



Niamh Cafferty
Secretary

Union of Clare Students
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UCS Meeting Minutes

Location: Garden Room

Time: 4:00pm

A record of the UCS Open Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Lily, Mia, Sally, Harry, Aine, Luca, Mira, Molly, Erin, Luca, Mary, Cat, Serena, Thomas, Enyioma, Fran, Mira

Apologies: Eva, Max, Issy

Absences: Prateeti, Rayyan

Total Turnout (including non UCS Committee members): 50

Chair: Mia

1. Preamble and Introduction

The committee expresses its gratitude for all the students in attendance and a remarkable turnout.

Removal of items from the agenda by the Chair, with no opposition to these changes from those in attendance:

- Committee updates
- Constitutional Changes

2. Discussion of the SU Extraordinary Members Meeting, and the UCS' relationship with the SU

Background information:

- Manners in which the UCS (and JCR's as a whole) typically engage with the SU:
 - No funding is provided by the UCS for membership. According to the SU's recent financial statement, colleges do provide funding to the SU through a direct grant.
 - Vice Presidents attend Student Council meetings to enact general policy
 - Select JCR officers work with sabbatical officers on specific policy
 - The SU are given an opportunity speak at Freshers Talks
 - Engagement and promotion of SU organised events and schemes
- Issues currently in the SU (as we know: resignations, issues with bigotry)
- The Members meeting on 11/06 was triggered by students - they could send in motions, but the SU had to approve them



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- Removed motions about the board of trustees heavily
- Seemed to be inter-SU politics that we can't control (unclear whether investigations currently happening)
- Stated that the board of trustees issues were internal politics and not up for debate amongst students

Expression of the UCS' view, as was discussed in a Committee meeting held on the 19/05, prior to the SU Members Meeting:

- The UCS believes, at least theoretically, that the SU has a very important role and job.
- The UCS recognises that as a JCR, we do not have the funds, nor the time to function in the same manner the SU can, particularly regarding contact with and community across the University.
 - It was noted the importance of the free services provided by the SU, in addition to the shadowing schemes, the freshers fair, and the general enactment of widespread policy changes.
- That is not to say the UCS committee are particularly impressed with the SU as it is in practice, and it is clear that they need to improve.
 - The UCS do not think it is the right move to retract full support of the SU, but resolved for better engagement with the SU in terms of demanding their own improvement.
 - The UCS did not resolve to take any particular action at the time, but agreed to monitor the ongoing situation and the outcomes of any 'investigation', and carefully consider our relationship with the SU going forward.

Response and discussion since the SU Members meeting:

- The meeting was attended by several members on the UCS committee, and other students.
- Consensus from all who attended: NOT GREAT
- It was not felt the Members Meeting was good place for genuine discussion - lacked the prospect for meaningful discussion
 - Felt that the current SU committee has run itself out of steam.
 - It is felt that the SU is underfunded and lacks the power it wants and needs.
 - It is felt that student council meetings have consistently failed, especially over the last term, to achieve the numbers needed to vote and actually enact meaningful change - is quite unproductive, and inaccessible.



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- Quoting of legal texts; not accessible to those who want to be involved in student politics but do not have a law degree.
- Recognition of general issues in terms of limited platforms to contact other JCRs.

RESOLUTIONS...

- The UCS will not denounce the SU as a whole, nor refuse to engage in Student Council Meetings - BUT it was resolved we should look to denounce some of the fully known allegations; or question the SU's transparency.
- Resolved to continue using the SU's provision of services and schemes, as it is a free benefit to students welfare.
- Resolved to keep the existing communication channels open with sabbatical officers, and the efforts of certain individual sabbatical officers to enact policy changes was acknowledged.
- Resolved that an effort on behalf of the UCS will be made to create non-SU channels of communication between other JCRs, particularly between Presidents and Vice Presidents.
 - Platforms for discussion of the SU's effectiveness in a neutral space
 - Proposal of a joint open letter to the SU, with other JCRs, pressuring change and improvement.
- The UCS will evaluate the changes, if any, made to the present issues within the SU with the election of the new sabbatical officers.
 - Going forward, the UCS resolves to set out more closely the direct conditions of our relationship with the SU. The UCS will consider whether any apparent changes made in the SU are actually effective, and resolve to continually pressure the SU until there is such improvement.
- The UCS resolves not to personally invite the SU to speak at Freshers Talks, but acknowledges the importance of students being made aware of the SU, so will make the SU known to freshers in an alternative way.

3. MOTION: UCS Motion to Affirm Solidarity with Palestine

Discussion of the UCS' engagement with humanitarian and political events

- It was expressed by the Chair that JCR's do not just act as a welfare group, and there is precedent in the past for the UCS (which is reflected across other JCRs) to make motions in response to external events, especially when those affect Clare students.



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- Although not explicitly raised, the UCS acknowledges the nuances in its position as a student-led body in its commentary and response to geopolitical and humanitarian events. It was expressed that the UCS are keen to be active, but will take into account the thoughts and concerns of students on the effectiveness and appropriateness of all resolutions and statements made by UCS.

The Motion

- This motion is brought to the UCS by two proposers, both of whom are UCS committee members, and seconded by two Clare students.
- The proposers describe the motion as one specifically in support of solidarity with Palestine, not the encampment itself - however, it is recognised that these views are in conjunction with the views of the encampment.

Discussion:

***For more details on the suggested amendments raised in the Open Meeting, please read the document entitled 'Notes on the amendments made to the UCS Motion of Affirmation with Palestine'.**

Specific amendments suggested:

- 1.13 - It has confirmed there are no direct shareholdings, may be indirect but that does not absolve the college's responsibility
 - The college has responded to the FOI response very vaguely
 - They do not have direct investments (investments are apparently confidential)
 - Our main fund is a carbon neutral fund (has restrictions)
- 2.4 - "the war in Gaza" specifically palestine; suggested the use of the term genocide instead of war
- Getting the College to review it's working relationship with Barclays - see if the college will suspend relationship with the bank
 - If our exact phrasing is that we support the encampment - we need to be clear there is nuance to our motion
- The question of the definition of Anti-semitism is a nuanced one and may need to be passed in a separate motion



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Specific point of the motion

- Will allow the UCS to take further action within College.

Rewording of the honouring of the encampments principles instead of demands

- Problems raised with the definition of anti-semitism
- Problem raised with the severing of ties with Israeli academics and academic institution
- It was mentioned that Hamas has not been brought up
- The use of genocide and apartheid (wording)
- Wording of Israel versus the Israeli government

RESOLUTIONS...

- The UCS acknowledges the need to follow its constitutional process (particularly Order F, s.6 of the Standing orders). As the motion was being discussed, the meeting was initially attended by under 50 people, hence was inquorate and any motion could not be passed. As amendments were being suggested as the meeting proceeded, more student members joined the meeting to make up 50 attendants.
- At the request of the proposer's of the motion, and recommended by the Chair, it was felt that the suggested amendments needed time to be properly written, and that the amended motion should be viewed in full by the wider student body before being voted on.
- Hence, with the consensus of those attending, the UCS resolved to call for a student-wide referendum, in accordance with s.2(3) of the UCS Constitution.
- At the request of the motion's proposers, it was agreed that within 24 hours the Committee will publish: the Minutes taken during the Open meeting, all suggestions and amendments proposed to the Motion, and the fully amended motion.
 - It is acknowledged that the variety and contrast in amendments suggested will necessarily mean that not every amendment could be implemented, but that all suggestions raised (even if not incorporated) would be explicitly recognised.
- The Committee shall announce across the appropriate channels to all Clare students that a Referendum will be held with 48 hours notice (s.2(6)).
 - The UCS acknowledges the need for due process, and the expressions of urgency for the voting process to take place. Thus, the UCS resolves to



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provide a 24 hour window for votes to be made on the amended motion, early in the last week of term.

- The UCS resolves to find an appropriate online format for the referendum, which was recognised must be anonymous, and can only allow votes from Clare students.
- In recognition of welfare concerns expressed about the motion, the UCS resolves to set a precedent for active communication with JSOC and the jewish community going forward.
- The UCS also extends that its anonymous feedback form may be used for any concerns or thoughts that were not raised in the open meeting.

Meeting adjourned.