

# UNIVERSITY OF ULSTER STUDENTS' UNION

## Student Council Minutes

26/02/2015 17.00

### IN ATTENDANCE:

STEPHEN AITKEN (DEMOCRACY CO-ORDINATOR)	FABIO CRISTIANO	EUAN CANTLEY
AVRIL HONAN (STUDENT ENGAGEMENT MANAGER)	DARREN CROOKS	BECCKY BRENNAN
MARK BELL (CHAIR)	SOPHIA HEIKININ	KEVIN MCSTRAVOCK
MICKY QUIGG	RYAN MCGAVIGAN	JOSH CATTERSON
SARAH GORDON	MICHAEL SHAW	JENNIFER HILLMAN
VIKKI LUTTON	ETHAN MCNICHOLL	YASMIN MCELHINNEY
FERGHAL O HIR	ROBBIE BANHAM	JUDE DOHERTY
COLUM MACKAY	SARAH CURRAN	EAMON MCCUDDEN
GILLIAN BELL	DECLAN SHIELS	LIAM MULVENNA
	NATHAN MOUNT	DYLAN CUMBO

### APOLOGIES:

CRAIG STAFFORD	LAURA QUINN
AOIFE GARVEY	GERARD MCDONALD
NOEL FLOOD	MEGAN MCDONAGH
ARTHUR CAULFIELD	CHRISTINE CAMPBELL
JAMES MCCAFFREY	DAVID RAFFERTY
ANDREW MCANALLEN	

### MINUTES

- 1 Chair opened up proceedings welcoming the councillors and informing them that the elections for the 2015/16 sabbatical positions are now on and wishes the best of luck to all candidates running. They encouraged all councillors to take part and help encourage all students to vote.  
The Chair also welcomed two new members to council that were co-opted onto the Belfast Campus Council. The new Councillors are David Rafferty and Fearghal O Hir.
- 2 The Council Noted and approved previous council minutes from the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2015 in Coleraine
- 3 The President began the officer reports stating that he had no update on the DEL cuts and would as soon as any news or update arrived. The president notified council of his work on the governance review and highlighted the new Schedule 1 and Council structure change. He highlighted that this will be discussed further on the Agenda. He also highlighted his work on the new Strategic Plan that is being developed for the next 5 years

along with work he has been involved with on the committee for employability skills. He opened to council of any initiatives or activities that their lecturers carry out.

Vice President Belfast reported that they had meetings with Heads of School at the Belfast campus in relation to hidden fees that could be associated with students especially in the Art's disciplines. They notified council that they would update at the next council meeting. They also mentioned that their feedback structure is progressing, this is the project that NUS supplied funding for. VPB also mentioned that she is also involved in upcoming RAG events.

Vice President Jordanstown reported to council that he has mainly been meeting with deans and heads of schools in relation to the setting up of Student Experience Forum's. Refreshers were successful on the Jordanstown campus and in partnership of the Vice President at Magee he took part in ready to rent training at QUB. This is part of a wider campaign to help student understand their tenancy rights. In the coming weeks they will be taking part in RAG events, Hustings and Elections.

Vice President Magee notified council that since the last meeting he has mainly been involved with academic appeals and he believes most of these will be successful.

The bar committee at Magee has been meeting regularly and has successfully held a number of events.

He is involved in running and taking part in up coming events i.e. SVW and RAG.

He has been in partnership with UUSU Course Representative Co-ordinator Mandy Mulholland in relation to creation of Student Experience Forums'. VPM also thanked Vice President Coleraine in providing cover for meetings he was unable to attend.

Sports President notified council that he has been very busy recently as it is intervarsity season. He notified council that Ulster has been successful so far in some competitions as the Pool team won the BUCS championships. The Magee Gaelic footballers had become All-Ireland intervarsity champions. There are more intervarsity's upcoming and SP will update council with any updates when they occur. He stated that he is also working closely with UUSU Societies Co-ordinator in organising events for RAG week.

Vice President Coleraine notified council that he has been working closely with students in a number of academic appeals that he has been sitting on. He has also been working closely with UUSU staff members to organise RAG events.

Vice President Campaigns and Communications notified council of their work on the University Race Charter. Her work has included creating an action plan for UUSU to enact these principles into its practice.

They have been part of different events including Fair Trade Fortnight in which they have been dressed as a banana, working with staff to help develop and promote events such as RAG, SVW, Fairtrade and elections.

- 4 Council also heard updates from Course, Society and Sports Representatives on differing actions that their respective forums are working on.
- 5 Chair asked each campus for their chosen delegate to send to USI congress as part of the UUSU Delegation. Due to the number of potential candidates being more than the space this agenda point was moved to an election to be carried out by the Democracy Coordinator as soon as possible. Results will be posted to all councillors as soon as the election is completed.
- 6 The council noted and approved the new Schedule 1 for the constitution. This will set out the make up and regulations for all democratic organs of UUSU. This will be put, along with the rest of the new constitution and Schedules to students in a referendum in week 9.
- 7 The Council discussed the paper that was put to council around the issue of Academic Standing Clause in the constitution. All campuses apart from Magee felt that there needed to be more discussion and research centred around this clause. They felt that it should be pushed until the next council meeting. Magee campus

entered their view that they feel that the clause should stand though there should be a right of appeal on any decision based upon this clause.

- 8 Chair outlined a policy submitted around 2<sup>nd</sup> year marks counting towards full degree classification. The chair opened the floor to site councils for their previous discussions.

Magee entered that they supported the policy unanimously though with an amendment that it is passed to a working group to ensure the policy is realistic and proportionate i.e. level of weighting 10% etc.

Coleraine did not pass the policy as they felt more work was needed through communications such as student shouts as to gauge the overall student opinions and help develop the policy to be more specific.

Belfast and Jordanstown both passed the policy as they feel that there is too much stress on final year students in relation to their marks.

The overall council passed the policy with a two thirds majority but with along with a referendum to put the policy out to student shouts and develop research into the issue. This is then to be brought back to council.

- 9 Chair outlined the second policy in relation to mandatory exam feedback. The chair then opened this up to the site councils for feedback:

Magee felt that there should be a standardised system developed but that the policy should also apply to assignment feedback. They noted that this could be difficult in classes that have large student numbers so they also suggest that feedback should only be mandatory on request.

Coleraine passed this policy but felt a system that could be used is to create an open door policy that is available for feedback for two hours each week per class.

Belfast council also passed this policy.

Jordanstown campus council passed this policy though suggested a dialogue is opened between the Trade Unions and University to develop a committee to ensure this policy is developed that is standardised, sustainable and efficient.

The policy passed with a two thirds majority with an amendment that instead of a referendum UUSU will move to take up the Jordanstown option of creating dialogue and a committee with the Trade Unions and University.

- 10 The third policy update in relation to the Library opening hours and accessibility was opened to council for debate and after input from all councils as decision on this policy was adjourned until the next council. This was mandated as council felt more research was needed into feasibility and efficiency to be carried out. The policy will be presented along with this research at the next council.

- 11 Council Noted updated Schedule 1 and was notified that at the next meeting that a vote upon the content will be held.

Date of next meeting : 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015.

Meeting Ended