



# University of Limerick Students' Union Sabbatical Officer Reports to General Meet...

Academic Year	2017/2018
Position:	Welfare Officer
Name:	Roberta Harrington
Profile Picture:	

## **Introduction To Report and Updates Since Last Council**

Hi everyone, my name is Roberta Harrington and I am welfare officer for this year in the SU. I would like to welcome you all to your first council meeting of the year – for some it is your first council meeting ever, and for many, its part and parcel of college life at this stage. We took our positions at the end of May therefore nearly 4 months has passed at this stage so it is important that I gave a good indication of the work that has been done so far.

**Drugs Awareness Campaign** – the students' union as well as a number of external bodies on campus to include the stables club, campus life services, buildings and estates and more met over the summer to discuss the drugs issue on campus and at students union events. We recognised the need to begin a campaign in time for fresher's week in order for deter new first years from falling into the trap of drug use and to stop people who were on the fence of taking drugs in the first place. The posters were distributed all around campus and they outline the consequences of drug use for students – some of which a student may not even have thought about like losing your Garda vetting or being unable to get a J1 visa. If a student is now caught taking drugs on campus they can be put up in front of the discipline committee for a hearing and essentially be kicked out of college. While the consequences are outlined the SU also ensured that the poster highlighted the help and support available by us and we encouraged students to use these supports.

**Mental health week** – mental health week is taking place on week 6 of semester 1 and there has been quite an amount organised as of now. The week will see the use of the den in the SU as a mindfulness room with black out windows and just a general calm area for students to go to during the week. SkinnyGaz will speak from 5-6pm on Monday 9<sup>th</sup>. Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> will see a lunch time “changing your relationship with food and body image” workshop and a “stand together” student walk on UL campus whereby all other colleges around Limerick will come here and be together on world mental health day. We are working closely with Limerick mental health week who

have organised buses to and from each college on the night. Refreshments will be served and lanterns will be lit at the KBS fountain. Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> will see Rosanna Davison do a cookery demo in the concert hall for all students free of charge and Bressie will then be coming in the evening to speak about anxiety and coping with it. This is part of a "wellness day" during mental health week. External services will also come in on the day. Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> has not yet been locked down and the three sabbats will be heading to the health and wellbeing summit in the Aviva on the Friday to help with campaigns going forward and for ideas for events etc.

## **S.U. Finances**

### **Budget Expenditure**

Boston expenditure

Mental Health week – SkinnyGaz token and Tuesday lunchtime workshop (both pending)

Health and wellbeing summit ticket

### **Short Term Objectives and Update**

- **Student Death Protocol** – the SU proposed a number of changes to the student death protocol document and we worked closely with Bernadette Walsh and Fr. John Campion on this. Thankfully the changes have been made and the document has been made a live document going forward given its importance and constant need for updating.
- **Pride Day** – beginning talks with Out in UL and Northern Trust regarding the possibility of a pride day in UL in semester 1. Due to meet with Out In UL soon on this.
- **UMASS twinning project** – Video conference call was held with UMASS sabbats and managers on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> Sept. Whats app group was established between sabbats. Goals were defined as fostering engaged students/closing the loop and the health and wellbeing of students on both campuses.

### **Long Term Objectives and Update**

- **Student Engagement/Familiarity of Sabbats by students:** We met every single first year during orientation week in the UCH over the week and again in the den where we had a more informal chat with them as they came through the SU for orientation. Students definitely became more familiar with the three of us as we have seen people stop us around college to ask us questions which is what we had aimed for starting out. The SU had their own orientation event also and you can

see the engagement figures from this were phenomenal. We chatted with students and gave out tea and coffee in the den, again interacting with a number of students and encouraging them to use the building and chat to us whenever they wanted.

- **Student Health and wellbeing**: Stables and scholars deciding to offer healthier food options to students. Cookery demonstration on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> of Sept to help with students cooking skills and to encourage them to eat better foods. Providing recipes and cost breakdown to students participating in the event for future reference. Mental health awareness week and wellness day as outlined above. Drugs awareness campaign as outlined above.
- **Gender neutral bathrooms on campus** – issue was taken to the president back in June and a proposal was put forward to university exec on September 20<sup>th</sup>. UL has approved the proposal
- **Mental Health** – offering of an education programme to students on conjunction with GROW. The programme will be certified and will be 4 weeks in total. The programme has been entirely tailored for student needs and both Seán and I worked very closely with GROW to ensure the roll out of the best possible programme. A “Mind your mental health workshop” will be ran by the HSE on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> Oct for staff and students in the SU (please sign up). I will be attending the safetalk course at the beginning of Oct.
- **STI Clinics** – meeting with Bernadette Walsh on Monday Sept 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **Meetings Attended (With External Bodies / Of Note)**

Sabbatical Training

Chairing effective meetings training

Meeting with GROW re education programme for students.

Meeting with JIGSAW to establish relationship between parties.

Meeting with Northern Trust re Pride Day.

Mental health training with Please Talk in Athlone.

3 Governing Authority meetings

GA Student Access Affairs

Numerous university meetings.

UMASS Boston Twinning Project

Stables, Scholars, Sports Bar, Pavilion committees

ULSU Executive

ULSU Management committee

Introduction meetings to key University Personnel throughout the month of June

**GIFTS RECEIVED (R.R.P of over €50)**

<b>EXPENSES CLAIMED</b>
<b>AOB</b>

Signed by the Officer: *Roberta Harrington*

Submitted to the Chairperson on the *22/09/2017*