AGENDA

CRC 7

Semester 2

Date: 03-04-2020

Venue: Online Time: 3:00pm

Exec Attendance: Katie Fay (VP for Engagement and Development), Christine Farrell (DCUSU President), Callaghan Commons (VP for Academic Affairs), Caoimhe O'Carroll (HSS Faculty Rep), Aisling Fagan (VP for Welfare and Equality), Hazel Byrne (DCUBS Faculty Rep), Olivia Forde (VP for Education and Placement) Mark McGee (Socs Officer), Sean Smyth (Education Faculty Rep), Cormac Flynn (CRC Chair), Sania Amjad (FSH Faculty Rep), Sorcha Ní Chonghaile (Irish Officer), Martin Clayton (First Year Rep), Josh Malone (Engineering and Computing Faculty Rep), David Martin (Clubs Officer),

1. **Minutes and Matters Arising** *(2 minutes)*
   As the correct wording has not been presented for the vote on the minutes, at the request of Laurence Cuffe (HDSDC), the vote was suspended until later in the meeting when a poll had been made with the correct wording.

   When the minutes for the previous Class Rep Council (CRC6, Semester 2) were put to a vote they were accepted by the majority.

   There were no further questions.

2. **Officer reports** *(5 minutes)*
   Question from Rory Williams Doyle (CPSSD4): There are two reports that require access to be granted before you can view them.

   Response from Katie Fay (VP for Engagement and Development): They are the video reports and she will look at the permissions and try fix this.

   Response from Cormac: Reminds students that reports have to be viewed with a DCU email. It is the first-time officers have done video reports but they are a great idea and he hopes people found them beneficial.

   A) <u>President's Update</u>
   Christine thanks Cormac, Katie and Podge for setting up our first virtual CRC. It is not an easy task, but they've done a great job. Since our last CRC, DCU has officially closed. She says she never would've imagined this happening in her time in DCU. It is a sad and strange time and she can't imagine what it would be like to be a student in these times and have the end of the semester cut short. She notes adjusting to home life can be difficult and encourages people to not be too hard on themselves. She has sat on two DCU Covid-19 meetings and says DCU were well prepared to move to online learning but it is still a lot of hard work and they are trying their best under the circumstances. She notes all DCU support services are still available

online. DCU have been keeping her in the loop with any developments to do with residence and refunds. Tuesday the 7th of April is the day all assessment details will be released. They are really trying to make sure students are supported and that there are measures in place to make sure no one's at a disadvantage because of internet connection etc. She thanks everyone for adapting so well to the situation.

Other non Covid-19 related updates include the SU elections that took place before Reading Week. She congratulated the incoming SU team and part time officers as well as everyone else who ran. She also notes the two referendums that passed. She mentions the Clear The Head campaign ran for Pieta House. Pieta House had asked each venue to raise €500 and DCU raised over €7000. She congratulates everyone involved and said it was great to watch and a fun distraction. She also mentions the Clubs and Socs awards that took place online and congratulates all the winners. It was brilliant to see the spirit and positivity of all our Clubs and Socs captured on video.

Question from Niamh Cunningham (EPLYA4): She is wondering if the SU are taking a stance in regards to refunds for students who are staying in Shanowen and Gateway. They've received no communication and have no access to their retrieve their belongings with the government restrictions.

Response form Christine: We're concerned about all students staying in Shanowen, Gateway and Hazelwood as well as students in landlord houses. They have contacted the various purpose-built student accommodations requesting refunds but haven't heard back from all. Gateway are not in a position to give refund, but the SU are staying in touch. Some have said they cannot give refunds as they have already payed off end of year bills. On a national level they have been working with USI on this issue and a petition has been launched.

Response from Niamh: Suggests an email is sent out to students to let them know that the SU have been working on this issue as they are not aware.

Christine says she will do this.

There are no further questions.

The officer reports accepted by majority

3. **Pre - Nominated A.O.B** *(2 minutes)*
   - Ben McMahon (CPSSD4): Procedural Motions strategy for CRC8
   - Jimmy Barry Murphy (SE3): Schedule A on website

4. **Items for Agreement** *(35 minutes)*
   A) <u>No Detriment Policy - Eoin Crossen</u> *(10 minutes)*
   Eoin notes he worked on this motion with Katie Duffy, Thomas Ward and Kate Goodman. They had drafted this motion before the online "No Detriment" petition was in circulation, but this motion would make it a formal mandate from council to SU. He discusses issues such as stress levels in students rising, online lectures have teething issues, some lectures are not happening at all or starting late, lecturers not responding to emails, lecturers changing timetables, the content quality of lectures is

varying, amongst others. He knows a survey was sent by faculty chairs in relation to any connectivity issues but notes that students on the Education and Training course as well as IR and BECE students never received the email.

Response from Callaghan Commons (VP for Academic Affairs): He has discussed the current online petition with other DCU staff members and they were not aware of the petition but reassured him they're taking measures to ensure no student is disadvantaged. The reason they're not in favour of a "No Detriment" Policy is that they feel it would lower the quality of degrees for 2020 graduates. Employers could see these degrees as lessened if the policy was applied and may choose graduates from previous years. They are looking at all aspects of academic life. DCU are taking measures to ensure no student is disadvantaged but will probably not go so far as to implement an official policy and will not be using the term "No Detriment" as they feel it is quite harsh and abrasive.

Response from Christine: Brian MacCraith is aware of the "No Detriment" petition and reiterates what Callaghan said that calling it "No Detriment" and having an official policy in place won't happen but says more than ever staff are adamant that no student will be disadvantaged. She suggests that we wait until the 7th of April when the alternative assessment guidelines are laid out and then look at suggesting changes to those principles. She suggests we wait until CRC8 and discuss the newly outlined principles then. In relation to students not receiving the internet connectivity survey, she will let them know some students did not receive it but the survey itself did receive 4000 responses. A statement will be made on these results and the assessment guidelines will take these responses into consideration.

Eoin then proposes an amendment that "implement a policy" is replaced with "ensure that no student". Also, that "such as the no detriment to UCC" is removed entirely.
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The amendment is then put to a vote and is accepted by majority.

Question from Rory Williams Doyle (CPSSD4): What is a "No Detriment" policy? My understanding is that if you currently average a first you will stay at a first regardless of grades.

Response from Eoin: That is the general idea proposed by the UCCSU petition. It's so that no student would be left with a lower average than they had pre Covid-19.

Question from Jacob Byrne: Has there been an update from DCU about plagiarism policies etc to ensure that students aren't communicating during exam?

Response from Christine: This issue has come up. Many exams have been replaced by CA or take-home exams. Plagiarism does not need to be considered in this situation as it's the same as regular CA. There has been talks of using soft wares that ensure academic integrity but there is not official update on whether they're being used or how they will work.

Response from Dean O'Reilly (BPY4): No Detriment does not just mean students will maintain their average no matter what, students still must pass all the assessments, but it would mean no one's average could be brought down but the opportunity is still there to bring it up. He is not sure if No Detriment is the best policy but up until now

he hasn't heard anyone discuss learning environments. A lot has been said about internet issues but there are other personal matters that can impact students and the No Detriment policy would allow for these. Contingencies need to be put in place for these issues as well.

Response from Christine: Those conversations have been had she was just using the most common examples. People being negatively affected by this in anyway are being considered and policies will be implemented.

Response from Laurence Cuffe (HDSDC): Software for browsers would not stop phone browsers or separate laptops being used so that is not necessarily the way to go.

Response from Callaghan: We will take that into consideration.

Response from Kate Goodman: Decisions are going to be made based off responses to the student survey but those who filled the survey out were mostly those who had internet access. It would not necessarily be filled out by those who have poor internet. She knows the university is concerned that final year degrees may not be seen as not as equal but final year students are the majority of signatures on the petition. She understands the concerns but wants the student voice heard as well.

Response from Christine: She's not against the motion but thinks the better use of our voices to postpone motion until CRC8 and then suggest amendments to the principles that will have been released.

A procedural motion 4(a)4 is then proposed by Rory Williams Doyle that the motion be postponed until CRC8

A vote is then taken on the procedural motion and it is passed. The motion is postponed until CRC8.

B) <u>Virtual CRC – Paul Delany</u> *(10 minutes)*
The motion was submitted by Paul Delaney but Paul is not present to present. Cormac opens the floor to questions.

Response from Laurence Cuffe (HDSDC): He is a distance education student and it would take a 140km round trip for him to attend CRC and so has only attended one in person. It would be great for students like him if CRC was available online in future

Question from Ben McMahon (CPSSD4): Before it is fully possible, we would have to review the procedural motions etc. to be able to accommodate a fully hybridised meeting. Are there working groups who could look at this?

Response from Podge: One could be set up to make sure it's done right and all rules are followed.

Response from Katie: They have been looking into this possibility all year and this CRC is a great example. The new SU team have all summer to look into it. They have looked into hybrid meetings before.

Response from Dean O'Reilly (BPY4): Dean commends the motion. He knows the SU have been looking at this for a while, he knows there will be teething problems but thinks we'd overcome the barriers, would help students online but also commuter students etc.

Question from Sean O'Hare: Also important to consider that there are some students not in the country for example, on Erasmus. There is often a big problem that in the host university its hard to be heard properly but not physically being in DCU also makes it hard to get concerns across. A virtual CRC would allow Erasmus students to stay involved. He agrees with Dean that there are only benefits.

Question from Eoin Crossen (BEd2): Could we make a mandate to form a working group at CRC8 to ensure its done?

Point of Information from Cormac: Under the new constitution, CRC have power to propose new working groups. This would mandate a group to look at this issue and deal with it, do you want to propose amendment?

Response from Eoin: Yes

A vote is then taken so that the motion would now include a mandate for a working group to be established at CRC8 2019/2020 to look after this issue. The VP for Engagement and Development and the Returning Officer will be members of this working group.

C) Séanad Reform – Rory Williams Doyle *(15 minutes)*
Rory outlines that he brought a similar motion to last CRC, but the feedback was that while the spirit of the motion was good, reps felt we should be taking a wider approach and we should be working towards abolishing the Séanad. He formulated a new motion, working with others who spoke on the motion the last time.

Response from Callaghan: He worked with Rory on the motion and thinks it's in line with the Manley Report and the USI Report and he encourages everyone to vote in favour of this motion

Question from Jimmy Barry Murphy (SE3): Can we have a quick overview of the Manning Report?

Response from Rory: The Manning Report was basically to look at the Séanad as an institution and look at it through lens of making changes without referendum. It was to outline reforms that would take out the elitist nature and implement the principle of one person one vote whilst maintaining the vocational nature of the Séanad. The idea behind the proposed panels is that you'd be attracting people with specific knowledge to retain the vocational nature, legitimacy and structure of the Séanad,

The motion is then put to a vote and is accepted by majority

Response from Cormac: Congratulates Rory and everyone else who worked on the motion and getting the support of CRC. It was a well written and researched motion.

5. Items for Discussion *(0 minutes)*

N/A

6. Items for Information *(5 minutes)*
A) Class Rep Elections – Katie Fay

Class Rep Elections went live this week. Nominations are open until April 10th and elections will take place on the 15th/16th of April. The reason for holding the elections at this time of the year is so reps are ready to go next year. The first few weeks of college are always mental, and this will have reps ready to attend early board meetings etc. She is aware they may have been oversights, but they will work to overcome these.

Question from Sinéad Whelan (SSCI2): Understands the idea behind holding the elections this time of the year but it doesn't necessarily work for all courses. For example, she is going into final year while some classmates will be going on Erasmus/INTRA. Likewise, students on the same course in the year ahead will be rejoining her year of the course and they do not yet know each other.

Response from Katie: It doesn't work for every course so some elections will be held in September as first year rep elections happen in September anyway.

Question from Thomas Carrigan (ME2): If someone got elected as rep but then they don't get into their next year, what happens then?

Response from Katie: The premise is to have the majority of reps elected. If that happened, they would then run a by election but just want majority of work out of the way for the first few hectic weeks

Question from Laurence Cuffe (HDSDC): He is on an Open Education course and they don't meet each other until the middle of October. When his rep was elected he wasn't aware of who it was and he felt disenfranchised. Groups such as his need representation also.

Response from Katie: If you would rather you courses election to happen next year you can email her and she can get on to the course about doing it next year

Response from Dean O'Reilly (BPY4): Anyone concerned about who on their course is running for election this side of the semester, there is always the possibility to vote for ReOpen Nominations' which would move the election to next September.

7. A.O.B *(20 minutes)*

Procedural Motions strategy for CRC8 - Ben McMahon (CPSSD4):

Ben is wondering how people feel about procedural motions and how best to do them going forward?

Response from Cormac: Podge had organised some of the polls in advance but they couldn't predict everything that was going to happen. In future they will hopefully have the options for all procedural motions and all that will need to happen is somebody raises their hand to vote.

Question from Ben: In a hybridised CRC, how would you get the total amount of votes? These issues will be probably be discussed but we don't want to have all these issues at CRC1.

Response from Katie: All reps are enrolled in the CRC module and there are loads of different ways to vote there, similar to how elections run on loop. The working group can work on these issues too.

Response from Rory Williams Doyle (CPSSD4): Raising a hand on Zoom might not get attention in time to propose procedural motions. Perhaps there could be someone in charge of watching for procedural motions and have them unmuted so they can speak up before a motion goes to vote.

Response from Cormac: That is a good idea. Podge is already available in chat and procedural motions could be sent to him. It is a good way to make sure procedural motions are heard but the working group will look at this.

<u>Schedule A on website – Jimmy Barry Murphy (SE3):</u>
Response from Cormac: He has received a message that Schedule A is accessible on the website.

Response from Jimmy: It is accessible but the most recent information is from 2012 so it needs updating. Schedule A deals with results from any referenda ran in DCU. There are results on the schedule but it seems it hasn't been updated since 2012.

Response from Christine: She will have them updated. They're behind on the website as they're down a marketing and comms person who would look after the website but will get the results together and publish them under schedule A.

Upon closing, Cormac thanked everyone for working with us for our first virtual CRC. It will take some getting used to but thankfully it ran smoothly. He reminds everyone that the positions of CRC Chair and Secretary will need to be filled at the end of this year. Information about this will be sent out.

Christine reminds everyone that SU are still working from home and are available to help anybody through emails etc.

On that note, CRC7 Semester 2 was adjourned