being mostly delivered by the President. Significant improvements on last years have been implemented (as promised following feedback from previous Part-Time Officers).

Class representative recruitment is tracking well. Nominations for round one have closed, but at the time of writing (27th September), we have had over 700 nominations. This is due to the incredible work of the staff, as well as particular Officers putting in immense effort with socials + class addresses. Class representative training is virtually ready to go. Main areas of improvement are for Officer team to push beyond standard operational campaigns and begin to 'lead' in a way that elevates us to being the best Union in the country.

Student Council nominations are tracking well (round one has finished) but similar to class representative recruitment, will now receive significant focus over the next few weeks to ensure full allotment. Part-Time Officers have also received training, uniforms + are now assisting with Student Council promotion.

Finally, the Voter Registration campaign took place across all sites, with full tally of the number of students registered expected by the first Council Meeting – feel free to ask me!



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Welfare & Equality

The accommodation campaign should have occurred by the time you read this, and other campaigns (Black History Month) are occurring as we speak. Upcoming campaigns (Mental Health Week, SHIFT) are being finalised as we speak. Policy work is accelerating rapidly (i.e. gender neutral signage, T-Fund, Accessibility concerns) although resistance within the University remains the main barrier. We've offered additional staff support to the VP for Welfare & Equality in lieu of a Welfare Executive (who sadly left us for Australia a few weeks ago)!

Accommodation informational campaign occurred on social media. Black History Month, taking on board feedback from last year, has included several major student groups (such as Africa Society) to ensure that the campaign is not seen as 'tokenistic', but is genuinely achieving its goals.

Communications was slightly behind target but received special attention from President + thankfully everything is more or less tracking well. With the hiring of a new Welfare, Equality & Advice Lead, the Welfare & Equality side of the SU is expected to accelerate its achievements rapidly.

President is utilising media + Governing Body to rectify this barriers in policy development Success has been seen with the multi-faith rooms, and society support of the Union has improved immensely. LGBTQ society remain involved regarding gender neutral signage, T-Fund, etc. Updates expected at the First Student Council regarding this.

Events & Fundraising

All campaigns are tracking very well i.e. Freshers Week was a resounding success in terms of ticket sales, communications, and the general 'feel' of campus culture as a result. Other campaigns (Halloweek, 30 days of RAG) have been virtually finalised and ticket sales are again tracking very well. An increased focus on day-time events, on each campus, is now in effect with the support of the CVP's.

A special shoutout to the VP for Events & Engagement on his consistent work ethic – I am delighted to announce that as President I was barely involved, which is actually a very good sign of VP's excelling! But genuinely, a shoutout to the entire Executive + our wonderful Part-Time Officers who dropped everything to ensure it was a success across all campuses.

Communications & Media

A finalised 'proposal' / 'feasibility document' (pick your poison) regarding a potential media outlet was drafted for review at a recent TUDSU CLG board meeting (due to potential financial implications). Feedback was welcomed, market research was requested, and the VP for Communications & Media (+ Deputy President!) is working on this currently.

As well, communication methods internally (via the new Executive reporting structure, our new VP for Communications & Media, and the return of our Communications Executive) are improving, with structural recommendations occurring regularly. General feedback is that Officers feel more 'involved' in decision-making, the board, and are more



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empowered to make decisions in their various work areas!

Finally, media engagement has seen an increase in recent weeks, due to the return of students on campus. Topics have included, as expected, student accommodation, cost-of-living, DIGS legislation (and so, so much more), and have ranged from written pieces to radio interviews. As well, the Union has been far more outspoken on ongoing issues within the University (multi-faith rooms, UET) from a variety of media sources. The goal is to receive even wider media attention on planned direct actions in the coming weeks.

National Affairs / USI

TU Dublin SU has been far more active within USI this academic year. Due to our input, they have established a 'TU Working Group' in order to more effectively address concerns such as the borrowing framework, and the governmental discrimination towards TU's in terms of funding for Student Accommodation. Other national priorities being pushed by TUDSU include Trans Healthcare, the complete abolishment of fees, and there is an increasing political appetite via Voter Registration & the potential for a vote of 'No Confidence' in the current Government.

USI also coordinated a protest on the 4th October (although please note TUDSU was given a week's notice regarding graphics + specifics, hence the difficulty in promotion during Orientations, Freshers, and Class Rep elections). Few USI Officers had workplans prepared by the target date, but are now available. On a personal note, the Executive would like to commend the President of USI who, to date, has been very communicate, supportive, and understanding,

Campus & Facilities

A wonderfully new function with our new CVP role! Our CVP's meet weekly with the President to progress all 'campus' / 'facility' issues which are often neglected / progress slowly in the Union.

Everything from microwaves, to the canteen protest, to chairs in Central Quad are developing rapidly and it's been really heart-warming to see such incredible output – campuses like AST have already seen significant improvements with the refurbished quiet space, common area, etc.

This new function continues to be highly successful. CVP's meet weekly with President and have achieved significant number of local improvements. Furthermore, they've highlighted some of the key University staff who fully ignore us, which strengthens my argument at Governing Body. Jeremy is working on accessibility, CCTV, common rooms and specific mandates. Sheran is working on the sports centre, bike facilities, and masterplans. Peter is working on canteens, coffee machines, BST+LH improvements (so many), lockers, bins on campus, vending machines, and more.

I won't even attempt to list the depth of the work they've all done – I cannot imagine the team without them, and they are perfect examples of how the new SU structure works; they are positive, efficient, and determined to support students throughout TU Dublin. Please let this be noted as my ongoing appreciation for their work ethic.

Campaigns

This function only officially convened a few weeks ago, and I won't (yet) list the current progress on each campaign



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(some are lengthy, ongoing and complex), but here's the current priority list:

- TU Dublin Finance Deficit
- Borrowing Framework & TU Student Accommodation
- Student Centre & Levy
- Partnership Agreement
- Common Rooms
- Bolton & Linenhall (Direct Action)
- CQ Seating (Direct Action)
- Repeat Fees
- Blanchardstown Transport
- Canteens (Direct Action)
- T-Fund

The Student Facilities Working group has also been convened (finally) and TOR's (Terms of Reference) are due to be agreed at the next meeting.

Summary

While this update captures the main priorities of the Union executive over the last few weeks, it does not capture everything – it was genuinely impossible to list every meeting, every success, and every 'win' by the Officers, but I tried! I'm, as always, happy to take questions on anything and everything you might have an interest in! Thank you!

Meetings Attended (and Number) Tinrimh Choistí agus Cruinnithe (agus Líon)	Events/Activities Attended Tinrimh Imeachtaí / Gníomhaíochtaí
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<p>Leadership Weekly x 9 NTUTORR Funding Oversight Board x 3 Academic Affairs Weekly x 10 Welfare & Equality Weekly x 11 By-Election Planning x 1 SHW Steering Committee x 3 Community Liaison Committee x 1 HR TUDSU CLG Agenda Preparation x 2 HR TUDSU CLG Meeting x 2 FARC TUDSU CLG Agenda Preparation x 1 FARC TUDSU CLG Meeting x 4 Exams Campaign Planning x 1 Catherine Bruen [Finance] x 3 Academic Council Preparation x 3 Academic Council x 2 EUT+ Meeting [Sascha, 9-5] x 1 Class Representative Award Selection x 1 NTUTORR Student Champion Interviews x 12 Student Council x 1 Inauguration Planning x 1 Student Finance Committee x 4 Governing Body Strategy Day x 1 Governing Body EDI Sub-Committee x 1 CLG Constitution Review x 1 OSV Presentation Preparation x 1 Governing Body x 4 Faculty Board [S&H] Preparation x 2 Faculty Board [S&H] x 2 Communications Meeting [Martina] x 1 Risk Management Committee x 2 Officer Onboarding Preparation x 1 Student Engagement + Sustainability x 1 Student Awards Ceremony Review x 1 TUDSU Staff Meeting x 1 UCCSU President Meeting x 1 Part-Time Officer Operational Planning x 1 TUDSU+ Discussion x 2 Elections Review x 1</p>	<p>SLWC Award Ceremony x 1 Exam Stands [S2 Exams] x 2 Exam Stands [Repeats] x 1 OSV Conference Presentation x 1 Society Awards x 1 DFHERIS 'Fund the Future' Event x 1 Unveiling Grangegorman x 1 Onboarding Training [2 weeks] x 1 Sustainability in TU Dublin Video x 1 TU Dublin SU End of Year Party [Social] x 1 SUT [Students' Union Training, USI] x 1 Newstalk Interview [Accommodation] x 2 Irish Independent Interview [Homelessness] x 1 Student Welcome Video [Orientations] x 1 Part-Time Officer Training x 1 Sports Building Opening x 1 HEA Anti-Racism Principles Signing x 1 Student Hub Staff Training & Discussion Day x 1 National Council x 1 Opposition Party Lobbying [Labour] x 1 USI Protest [Pre-Budget] x 1 Transgress the NGS Protest x 1 'Posie Parker' Protest x 1 Grangegorman Histories Event x 1 Broadstone Demonstration x 1</p>
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<p>TU Dublin Sustainability Meeting x 1 Broombridge Societies Meeting x 1 Electoral Commission x 3 TU Dublin SU CLG Strategy Day x 1 Orientations Preparation [Internal] x 3 Orientation Preparation [TU Dublin] x 4 Jennifer Farrell [Student Services] x 3 Supplemental Fees [TU Dublin] x 1 Pride Parade Preparation x 1 Pride Panel Event [eBay] x 2 Joanne Kearney [Operations + Services] x 2 Sonya Keniry [NIC Safety Partnership] x 1 Direct Voting Discussion [TCDSU] x 1 Organisation, Culture, Change [TU Dublin] x 1 Blanchardstown Transport [Louise] x 1 Graduations Campaign Discussion x 1 Governing Body Effectiveness Interview x 1 TUI [Teachers Union of Ireland] Meeting x 2 AQAEC [TU Dublin] x 1 Paul Horan [Campus Planning] x 1 Rachel O'Connor [Doctor Charge] x 1 Rachel O'Connor [Cost of Living Guide] x 1 Full-Time Officer Operations x 1 NCBI Meeting x 1 Campus VP Crossover [Tallaght] x 1 USI President [Student Charge Review] x 2 Manager Training [HR Locker] x 1 LCSP Partnership Meeting x 2 TUDSU CLG Crossover Board x 1 Interview [Student Journalist] x 1 Counselling Service [TU Dublin] x 1 Class Representative System Review x 1 Faculty Board Operation Discussion x 1 Healthy TU Dublin Meeting x 1 Denis Murphy [Financial Concerns] x 2 Quality Assurance in TU Dublin x 1 Website Review [Internal] x 1 Campus + Facilities Weekly [CVP's] x 10</p>	
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Calendar Team Meeting x 2 Glenn Fitzpatrick [Electoral Commission] x 1 Student Facilities Working Group x 1 Niteline Meeting [TU Dublin] x 1 Weekly Executive Meeting [WEM] x 10 TUDSU CLG Chair Meeting x 1 Islam Society [Multifaith Rooms] x 1 Re-Union Event Planning x 1 Budget Discussion [TUDSU] x 1 PTO Training Planning x 1 Student Media Outlet Discussion x 1 Campaigns Weekly x 4 Student Advisor Desk Assessments x 1 Student Advisor Interviews x 1 University President + Registrar Meeting x 1 Accountability Structures x 1 Voter Registration Planning x 1 TUDSU CLG Board Meeting Preparation x 1 TUDSU CLG Board Meeting x 2 OSV Meeting [Our Student Voice] x 1 Governance Committee [USI] x 1 LGBTQ Society Meeting [General Policy Work] x 1 LGBTQ Society Meeting [Orientation Sessions x 12 SU Policy Priorities Meeting x 1 WEA Lead Desk Assessment x 1 WEA Interview Panel x 1 NTUTORR Student Meeting x 2 Tallaght HSW [Health, Safety & Welfare] x 1 Library Services Meeting x 1 Services + Events Desk Assessment x 1 Services + Events Interview Panel x 1 EUT+ Meeting [TU Dublin] x 1 FARC CLG Training x 1 DDPA Review x 1 Emergency Campaigns Working Group [USI] x 1 Student Experience Committee x 1 Culture Week Planning Meeting x 1 	
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<p>Architecture Talk [Student Accommodation] x 1 Jack Chambers [Government, Transport] x 1 Class Representative Elections x 24 Executive 1:1 Meetings [Ongoing] x 3 Payroll Process + Confirmation x 1 Design & Construct [Broombridge] Brief x 1 Student Council Preparation Meeting x 1 Postgraduate Officer Candidates Meeting x 1 Postgraduate Officer Manager Training x 1</p>	
Gifts Received <i>Bronntanais a Fuarthas</i>	Personal Expenses <i>Costaisí phearsanta</i>
SUT [Notebook, Pen, Totebag, Cup] Lunch Voucher [USI President's + Deputies Day]	<p>17/07/23 – Taxi [Mascot Collection + SUT] 17/07/23 – Taxi [SUT, no public transport available]</p> <p>Note = SUT this year took place in Tralee to reduce costs as much as possible (extremely cheap accommodation in comparison to Dublin) but very poor public transport meant taxis occasionally required + were always filled i.e. a taxi contained the maximum number of Officers legally allowed at all times).</p>



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Additional notes
Aon nithe eile

I just want it to be noted that I'm incredibly, incredibly proud of everyone on the team. From our staff who are genuinely unfathomably dedicated to their roles (and often get no credit), to the Officers who have given their everything to this one-year role (shoutout to Peter, whose positivity has given the team a sense of happiness few people can truly give) to the Part-Time Officers (Marco & Éadaoin in particular) who have exceeded all expectations – you've all given me hope for the future of the student movement, and you consistently remind me why I ran for election, so thank you. Keep up the stellar work, and please know that I am prouder than you know.