

## **Cillian O'Donohue's Manifesto**

### **Leading UL back to Normality**

#### **Who am I?**

My name is Cillian O'Donohue, and I am a fourth year Business and German student at the University of Limerick from County Clare.

I am a hard-working, honest, driven team player with lots of leadership experience. The main reason I have put myself forward for Student Life President is my love for UL. Ever since starting in UL in 2017 I have fallen in love with the campus and it's hustle and bustle feeling.

Since my first week of first year, I have worked in The Stables as a barman and while working here, I have encountered a large proportion of the UL community. I have been able to experience first-hand that UL means something different to every single student. I would love to be a representative voice for all of UL's students and use my voice to better the lives and student experience for UL students.

#### **Leading UL Students Back to Normality**

My main goal as UL's student president is to make the transition back to pre-Covid normality as easy as possible for students. The last year has brought with it increased stress, anxiety, and uncertainty for all of UL's students. As the vaccine begins to roll out, we are all hopeful that the next year will bring new positive change whether this be a sense of normality or the new normal it is vital that students feel supported and are given the tools and reassurance they need during such an uncertain time.

I am extremely aware that the current 2<sup>nd</sup> year students have experienced just 5 months of life on campus while current 1<sup>st</sup> year students have never experienced life on campus. As a fourth-year student I have completed five semesters of college on-campus as well as two semesters online due to Covid-19. I want students to experience the UL I know. When we return to UL in September 2021, we must be prepared for the semester that lies ahead and whether that is off campus or on campus, I feel I have the tools and experience to ensure we are prepared. I am passionate about ensuring that where it is possible during the academic year 2021/22 students who have already missed out on so much, get to experience the UL that so many of us know and love.

#### **Increased Safety on Campus**

Having spoken to UL students in the last week it has become apparent to me that students do not always feel safe on campus. I will make it one of my priorities to increase safety for UL students to ensure that all students and in particular the women of UL feel safe on campus and in surroundings areas. I will do this by demanding increased CCTV and lighting across campus, ensuring that all emergency blue SOS phones are intact at all times and ensuring that the UL security workers have an understanding of how females feel on campus and how to promote safety among all of UL's students. Most importantly I will run workshops and social media campaigns to increase awareness of how both men and women can make everyone feel safe and at ease on campus. It will be a priority of mine to ensure that every student, in particular women in UL are safe and that everyone is educated on this topic.

## **No Increase in Student Population until there is an Increase in Accommodation.**

As UL plans to increase its student population in the coming years, it is essential that UL increases housing options first. This can be seen in 2019, when UL received 7200 applications for on campus accommodation and just 2900 were accepted. No student should ever have to sleep on a couch or in their car as we hear of so often. The twin room solution that was proposed by UL accommodation wasn't the solution before Covid-19 and it won't be in the future. UL has the advantage of an abundance of space on campus to build on and this needs to be put to use if the student population is to increase.

I will also provide free workshops to inform students of their tenant's rights, as well as establishing a free legal aid centre, where students can avail of legal advice when dealing with cowboy landlords.

## **Increased Parking for UL**

This ties in with my last point on accommodation. The less accommodation, the more commuters and the more commuters, the more parking spaces are needed. Any UL student who drives knows how difficult it is to get parking on campus during peak times. It is essential that there is more parking provided for UL students. It is too often we hear stories of students missing out on lectures or tutorials as a result of not being able to get a parking space. With the hope of returning on campus in the coming academic year it is vital that there is more parking available for UL students as no student should be missing out on college hours due to a situation out of their control. This is a problem that was evident before Covid-19 and it is something that must be rectified as students return to campus.

## **Making Mental Health a Priority, not a Project.**

Due to the increased stress and anxiety experienced by all students during the past year I feel it is more important than ever to make student's mental health a priority. I will make it transparent across the UL community that one of the main priorities in 2021/22 is students mental health and wellness. We look forward in hope that the coming year will bring a sense of normality back to UL life, however this can lead to a new sense of uncertainty and anxiety as students adapt to another change. It is vital that students mental health is a priority for everyone at UL. I will work to achieve this by increasing student-lecturer engagements, workshops, social media campaigns and check-in hours with the team. Of course in order to successfully obtain this goal I will campaign for additional funding to UL Éist.

## **Lecturer-Student Engagement**

The past year has brought increased stress and anxiety for many UL students, leaving many students feeling like they haven't got enough support from lecturers. I will work to promote increased lecturer-student engagement. This will include lecturers having a weekly check-in with students through a short online call or at the beginning of a lecture to ensure students don't feel that any modules are falling away from them, adding to what is already a very stressful period for all students.

In the present moment it is hard to know if remote learning will continue in September 2021, however if this is the case, I will ensure that lecturers work together with

students to find a teaching method that works best for each individual class be it prerecorded or live sessions. I will work to ensure that all students are supported and heard during this uncertain time.

### **The Creation of a UL Mobile App**

With technology becoming an increasingly important part of our lives, it is hugely important that UL aren't left behind. Therefore, I will push to create a mobile phone app for UL students which will allow students to access everything from their student timetable to past exam papers and everything in between. Students will be able to book a study room in the library, view the books they have on loan, view different deadlines as well as their grades. They will also have access to UL's many clubs and societies via this app. This app will also allow give students access to their UL Student ID e-Card to allow easy access to the library and other areas on UL campus.

### **A Greener UL**

Over the last number of years there has been great work done on making UL Greener, I want to push this on further by installing more water fountains and encouraging more use of reusable coffee cups and containers across campus.

### **Representation**

It goes without saying that I will represent everyone, I will act as a representative voice for all of UL's students, there will be no students left with a lack of representation. I will be a representative for all minority groups. Regardless of who you are, what you do or where you are from you will be heard.

### **Continue on the great work done by the 2020/21 team**

- Continue the plans for UL Diversity Week
- Drug Harm Reduction
- Addictive Behavior Workshops
- Great Social Media Interaction

*Issued by Stevie Cahill, Campaign Manager for Cillian O'Donohue.*