

TCD Student's Union 2nd Council Minutes 2022/23

1 November 2022

Stanley Quek Theatre, TBSI

Chair: Emma Gallagher
Secretary: Maggie Larson
Minutes: Maggie Larson, Secretary to Council
Simon Evans, Administrative Officer

1. Minutes

The minutes of the 1st Council meeting, held on 18/10/22, were approved.

2. Matters arising

No matters arising from the minutes.

Motion to Admit the USI VP for Dublin Region & Motion to Give Speaking Rights

The motions were carried.

3. Presentation from the USI VP for Dublin Region

The VP gave an overview of the activities and governance structure of the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) and highlighted opportunities for members of Council and ordinary students to engage with USI.

4. Elections

1. Welfare & Equality Committee

- a. First Year Rep: Emer Munnally elected
- b. OCM (3): Sarah Carroll, Stella Butler and Adam Joyce elected

5. Sabbatical Officers Reports & Questions

- a. President: Gabi asked for her report to be taken as read.
 - i. Ruaidhrí Saulnier asked about the planned location for the Student Centre. The President responded that this information is currently confidential, and could potentially be revealed following confirmation of HEA funding.
- b. Education: Zoe asked for her report to be taken as read.
 - i. Laszlo Molnárfi asked when SU voter registration will be reopened. The Education Officer responded that it has not been confirmed whether registration will be necessary for the next elections.
- c. Welfare: Chloe asked for her report to be taken as read. There were no questions.
- d. Comms: Julie asked for her report to be taken as read. There were no questions.
- e. Ents: Max was not present. His report was taken as read.

6. Items for Noting

a. Class Rep Elections Report

The EC Chair/Chair of Council presented the report. Emma reported that the Class Rep Elections had been very successful. 500 nominations for class rep were received

and 2800 people registered to vote. The best represented faculty was STEM, with the highest proportion of class rep positions filled in this faculty.

- i. David Kelly asked whether Chemical Sciences should have more class reps. Emma responded that the Education Officer can amend Schedule 1 to provide for this if necessary.

b. OC Report to Council 2

The report was taken as read and there were no questions.

c. AHSS Faculty Convenor Report

The report was taken as read.

7. Motions

a. Motion to amend the terms of reference for the BDS Implementation Group

The BDS Group Secretary proposed the motion and promoted the upcoming BDS pub quiz.

The BDS Group Chair spoke in favour of the motion.

The motion was carried.

b. Motion on Returning from Off-Books

Ruaidhrí Campion, School of Maths Convenor, proposed the motion.

The motion was carried.

c. Motion on Activist Training

Laszlo Molnárfi proposed the motion.

The President proposed a motion E to amend the motion to include the President in addition to the Communications Officer. The proposer accepted the amendment and the motion was amended as follows:

Replace “That the TCDSU Citizenship Officer run an annual training series—that is open to all students—on activist well-being, organising strategy, and horizontal group structures.” *with* “That the TCDSU Citizenship Officer, **with the support of the President**, run an annual training series—that is open to all students—on activist well-being, organising strategy, and horizontal group structures.”

The motion was carried.

d. Motion on USI Democracy

Laszlo Molnarfi proposed the motion.

Sierra Mueller-Owens, the USI VP for Dublin Region, agreed that the voting system in USI needs to change, but suggested bringing this idea to USI focus groups to find a more workable solution.

Craig Gillespie (SF Engineering) asked how much time and resources it would take to raise awareness of this among students. László responds, saying that this motion does not prescribe any specific system - it is “opening the doors” rather than taking any specific steps.

A concern was raised that the wording “one member one vote” implies that each member organisation would have one vote. László proposed a Motion E to amend “one-member one-vote mechanism” to “universal suffrage” and accepted the amendment as proposer.

Replace “That TCDSU lobby for the USI to change its electoral system to a one-member one-vote mechanism...” *with* “That TCDSU lobby for the USI to change its electoral system to a **universal suffrage** mechanism...”

The motion was carried.

A break was taken.

e. Motion on Cornelius McGrath

Catherine Arnold, Deputy AHSS Convenor, proposed the motion.

Eva McDonnell spoke in favour of the motion, saying that this goes against the principle of consent which is taught to students in the medical sciences.

The motion was carried.

f. Motion to Explore Switching Voting System

Laszlo Molnarfi proposed the motion, saying that the current voting system, which requires pre-registration, hurts engagement and places pressure on the Education Officer, EC and OC. He argued that a different system would allow the Union to focus more on improving engagement and that the voting experience was better with other systems.

The President proposed a Motion E to remove a section of the motion which stated that pre-registration was a factor in the de-recognition of the GSU, saying that this was speculation and should not be included in the motion. The amendment was accepted by the proposer.

Remove "Council notes with concern: The need for pre-registration caused an issue with the situation of the de-recognition of the GSU, as it caused further delays when postgraduate student representatives had to be elected quickly."

Yannick Gloster spoke against the motion.

Sarah Carroll spoke in favour of the motion, noting that during Class Rep Elections, Joint Honours students were not able to vote in elections for both of their subjects.

A member of council spoke in favour, saying that the motion would mandate exploring options, not necessarily changing the system.

Catherine Arnold, Deputy AHSS Convenor, asked why the Secretary of Council would be involved in this review. The proposer responded that they would be involved in their capacity as Chair of the Oversight Commission.

Yannick Gloster stated that he was not against looking into other options, but was certain that the review would find that SU elections require a custom system, which is what EVIABI was designed to be.

The Education Officer stated that they had looked into other options before deciding to use EVIABI this year.

Jenny Maguire spoke in favour of the motion, arguing that Council should vote on the substance of the motion rather than pedantic issues with the wording.

The motion was carried.

g. LTP Motion to Mount Pressure on Sports Levy

Motion to give speaking rights to Lórien MacEnulty, one of the proposers of the motion – the motion was carried.

Lórien proposed the motion, describing the additional booking fees that apply in addition to the sports levy, and noting that 88% of funding for Trinity Sport comes from the students.

The Welfare Officer clarified that there is an existing process for students experiencing financial hardship to be exempt from the levy. The Secretary to Council clarified that the motion proposes to amend the existing LTP. Yannick Gloster asked exactly what change would be made to the existing LTP. It was clarified that passing this LTP would replace the existing LTP with the wording of the proposed motion.

Laszlo spoke in favour of the motion, saying that the SU needs to pressure the college and raise public awareness of the issue.

The motion was carried.

h. Motion on School Convenor Report to Students

The motion was proposed by Laszlo Molnarfi.

Ruaidhrí Saulnier spoke against the motion, saying that these reports may not exist as convenors are not mandated to prepare them.

Sean Lysaght, STEM Convenor, spoke against the motion, reiterating the previous point and saying that engagement with students can't be forced.

Jenny Maguire spoke against the motion, arguing that sending more emails does not correlate with higher student engagement.

Giulia Villa spoke in favour of the motion, saying that this would improve current lack of awareness about what work is done in the Union and what supports are available to students

The proposer summed up the motion, saying that for the 3 years he has been a part of the union the union has not proactively engaged with students and this is a chance to change that.

The motion was carried.

i. Motion on Trade Union Solidarity in Wake of HEA Act

Patrick Flynn proposed the motion, explaining the HEA act does not guarantee trade union representation on College Board, and encouraged people to vote in favour.

Laszlo Molnarfi also spoke in favour of the motion, arguing that staff and students are fighting against the same system, and the motion should be supported.

The motion was carried.

j. Motion on Collaboration with An Taisce

The President proposed the motion, stating that a mandate from Council would help her to do her job in this area and represent the student voice.

The motion was carried.

k. Motion to Amend T Fund Proposal

Niko Singbad, the LGBT Rights Officer, proposed the motion to update the T Fund proposal, saying that the T Fund is an important resource and that these amendments would make the application process easier and less invasive.

The motion was carried.

l. Motion for a STEM Ball Mandate

The STEM Convenor proposed the motion. He explained that STEM Ball is normally held every year and that he felt it should be mandated to ensure that it continues to be held.

The motion was carried.

8. Discussion items

a. Discussion Item on College Using Us

- i.** Laszlo Molnárfi elected not to present the discussion item due to time constraints.

b. TCD SU Referendum on Irish Unity

- i.** Brandon McGrane was not present to present the discussion item.

9. Questions

a. Laszlo Molnárfi asked the Education Officer if a contract with the voting platform EVIABI had been signed. The Education Officer responded that the answer was no.

b. The President was asked what would happen to the current College Health space as College Health is moving to Printing House Square. The President could not definitively answer & the question was noted as an unanswered question.

The Council meeting ended at 9pm.

