

University of Limerick Students' Union Sabbatical Officer Reports to Council

Academic Year	2015/2016
Date	04 November 2015
	Week 8 Semester 1
Position:	Academic Officer
Name:	Marian O'Donnell
Profile Picture:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results were a busy time in the SU – no major incidents to report. In future perhaps there should be more clarity as to where you check your overall degree award and students should be notified about the discretionary band (only relevant to fourth years). • We met with all the Deans and different interest groups in the University during the summer – We raised different matters and concerns to the Deans in relation to their different Faculties. • Development of the Student Choice Awards proposal. This is an initiative that has been floating around for a number of years but it is now being looked at seriously. It has partially passed through council and we are just waiting to finalise the particulars on it. Hopefully this will take place in semester 2. • During the summer Colin, Ciara, Liz and myself travelled to Leeds to visit their Students Unions in terms of idea generation and looking at what they do. Leeds Union is one of (if not the) best Union in the UK. Fantastic facilities, innovations and many different ways of working at engaging students while also providing them with the role of the Union – representation and advice. • Repeat Fees Campaign – Continuing on the work from Mike, - 2000 signatures in total collected – (we were at around 1,900 so finished that off to 2000 wk 1). This campaign has taken a slight back seat for the moment. Working on getting all our facts and figures correct. In other Universities while they may have free fees or less fees than us – in comparison they could have more student friendly measures in relation to sitting repeats so we want to do a bit more research before this is 	

presented to the university.

- A survey was sent to the class fb group pages of all the 4th year education groups in relation to accommodation issues in the weeks previous and after they go on School Placement – this is attached along with the results. While the sample of students that replied back was small it paints a stark picture of what the reality is like. This has been sent on to the EHS Faculty.
- Along with Colin and Ciara I have also been working a lot in relation to improving the communication of the work that the students union does in relation to the students and the wider community. I have previous experience at writing press releases etc. This summer we highlighted the lack of resources for mental health in the university, followed by last Friday the writing of the letter that was handed to Minister O'Sullivan. Also in relation to welcoming the new points system that is now in place for those doing their leaving cert in 2017 and in relation to our new Gender Neutral bathrooms that are located in the Students Union.
- Since students have been back on campus my office has been very busy in relation to student queries and first years wanting to change course etc. No major issues have come to light as of yet. Liz and I have also been meeting with the Universities centre of teaching and learning in the early stages of them developing an app for students, particularly first years; however this is in the very early stages at the moment.
- During orientation week we had a very successful presentation for class rep recruitment which LIZ and I delivered. This has resulted in a fantastic uptake on class rep positions. Also worked with LIZ in relation to Student Council recruitment which has also been fantastic.
- During the Summer I also worked on developing and changing the traditional 'Class Rep Handbook' – This is now a longer and detailed version which encompasses all Student Representatives, their roles, how they work together and how they get elected. This will hopefully allow people to better understand the system and how they fit in it.
- Following on from that we also had Class Rep Training on 15.09.15. This proved very successful we had upwards of 80 in attendance.
- A number of concerning issues have been rising out of GEMS recently. We have a newly elected GEMS department rep and I am working with her and the class reps in Gems to help resolve the main issue. Working on getting a greater understanding for the issues in Gems, have met with the President of the Medical Society in relation to this. Working on a few different things to ensure that that GEMS students feel that they are a part of the SU and can come to us when they have problems etc.
- The grinds register is fully functioning – sorted out last bugs with

<p>registering new tutor. Running a poster campaign soon on promoting the feature on the website.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The joint class rep training and student council meeting held on Tuesday wk 8 was a fantastic success. Instead of the annual talk from the disabilities office we had a guest speaker. Adam Harris is the 20-year-old founder and CEO of AslAm.ie. Adam founded AslAm.ie based on his experiences as a young person living with Asperger's Syndrome. He gave us an interactive educational workshop on autism. • Working on developing a FYP contract. This contract would be between the supervisor and the student outlining their mutual responsibilities in the FYP process. The majority of which is complete – the difficult part now is getting the different faculties and departments to agree to it. • Beginning to look at coop issues. Looking at completing a short survey on the coop experience to understand students concerns in relation to the experience to present to the coop office and also help move forward some positive change.
S.U. Finances
Budget Expenditure
<p>Short Term Objectives and Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue work in relation to FYP Contract Campaign • Continue work in relation to SP Accom problems • Work on sorting GEMS issue • Looking at coop Survey
<p>Long Term Objectives and Update</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Several goals for the course of the year in relation to different campaigns, repeat fees, FYP contract, Coop Reform and TP accom etc.
<p>Meetings Attended (With External Bodies / Of Note)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • APRC, ARC, AC, UTEB, Faculty board meetings, PASS, AICUR,
GIFTS RECEIVED (R.R.P of over €50)
EXPENSES CLAIMED
AOB

Signed by the Officer: _____

Submitted to the Chairperson on the _____

Verified by a member of the Executive Oversight

Committee: _____



WOLVES