

**UL Student Life**

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

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| **President** | | | |
| **Author** | **:** | Cillian O’Donohue | |
| **Date** | **:** | 08/11/2021 | |
| **Audience** | **:** | **UL Student Council** | |
| **Action** | **:** | **Approve** | |
| ***Goals*** | | | |
| **Main Goals** | | | **Progress (what have you achieved since the last Council meeting)** |
| **Return to Campus** | | | Library Capacity: One of the main bits of feedback we have received in recent weeks through an Instagram survey, the Class Rep forum and from Student Council is about the demand for the library far outweighing the current (900) spaces available. Alice and I brought this to the CAMPG committee over the past few weeks, which has led to an increase in Library capacity from 900 to 1600, (41% to 72%). We hope to build on this in the coming months to bring more study spaces for students and increase the library capacity.  I can confirm that the Library Capacity has risen to 1700 this week! |
| **Accommodation Crisis** | | | **Social Media around Twin Room’s**  On the 2nd of November, UL released their much-anticipated accommodation survey. We reacted quickly, releasing a statement on the survey on our social media accounts, emphasising the question on twin rooms. We continued to campaign throughout the week, on Instagram and twitter to ensure that students were well-informed when completing the survey. We released photos of the twin rooms and information on UL’s student population increases.  **Meeting President, Provost and Chancellor**  Following our social media campaign around the accommodation survey, we met with the above to discuss the accommodation situation. We firmly highlighted our stance on twin rooms and this led to conversations alternative solutions.  We discussed   * UL’s ownership of the Travel lodge building * A scheme where UL could run its own private bus services from nearby towns, ie. Ennis, Shannon, Nenagh etc. This would open the DIGs market to further towns. * We found out that UL have engaged with the Government via the IUA (Irish University Association), to show their concern around the implications increasing their student population will have on its students.   **Governing Authority**  At the Governing Authority meeting, UL presented its Accommodation Plan.  The main points of UL’s plan for Long Term issues were:  1. Update twin bed proposal for consideration of Executive and FHRAMC with a view to complete over Summer 2022.  2. Consider the imbalance in student placement and its impact on single semester availability.  3. Consider alternative accommodation models to match the University requirement in relation to blended learning e.g. keep aside some rooms for students who are on campus as part of a block of learning where on campus attendance is required.  4. Finalise capital development plan identifying the preferred locations for student accommodation including a possible PPP site. UL will also need to consider its EIB debt covenants and the group borrowing capacity to enable PCC borrow to build 500 on campus beds if that is a preferred option.  5. As part of the capital development plan UL to confirm its plans for City Centre Campus site, number of students attending the City Centre site, the scale of any proposed student accommodation, together with an indicative timeframe for the project delivery.  6. Consider the strategy of increasing international student growth in circumstances where there is a student housing deficit and consider which international student cohort if any should be prioritised.  7. PCC to re-examine whether there is an appetite amongst private developers to enter a PPP with the University/PCC re delivery of on campus beds with a long term reversionary interest reverting to University/PCC;  8. Investigate the feasibility of providing fastbuild accommodation relative to traditional methods as a short-term solution.  9. UL to Engage with IUA and working group set up between Ministries of Housing and Higher Education to deal with the accommodation shortage.  **My Speech at Governing Authority**  In response to UL’s plan, I spoke to the UL’s Governing Authority on behalf of students, and what I thought of the plan.  **My fundamental issues with the plan:**   * The lack of timelines. UL did not provide timelines on when they would complete. * Twim Rooms. I explained to GA that ULSL are mandated to oppose these twin rooms since our AGM in Febuary 2020, and gave them very comprehensive explanations why.   **My Request to UL**   * Acknowledge the fact that twin rooms are not a solution, as has been very clear from students. They should focus their energy into some of the other proposed solutions. * Do everything in their power to turn the Travel Lodge facility into affordable student accommodation. It makes no sense that UL owns this building, yet are leasing it out to a private hotel company for them to profit from students. * I requested that the University Pause their increase in student intake for the 2022/23 academic year. * I also requested that the University write to the Minister for Further education, on behalf of their students and exclaim their worry about the pressure they are under to increase their student population. They need to explain that an increase in student numbers is not feasible for them until there is serious funding given to UL to increase its student accommodation and infrastructure portfolio. |
| **Work towards creation of a “One stop shop” UL Mobile App** | | | I have received the white paper proposal from the computer science graduates. The UL ITD team are currently reviewing this and will come back to me in the coming weeks. |
| **The New Student Centre** | | | Following the approval of the new tender by the Governing Authority, we are currently waiting on the new contractors to arrive on site. |
| **Celebratory Event for the Class of 2020 and 2021.** | | | We are currently waiting on a response from the University on the format of the celebration of the graduations for the class of 2020 and 2021. |
| ***Other Achievements since last Council*** | | | |
| Library Capacity | | | This is now at 1700 students |
| Commuter Student Hub | | | I brought up the need for BOI building to be used as a Commuter student hub, supported by Provost Nigel Healey and is being looked at by University Exec.  I asked for an update off Kerstin at our recent meeting, they have nothing to update us on. |
| Legal Action against Irish water | | | <https://www.irishtimes.com/news/ireland/irish-news/ul-takes-legal-case-against-irish-water-over-charges-1.4705104>  I supported the University in their legal action against Irish water |
| ***Attendance at events/meetings and actions taken or agreed*** | | | |
| CAMPG | | | * Library Capacity * Accommodations for Student affected by Covid * Planning for Semester 2. * Updates on Exams |
| Visit of president of Ireland and Germany | | | Attended a Student Engagement session in the Glucksman Library with students and both presidents. |
| Executive Quality Committee | | | Updates from multiple UL departments. |
| The Student Forum | | | I chaired the first ever Student Forum. This was a great success and a really engaging forum for us. |
| Stables AGM and Scholars AGM. | | | Attended the AGMs of Stables and Scholars clubs. |
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| ***Plans before the next meeting*** | | | |
| **Action/work area** | | |  |
| Governing Authority | | |  |
| Events | | | Continue to work with Dara to discuss future events and help with any way I can, and look at what we can start to do as restrictions ease going forward. |
| Maguires Pitches MOU | | | I would like to review the Maguires Pitches MOU between ULSL and UL Sport as I don’t believe it is currently being met. |
| **Student Engagement** | | | |
| **Type of Engagement (Meeting, event etc)** | | | **Purpose and anything to report on** |
| Christmas Ball | | | We launched the marketing campaign for our Christmas Ball during week 7. This ball will take place in the Castletroy Park Hotel on the 24th of November |
| New Student Engagement Co-Ordinator | | | I have met with Dara to discuss future events, including Charity week. We discussed possible acts and this led to a student Instagram survey to see what type of acts students would like to see. I have also assisted Dara with preparation for the Christmas Ball!  We have sold out tickets for a second Christmas Ball last week. |
| Student Instagram Survey | | | Ran a question box on Instagram to address the main issues coming up for UL students during the return to campus.   * Main Issues: * Library Capacity / Opening Hours * Lack of Face to Face Lectures * Microwave Facilities |
| Student Forum | | | We ran the student forum on Wednesday the 3rd of November. The questions were mostly academic related but there were also some engagements about Accommodation, Parking, on campus rental fees and more. |
| **Media engagement and external relations** | | | |
| **Engagement (Press, other organisations etc)** | | | **Purpose and anything to report on** |
| N/A | | | No engagements since last Council. |
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