





A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT

Where do I begin, what a year, unprecedented times led to unprecedented experiences.

I'd be lying if there weren't times where I spent the year longing to get the on campus experience of running the SU, meeting all the students, protesting on the streets, and having a bloody good time at events. But I quickly realised leading MSU was the ride of a lifetime, even if it was through a screen.

This year brought barriers we never imagined we'd have to deal with; we've been distanced and isolated, yet expected to continue on as normal with our University lives. Students in Ireland got a raw deal but it has been an honour to be your voice in all the mayhem and to support you in every way possible during these challenging times.

What am I proud of?

I'm beyond proud of the MSU Executive, Staff, and Senate this year who had no blueprint or idea how to be a Students' Union online- but we overcame it, innovated and found a way to be 'MSU here for you'.

I'm proud of all the virtual representative committees, online panel discussions, podcasts, story chats & IGTV interviews MSU hosted to discuss so many important topics for our members to keep us all aware, active and fighting for change while at home.

I'm proud of myself. Because the going did get tough, but you gotta look at your glass half full, not empty. Like they always say. What a year my friends, we did it!

And let me tell you, I'm so grateful for all the social nights, quizzes and games that reminded us how to have fun during the pandemic and not feel so alone <3

KELLY RENNICK
MSU PRESIDENT 2020/21

JULY/AUGUST 2020

USI STUDENTS' UNION TRAINING

Each year the Union of Students in Ireland (USI) provides training for elected officers, this year it took place entirely online! The purpose of SUT is to provide full-time officers with the skills required to plan and execute a successful year as a sabbatical officer. Officers receive training in different areas, some specific to individual roles and some general training that will aid all sabbatical officers during their time in office.

Training this year included topics such as student accommodation, students with disabilities, academic representation, team leadership, media training, Ents, marketing & comms, SUSI, The First Year Experience in a COVID-19 Setting, lobbying training, anti-racism training and role play casework workshops.

MSU X MU RACE EQUITY PANEL DISCUSSION

This panel was chaired by Kelly Rennick (MSU President) and supported by Dr. Gemma Irvine (MU Vice-President for Equality & Diversity). Guests were Bukky Adebowale (MSU VP Student Life), Tina Adinga (MSU Ethnic Diversity Senator), Senator Eileen Flynn, and Megan Berry (MU Masters Student). The event was opened with a statement from the MU President, Prof. Philip Nolan.

This event was to highlight the importance of talking about race on our campus. With the Black Lives Matter Movement and Traveller Week taking place around this time, this event was to elevate the stories and experiences that are often forgotten.

HOUSE IT GOING?



At the start of the year we put out information around housing and renters rights to help students in looking for accommodation, and in letting them know their rights when in accommodation. We posted multiple Instagram Stories with details of where students could look for accommodation as well as detailing different things students needed to know in relation to their accommodation rights. We also provided students with opportunities to ask questions about what rights they have and raised awareness of supports around Accommodation.

JULY/AUGUST 2020

SUT+

In August the sabbatical officers received round two of student union officer training from USI. Training took place online with officers from around the country. These sessions heavily focused on teaching officers to deal with certain scenarios they could encounter with students & how to respond effectively. The training also aimed to build on officer communication and team working skills and ability to work under pressure!



I'M PLAYING MY PART

The full time officers filmed lots of material with MU for the safe return to campus. This included a walk around the campus video with Kelly, detailing all the new safety measures in place on campus. A video showcasing 'I'm playing my part' was a part of a large media campaign about keeping each other and the wider community of Maynooth safe.

This campaign involved bilingual posters around campus, the town and neighbouring towns, that the MSU President, Kelly, the VP Welfare and Equality, Ciarán, and the Social Science Faculty Convenor, Séan featured in. Kelly also filmed a how to be safe in class tutorial, that was used when needed at the start of lectures when term started.



A MESSAGE FROM THE MSU VP EDUCATION

A chara,

When running for election, none of the Officers (except Nicole) expected for their term of office to be dominated by a global pandemic. Nonetheless, we took up the mantle from our predecessors and set out to fulfil our constitutional responsibilities, implement our manifestos and venture into the unknown with COVID adaptation.

My fear at the beginning of our term was that the latter would preoccupy or even overwhelm us. I like to read history in my spare time and I discovered a pattern; times of great crisis are also times of great opportunity.

The French Belle Epoque, considered to be the golden age of the French Republic, was initiated by the defeat of Napoleon the Third in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870 and the subsequent reforms enacted to recover from the fallout of the war. The reparations imposed on Finland by the Soviet Union following World War II kick started a push towards innovation and industrial growth which resulted in Nokia becoming a giant that dominated the global electronics industry for much of the late twentieth century.

I believe we rose to the challenge. In particular, I am proud of the advancements I've made to Academic Representation in MSU this year. The Academic Officer Team elected the highest number of Reps in the Union's 45 year history, increased the number of students consulted on University Faculty documentation by 4,300%, and ensured every Rep has an opportunity to interact with their Faculty Dean.

JULIAN NAGI

MSU VP EDUCATION 2020/21

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020

MSU WELCOME 2020

Alongside the Orientation Programme run by the University, MSU hosted a parallel programme of activities that welcomed new students to Maynooth. 'Maynooth 2020' helped students get to know the campus before they arrived and provided them with the information and support needed to settle in on campus. This programme was a first of its kind for MSU- a fully online programme of orientation activities that lasted for 3 weeks with a dedicated section of our website hosting all of the resources centrally so that students could access them whenever it suited them.

There were sessions on wellbeing and educational topics that drew attention to the support services available to students. We also detailed how students could get involved with the different extra-curricular activities run by MSU- providing a gateway to meet people and get to know the campus community. This programme was a first of its kind for MSU- a fully online programme of orientation activities that lasted for 3 weeks with a dedicated section of our website hosting all of the resources centrally so that students could access them whenever it suited them.

MSU WELCOME 2020 SOCIAL SESSIONS:

- College Life during a Pandemic - Kelly MSU President
- Commuter Life - Julian VP Education
- How to Manage your Money - collaboration with Eoin McGee, Life CU
- My First Year - Ciarán VP Welfare, Bukky VP Student Life, Julian VP Education
- Minding Yourself - Ciarán VP Welfare & Equality and Niteline
- Finding Your People - Bukky VP Student Life
- Getting Involved with MSU - Julian VP Education
- Remote Learning and Destressing - Julian VP Education
- Activism 101 - Kelly MSU President & Bukky VP Student Life and Liam Cosgrove, LEAD

MAP LAUNCHPAD ORIENTATION

This was an online orientation programme designed to support and ease the transition to third level for students who are coming to Maynooth University through the Higher Education Access Route (HEAR) and/or the Disability Access Route to Education (DARE). Incoming students supported by the Maynooth University Access Programme (MAP) can get to know fellow first years, ask questions and find advice from existing student leaders on how to navigate the University. MSU gave talks and hosted workshops online as part of the Launchpad programme.

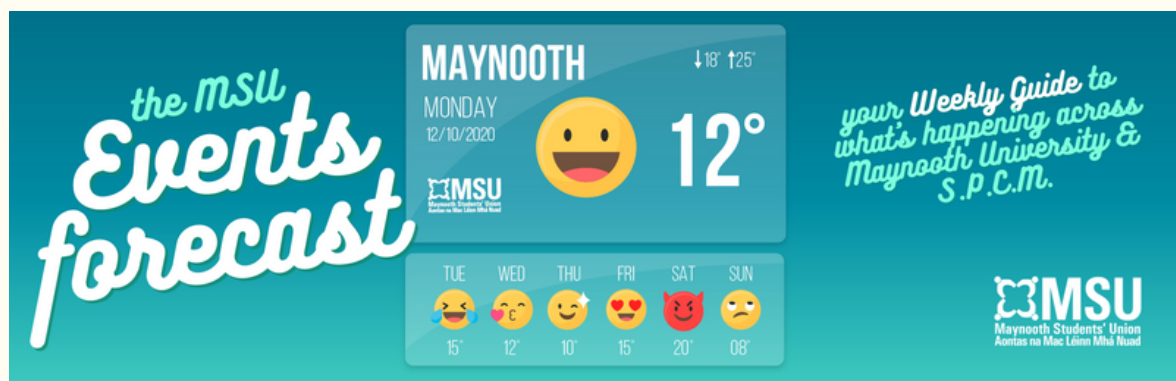
'EDUCATION FOR ALL' DAY OF ACTION ONE

Our first day of lobbying for publicly funded education with USI took place on September 21st. MSU called for our members to email their TD's ahead of Budget 2021 to demand a fairer education system. We also took part in a national campaign that involved Tweeting local TD's and the minister for higher education about our experiences with higher education funding, to highlight the barriers students in Ireland are facing.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020

MSU EVENTS FORECAST

This year was the year for the students & staff of Maynooth to get involved, engaged & empowered! The MSU Events Forecast was a schedule of weekly events for four weeks each semester. It lets students and staff know WHEN and WHAT things are happening and showcases the different types of events within the Maynooth Student Life so that they can be promoted on the MSU socials and event pages!



Various members of Maynooth University & St. Patrick's College Maynooth input their events for the beginning of each semester. It was a central hub where people could simply find an event they were interested in and attend with just a click. Clubs & Societies, Student Services, Departments and so many more contributed to the Events Forecast this year. There were a total of over 100 events imputed into the Events Forecast this year!

MSU X MU PRESENTS ACTIVE CONSENT

Our second Equality & Diversity Series event was held on the 30th September. MSU and MU teamed up to host an online panel discussion on the topic of consent, detailing its importance, how far we've come in Ireland in terms of legislation & education and what we need to work on. The panel was chaired by Bukky Adedbowale (VP Student Life) with support from Gemma Irvine (VP for Equality and Diversity MU). The guests included Kelly Rennick (MSU President), Dr Pádraig MacNeela (NUIG Psychology), Dr Sinéad Ring (MU Law), and Clare Austick (USI VP Welfare). MU support information was delivered by Ciarán Watts (VP Welfare & Equality) and Sam Blackensee (Equality Officer MU).

ACTIVE CONSENT WORKSHOPS

All 4 sabbatical officers received active consent workshop facilitator training in order to host consent workshops that were made available for students to attend online in the first month of term time. We received training from the Active Consent team in NUIG. The sabbatical team delivered almost 30 sessions during the course of the month. The SU teamed up with the office of the VP for Equality and Diversity and many other departments to facilitate these workshops and they will continue every year from now on!

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020

GET CONNECTED



GOVERNMENT FUNDED
COVID-19 SUPPORT

LAPTOP LOAN SCHEME

**Applications Close:
11th of October 2020 at 12 midnight**

[maynoothuniversity.ie/student-services/
student-budgeting-advice-service/laptop-loans](http://maynoothuniversity.ie/student-services/student-budgeting-advice-service/laptop-loans)

If you meet eligibility criteria and belong to one of the identified **Priority Groups** you should apply as you may be eligible to receive a laptop/CT device on a long-term loan without any charge.

Priority Groups are students underrepresented in higher education and disadvantaged by socio-economic barriers and include:

- First-time mature students
- Students with disabilities
- Part-time/flexible learning students
- Students who hold further education qualifications
- Students who are members of the Traveller and Roma communities
- Students who are ethnic minorities
- Students who are lone parents

Administration of this scheme is a collaborative project between MU IT Services, MU Access Programme, MU Student Services, MU Library & MSU

Kelly & Ciarán teamed up with MU's Access office on Get Connected, a campaign that gave students tips and tricks for improving their internet access while studying from home from October 1st-7th. The campaign also included the financial support services available at Maynooth University for device & connectivity funding. The campaign also launched MSU's partnered approach in promoting MU's Laptop Loan Scheme, a government funded scheme to ensure students had access to laptops to do their studies.

SHAG WEEK 1



During SHAG Week 1 we raised awareness around Sexual Health while also running some fun events for students to attend during the week. We ran Consent Workshops all week long, and as well as this we ran Safe Sex, Queer Sex Ed, Porn Literacy, Menstruation Hygiene and Kink Education Workshops and hosted the Big Sex Quiz! SHAG Week is a great opportunity to raise awareness and educate Maynooth students about practising safe sex, sexual identity and expression and learning the importance and necessity of consent. This campaign is an educational programme which promotes safe sex in a fun and effective way. We also strive to have informative classes throughout the year on safe sex, consent, sexual expression and sexual empowerment and provide information and signpost supports.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2020

FIRST MSU CLUBS COUNCIL OF THE YEAR

The very first clubs council began with members sharing their fears and excitement for the year. Elections for the MSU Student Senate subcommittees took place here. Members Aaron Thornton (Shotokan Karate Club) and Seán Keane (Surf Club) were elected onto the student senate. Michael Grant (Volleyball Club) was elected on the Constitutional Representative Review Committee of the Student Senate. Robert McCabe (Athletics Club) was elected as both secretary and member of the Entertainments Committee of the Student Senate.

FIRST MSU SOCIETIES COUNCIL OF THE YEAR

The very first societies council took place as one of the longest councils in the history of councils. Like clubs, each member shared their fears and excitement about the year ahead. Elections for the MSU Student Senate subcommittees took place here. Members Lucas Jeannot (Games Society) and David Dyksy (Social Democrats Society) were elected onto the Student Senate. Ryan Lynch (Access Society) was elected onto both the Constitutional Representative Review Committee of the Student Senate and the Entertainments Committee of the Student Senate. Gavin Fanning (Hogwarts Society) was elected as the secretary of the Societies Council.

MSU EXECUTIVE ELECTIONS

Our semester one Executive took place on November 2nd and saw the election of an MSU Postgraduate Representative

MSU STUDENT SENATE ELECTIONS

Content to follow

MSU ACADEMIC REP ELECTIONS



The Academic Officer Team (Julian, Katie, Seán and Jemma) ran a campaign to encourage students to put themselves forward to represent their classes as Academic Reps. Graphics featuring previous Reps and their achievements were put out to highlight the work Reps do. The campaign worked very well and despite the pandemic, MSU elected the most Reps in the 45 year history of the Union.



A MESSAGE FROM THE MSU VP WELFARE & EQUALITY

It's safe to say that this year didn't go the way I had hoped when I originally set out to re-run for the role of VP Welfare and Equality. Having been lucky enough to have gotten a semester on-campus last year, I definitely missed getting to meet students in person and getting to run events on-campus but like everyone else we had to adapt to the online environment.

I tried to make myself as available to students as possible by running online drop-in hours during the year, and tried to run online campaigns and events during the year to try keep that aspect of the student experience alive in the online world. I was super proud of the engagement with all of the online campaigns, and was also humbled to have the SHAG week campaign shortlisted for the USI SAAs.

It wasn't the usual scenario of students popping their head in the door to chat to me or me running around campus with a shopping trolley full of condoms, but I have to say I did enjoy it all the same!

The lack of on-campus students also meant that we had an opportunity to push for development of on-campus facilities to be implemented, which led to the implementation of plans for more gender neutral toilets on campus, and improvements to the physical health facilities on campus, which I have been proud to have helped develop.

I'm also super proud of the team this year, in how we worked together and functioned as a team. I've been on quite a few Executive teams, and one fear I had at the start of the year was that if we didn't have the same time to bond in person as with previous sabbat teams and executive teams that we wouldn't be able to function as a team when under pressure, however I think that the Executive really came together this year and worked extremely well together all year long.

My stand out moments of the year would definitely be developing the representative roles on our Student Senate, through helping bring in the position of Mincér Senator and Parents and Carers Senator to increase representation in our governance structures, but mostly in beginning the work to split the role of VP Welfare and Equality into two full time positions, to ensure that all the issues that students face in both the welfare and equality remits get the time and attention they deserve.

It was a tough year, with a lot of long nights, and days when it was difficult to pull myself out of bed, but knowing that getting up in the morning meant getting to work to make the lives of students better was a light during these difficult times that helped keep me going, and I am so grateful for that. Overall, although it wasn't the end to my time in the Students' Union that I foresaw six years ago when I became First Year Rep, it was one to remember!

CIARÁN WATTS

MSU VP WELFARE & EQUALITY
2020/21

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

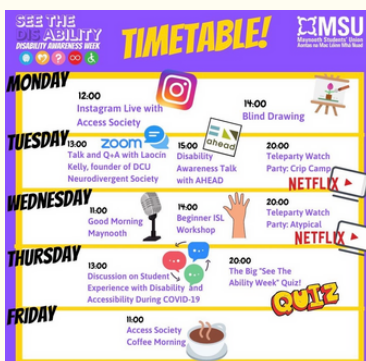
MSU X LEAD VOTER REGISTRATION INFORMATION



Kelly dedicated a week to informing students on how to get registered to vote in national elections, with Julian educating students on how to register for Seanad Elections from November 9th - 13th. A station was set up in the SU Information Centre with forms printed off for each election and students could hand them in to be posted by our Front Office Manager, Ann Marie.

LEAD made infographics to break down local & national elections, the Dáil & Seanad, and The President & referenda. LEAD also hosted a live episode on voter information with special guest Marie Lyons (VP for Equality & Citizenship USI) MSU also launched a national call for online accessible voter registration for every county in Ireland.

SEE THE ABILITY



During the See the Ability week we collaborated with the MU Access Society to raise awareness around disabilities among the student population. We ran Zoom Chats, Watch Parties, a Quiz and a Discussion panel all centered around raising awareness of the issues faced by students with disabilities.

STUDENT SENATE PROMO CAMPAIGN



MSU Student Senate is the highest decision making body of Maynooth Students' Union. Its main role is to set out policies for the Union, and to oversee the work that it does. Updates to the general student population of the activity of the Senate had been uncoordinated for some time, so this campaign aimed to change this. A graphic update style and schedule was introduced with the aim of highlighting the main talking points and decisions from Senate within 48 hours of each meeting.

GOOD MORNING MAYNOOTH



MSU's first talkshow was a project created by the MSU VP Student Life Bukky to transform what would be a coffee morning into something innovative for virtual student life. This project was a collaboration between the MSU VP Student Life Bukky Adebowale, VP Welfare & Equality Ciarán Watts and the MU Chaplain Ciarán Coughlan. On the 4th of November, the first episode "Let's Be Honest: We're in a Global Pandemic Y'all" was released with great success. The project then transitioned into a podcast which can now be streamed on all podcast platforms including Facebook and YouTube!

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

FIRST SITTING OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE MSU STUDENT SENATE (09.11.20)



MSU
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Aontas na Mac Léinn Mhá Nuad

STUDENT SENATE

WHAT HAPPENED IN SENATE?

- Senate took **6 hours** last night, the **longest sitting in Senate history**.
- **Elections for 8 Senate committees** took place.
- **Senators** robustly critiqued the officer reports.
- The **MSU Plan of Work 2020-2021** was **unanimously approved**.
- We had **discussions** around the **2020 Climate Bill**, **name change documentation within MU & MSU communication with the student body**.

ENVIRONMENTAL PLAN OF WORK

This year MSU developed their first ever environmental plan of work dedicated to environmental and sustainability activism & education. It's goals included having an environmental update as a standing item on our MSU Student Senate Agenda, where our green campus senator could update on MSU's sustainability initiatives and climate news students should be aware of, supporting and collaborating with Maynooth Green Campus, lobbying MU for environmental electives, educating students to be active citizens, hosting a sustainable fashion week and green week and much more!

MSU ACADEMIC REP TRAINING

Once Academic Reps got elected, the Academic Officer Team set about providing them with the skills and knowledge they would need to excel in their roles. Three sets of training were provided. The first was a general training that featured speakers like Professor Colin Graham, Dr Susan Gottlöber and Clare Austick (President-elect of the Union of Students in Ireland). The second set was the National Student Engagement Programme (NStEP) Class Rep training, delivered by the wonderful NStEP Student Trainers. The final training was around aiding student life in the remote learning environment where Reps developed skills to create a community within their class groups.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

SPCM STUDENT FORUMS

This MSU focused on improving engagement with students of St. Patrick's College Maynooth (SPCM) and in turn learning how to be better representatives for SPCM students. We hosted SPCM student forums to hear about the changes needed and how we could get students more involved with us. This led to MSU hosting their first ever SPCM dedicated Student Life events and SPCM students designing a Good Morning Maynooth Episode. MSU successfully elected SPCM Academic reps and an SPCM Senator was elected to Student Senate with another student elected for the position next year too, this was a massive success as the position has been vacant for some time. MSU also hosted an SPCM awareness campaign so MU students could learn more about the life of SPCM students.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

SUSTAINABLE FASHION WEEK



MSU's Sustainable Fashion Week took place from November 23-27. The aim of the week was to draw attention to the harmful effects of 'fast fashion' and educate students on small changes they could make to be more sustainable with their choices. MSU hosted a series of collaborations and workshops that highlighted the appeal of vintage and charity shop fashion while promoting sustainability practices in fashion. Online social events included interviews with Spice Vintage, Retrospect Clothing, Workshops with the Useless Project and interactive sessions with Kelly and guests.

SECOND MSU CLUBS & SOCIETIES COUNCILS OF THE YEAR

At the Clubs Council council, many exciting things happened! The very first Council Recommendation was also passed in the history of MSU Clubs and Societies Council. These recommendations were in relation to two different things. One, 'the MU Clubs and Societies Committee Terms of Reference' and a 'Request for more supports to be offered to MU Clubs to the MU Sports Officer'. At the Societies Council, the third council recommendation was passed. This was the 'MU Clubs and Societies Committee Terms of Reference' recommendation.

END IBSA



MSU released a statement condemning IBSA in support of victims in Ireland focused on educating students on the harmful effects of IBSA while committing to lobbying for legislation against it. Senators came together to draft policy to ensure MSU's attendance at the national online protest organised by End IBSA on November 28th. MSU created virtual protest signs students could share on their social media on the day to support the call for legislation and aided students drafting emails to their local TDs.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

SECOND SITTING OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE MSU STUDENT SENATE

MSU
Maynooth Students' Union
Aontas na Mac Léinn Mhá Nuad

STUDENT SENATE

WHAT HAPPENED IN SENATE?

- We received updates from the **Operations & Finance Manager**, the **Director of Democratic Affairs**, **USI VP for the BMW Region**, the **Green Campus Senator** & the **Office of the VP of Equality & Diversity**.
- All **executive officer reports** approved unanimously.
- The **MSU Environmental Plan of Work 2020-2021** was approved.
- **Discussions** happened around **online content for students post pandemic** & the **MSU accommodation position paper**.
- The **creation of a Mincéir Senator, Parents & Carers Senator & International Student Senator** were proposed and referred to **CRRC for implementation into the constitution**.
- **Caucus leaders** gave their opening address to Senate.

PINK TRAINING

MSU attended USI Pink Training with a number of students to learn more about the issues that affect LGBTQIA+ individuals. Pink Training is the largest LGBTQIA+ Conference in Europe which is ran yearly and is a great opportunity for students to learn more about LGBTQIA+ issues and also to celebrate the LGBTQIA+ community.

MSU CHARITY PARTNER OF THE YEAR SELECTION

The selection of the MSU Charity Partner of the Year (CPY) was done in a new fashion this year with three stages: Application and nominations, shortlist then finally, selection. The nomination panel was selected who then shortlisted six nominated charities to two. The Selection of the CPY was done by secret ballot vote at the first sitting of the MSU Student Senate. The MSU Charity Partner of the Year 2020/21 was chosen to be the Multiple Sclerosis Society Ireland.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

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MOVEMBER



SPOT SOMEONE WHO IS FEELING LOW

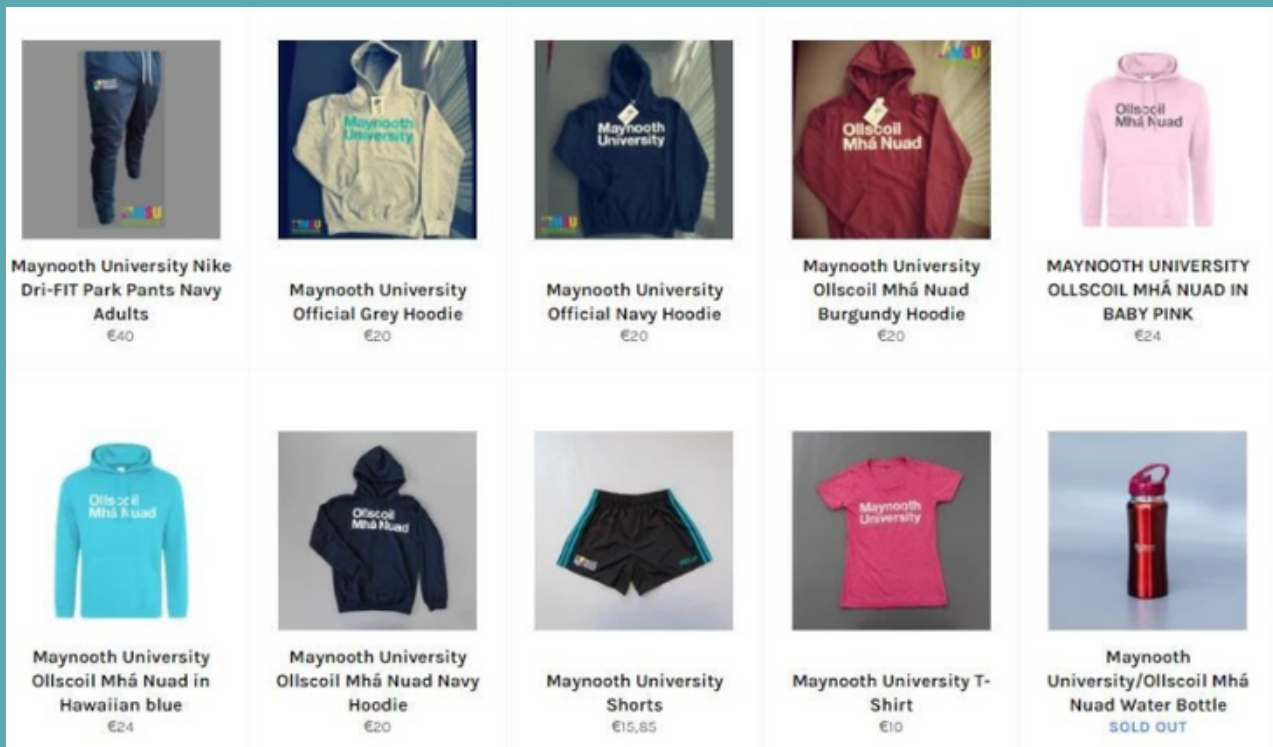
If a friend hasn't seemed themselves lately, it might be a sign that they're struggling.

Is your mate...

- Gone quiet in the groupchat when they normally are always talking?
- Not eating when they normally love a good meal?
- Missing training sessions even though they love sports?
- Not feeling like going out even though they love to party?
- Not sleeping well anymore when they didn't struggle before?
- On edge when they normally quite chilled?

During the month of November we raised awareness of men's mental health and the risks of Prostate and Testicular cancer and the importance of reaching out for help and looking after yourself and your male friends.

MSU ONLINE SHOP



MSU launched a new online shop in November 2020. The online offering facilitates the sales of Leap Cards and our MSU and MU products to you while you study from home. Engagement in the online offering has been fantastic, MSU has processed thousands of Leap Cards to ensure students can avail of discounted travel rates. MSU has partnered with Fastways to provide next day delivery at the most competitive rates. This project was in the pipeline for many years, we embraced working from home and delivered a new service fitting to the current travel restrictions. Orders are now being shipped to the US, Europe and Australia, we have very happy Maynoothians all over the world. We have added to the product line through requests from the students, new colours were picked by executive officers by polling options on our social media. The new Maynooth University Hoodie in baby pink and hawaiian blue were picked by you on Instagram. You can see the full catalog at shop.msu.ie.

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

MIND YOURSELF



MSU's Mind Yourself campaign took place from November 30 - December 03. Many students struggle with mental health issues that may be worsened by a college workload. This campaign promoted positive awareness and discussion around the area of mental health. We hosted a series of collaborations and workshops on topics such as yoga, fitness and dealing with procrastination, that worked together to help students mind themselves. We also ran events to support students mental health by facilitating students in chilling out and relaxing during a busy time period.

CHARITY WEEK



Charity Week was held on 7-10th of December and kicking it off was Bingo Loco! Throughout the week there were various events from Clubs and Societies and the MSU Student Engagement Ambassadors. This included a movie watch party, a Club & Socs Quiz and more! All the insanity of Bingo Loco was brought to students living rooms on December 7th as we hosted Bingo Loco TV! This event was the headline event for Charity Week and was brought to you by MSU & Life Credit Union in aid of our Charity Partner MS Ireland. Yes, we played bingo- but not as you know it! There were dance-offs, hilarious lip-sync battles, and even a Christmas jumper competition! The event was free with all donations on the night going to charity.

LOBBYING FOR ACTION ON THE 2020 CLIMATE BILL

MSU officers and members attended a national protest on December 7th to lobby local TDs for Action on the 2020 Climate Bill. The protest involved intimate online meetings with 4x North Kildare TDs to discuss how the Bill was too vague and contained many loopholes. Ireland's climate law is important because only a strong law will ensure every Department across Government takes climate change seriously, we wanted to start a dialogue with local TDs to improve Ireland's urgency with tackling climate change!

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

12 DAYS OF CHRISTMAS DRAWS

As a result of Covid-19, our usual 12 Days of Christmas Free Prize Draw took on a somewhat different format. We asked students to follow a link provided on our socials to enter, via a Google Doc form. We now had our MSU Four Weeks of Christmas 'Remote' Free Prize Draw! Each Thursday during the month of December we held multiple draws with the finale, hosted by our MSU President Kelly Rennick, held in "Your Space". This took on a live stream format which was posted on our socials



With well over 1000 students entering, there were a total of 17 contributors giving us a total of 48 prizes. These prizes included, Hampers, Student Leap Card vouchers, One 4 All vouchers, Book Shop vouchers, power-banks, hoodies, chocolates, etc. the list was amazing. A huge "thank you" to all our partners/suppliers who donated, without you this event simply would not happen. Let's hope next year's event can return to normal and be bigger and better as we say goodbye to Covid..

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING AT THE SU

MSU collaborated with the international office to deliver small Christmas events with international students on campus. MSU officers met them in groups of 10 to turn on the lights, listen to Christmas music and have hot chocolate. We also live streamed the main event for students, the MSU President Kelly gave a speech before turning on the lights for the last time. The officers also filmed a Christmas message to wish all our members a happy holiday season!

'EDUCATION FOR ALL' DAY OF ACTION 2

The national second day of action took place on December 16th with USI releasing a video with messaging from student union officers around the country calling for a more accessible education system. This day of action focused on educating our members why publicly funded education is needed and what the system used to look like when it was properly funded by the government in previous years. MSU also created a demo with our executive team holding up statements about Ireland's education system and the need for change, which was uploaded on social media. Many of our members also took part in this action creating their own demos and crafting signs at home!

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

THIRD MSU CLUBS COUNCIL OF THE YEAR

At this council there was a recap of the previous recommendations and updates on their progress. The recommendations had encouraged more support for clubs in training and their future endeavours.

A mini survey also took place:

Of those who attended the MSU Councils in previous years, in comparison to those councils, how have the councils improved?

- 21.4% said a great deal
- 50% said a lot
- 14.3% said a moderate amount
- The rest had either never attended councils in previous years or chose the option N/A.

Have the MSU Councils been helpful to your club or society?

- 24.1% said Extremely helpful
- 78.6% said Very helpful
- No one chose the options of 'Not so helpful' or 'not helpful at all'
- I was also informed that the councils have been 'brilliant and very informative'.

And the best part about this, is that the students on this council made it what it is today.

THIRD MSU SOCIETIES COUNCIL OF THE YEAR

There were more discussions around the recommendations of clubs and societies and how to go forward with them. An update was also given on them which encouraged all the members!

A mini survey also took place:

Of those who attended the MSU Councils in previous years, in comparison to those councils, how have the councils improved?

- 14.3% said A great deal
- 32.1% said A lot
- 14.3% said A moderate amount
- 3.6% said A little
- 7.1% said Not at all
- 28.6% had never attended the MSU Councils prior to the ones this year.

Have the MSU Councils been helpful to your club or society?

- 20.7% said Extremely helpful
- 69% said Very helpful
- 6.9% said Not so helpful
- 3.4% said Not helpful at all

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2020

THIRD MSU SENATE OF THE YEAR



WHAT HAPPENED IN SENATE?

- Senate was a **shorter** sitting than usual, last night it **ended** at **9.20pm**.
- **Senators** questioned the **officers** based on their reports and **all** were **approved**.
- We had **discussions** around the **constitutional referendum** hosted by MSU. As the **LEAD Executive & Caucus** and the **MSU Executive** had **different views** surrounding it. These issues hope to be resolved before the March executive and senate elections.
- Another major **action point** from **senator discussions** was that the **MSU President** is going to **advertise** who the **MSU returning officer** is for student information.



A MESSAGE FROM THE MSU VP STUDENT LIFE

I knew coming into a brand new role like this one would have its challenges; nothing prepared me for a year like this.

In such a short period of time we had to make the most of a virtual student life... and we did! Student Life has been transformed with the help of amazing students, clubs and societies and staff here at MSU. I couldn't be prouder. I have had an amazing year with the best three officers anyone could ask for!

One of the achievements I am very proud of is Good Morning Maynooth. What was once a physical coffee morning, has now become a branded live streamed talk show and podcast!

My second is the MSU Clubs & Societies Councils and working groups. This year I spent the summer reimagining the way the councils functioned and the sense of involvement I wanted to give students. Transparency and change were my main focuses and that happened all because students raised their voice on what mattered!

And my happiest moment was USI Congress where I got to propose motions on behalf of our students and become the VP Equality & Citizenship Elect!

BUKKY ADEBOWALE
MSU VP STUDENT LIFE 2020/21

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

DESTRESS MAYNOOTH



Stress levels can be higher than usual around exam time, especially with students completing assessment mostly online. While a bit of stress can help for students to stay motivated and focused, too much can be pretty unhelpful. We built on our previous award winning DeStress Maynooth campaigns to deliver an online programme of activities aiming to lower stress levels and help students achieve the best academic grades that they can. Workshops included; reaching out to supports; getting the last assignments in; preparing for exams; and taking breaks.

STUDENTSURVEY.IE PROMO

StudentSurvey.ie and PGR StudentSurvey.ie are designed to focus on student engagement, namely the amount of time and effort that students put into meaningful and purposeful educational activities, and the extent to which institutions provide such opportunities and encourage students to engage with them. We worked very closely with the University to improve increase uptake of the survey with our VP Education Julian organising students to conduct promotion online and distributing Goody Bag prizes via social media.

WOMEN LEAD



Women Lead is an annual conference hosted by USI to empower women and non binary people to take up leadership positions. This year it took place online on January 29th & 30th with Kelly and Bukky bringing a group of 20 aspiring leaders from MSU. We heard from many inspiring women about what it's like at the top and from female sabbatical officers around the country. There were also lots of great workshops on running campaigns online & creating a manifesto to achieve your goals!

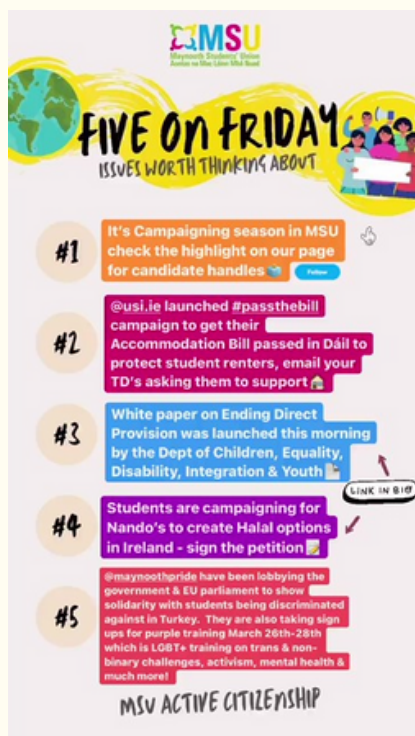
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

EMPOWER: EMPOWERING ETHNIC MINORITIES

EMpower is an annual conference of just two years, hosted by USI to inspire ethnic minorities to be leaders of the future. As most events did, it took place online from 12th to 13th February. This event was in partnership with Black & Irish and iNAR. Both Julian and Bukky led a group of seven students from various ethnic backgrounds to this event. There were various sessions such as 'Minorities in Leadership' by Dr. Eburn Joseph, 'Getting Ahead with Social Media' by Angel Arutua and 'Presenting Yourself in an Online World' by Eric Ehigie.

Alongside this, Bukky and Julian were representing on the 'Leading the Student Movement Panel Discussion'. This panel included student representatives Taidgh Kavanagh and Precious Ayoade (Dundalk Institute of Technology SU), Margaret Hutchinson (Athlone Institute of Technology SU), Nuttawud Nutchanaat (Munster Technological University SU Cork), Dajana Sinik (National College of Ireland SU) and of course, Maynooth Students' Union.

FIVE ON FRIDAY



Five on Friday was an educational campaign throughout the first half of Semester Two. It aimed to educate students on current affairs and climate news. Each Friday alternated between active citizenship highlights and environmental and sustainability highlights of the week. MSU provided links to useful ted talks, news articles, podcasts, and petitions to empower students to be active citizens of the world.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

STUDENT SUPPORTER TRAINING



Student Supporter Training

MSU
Maynooth Students' Union
Aontas na Mac Léinn Ibhá Boird

LEARN HOW TO SUPPORT YOUR PEERS DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR!

TRAINING FOCUSED ON SPOTTING THE SIGNS OF SOMEONE NEEDING HELP, HOW TO SIGNPOST AND GETTING TO KNOW WHAT SUPPORTS ARE AVAILABLE!

THURSDAY 28TH - 2PM START
FILL OUT SIGN UP FORM TO REGISTER

EMAIL WELFARE@MSU.IE WITH ANY QUESTIONS

(A small photo of a group of students in yellow shirts is visible in the bottom right corner of the poster.)

This year we trained students in signposting and on how to support their friends while studying. Each student who completed their training received a certificate. Students were trained on what supports were available to students both on and off campus so that they could signpost those in need of help to get help.

LET'S MUVE



MSU
Maynooth Students' Union
Aontas na Mac Léinn Ibhá Boird

Motivation

Healthy Eating

Body Positivity

New Hobbies

Mental & Physical Wellbeing

Let's MUve

Every Monday in February!
Starting Feb. 1st

MSU's Let's MUve campaign took place every Monday during February, allowing students who may have issues around motivation of physical health since Christmas opportunities to discover simple ways to get healthy, get active, and promote positive discussion around the area of body positivity.

MONEY WEEK



EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE

SEF

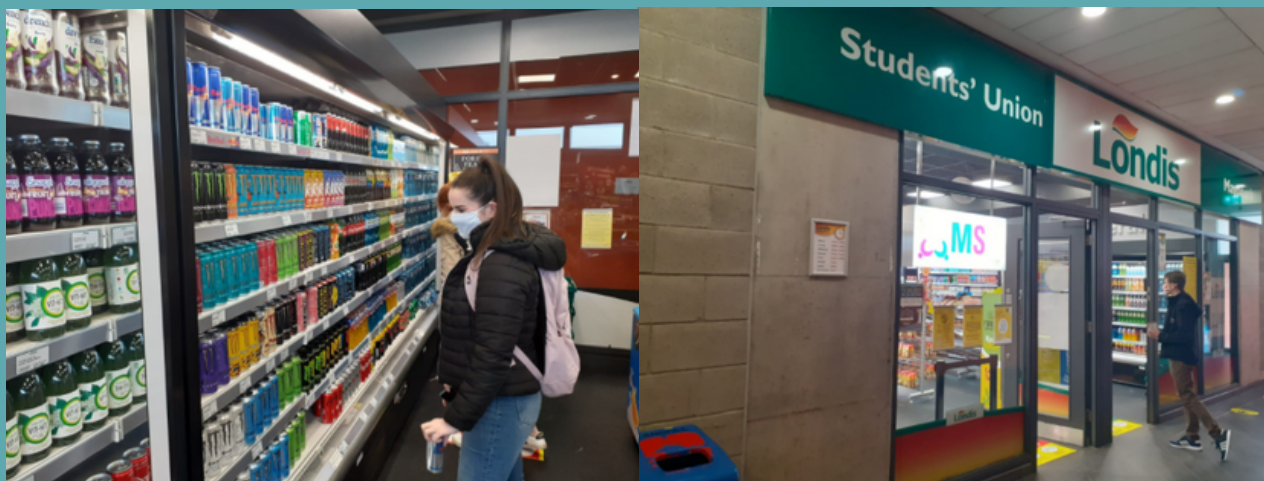
(STUDENT EMERGENCY FUND)

MSU
Maynooth Students' Union
Aontas na Mac Léinn Ibhá Boird

MONEY WEEK

MSU teamed up with Student Services to educate students on all the financial support available at Maynooth University. This involved breaking down the Student Assistance Fund, the Student Emergency Fund and the Laptop Loan Scheme. MSU answered students frequently asked questions & promoted students accessing whatever support they needed to succeed!

MSU LONDIS



The shop staff returned mid summer 2020 in anticipation of some activity on campus in September. The shop layout was adjusted to allow for one way traffic and floor decals were put in place to allow for social distancing. At the entrance we installed a sanitising station and in addition, we erected perspex screens at each till point to ensure best practice was being followed. We reconfigured the coffee station, again to allow for social distancing and reduced the number of touch points by sourcing new milk dispensers.

It soon became apparent that students were not going to be back on campus but it was great to see some of our first years for orientation albeit, a very low key orientation. Unfortunately, we were not able to recruit a new team last year but we felt it was important to keep MSU Londis open to offer a service to students who wanted to avail of any on campus facilities.

After Christmas, The John Hume Building became a key resource for students and we were delighted to be able to continue offering our much loved Seattle Best coffee and hot chocolate during the busy exam period. Again, we had hoped for more on campus activity for semester two but unfortunately it wasn't to be. With further lockdowns and level five restrictions MSU felt it was important to keep MSU Londis open and the team were more than happy to do so.

MSU londis are proud to be one of the only on campus services to remain open during this awful year and hope it confirms our dedication to offer our students the best service we can. We are looking forward to September 2021 and will continue to offer the best service and value on campus and with that in mind keep an eye out on our social media platforms for information regarding recruitment.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

POSTGRADUATE COFFEE MORNING



On the 12th of February 2021, MSU hosted its first postgraduate student student life event. The Postgraduate Coffee Morning was hosted by MSU's Postgraduate Representative, Nicole Carr. This event was a casual social online gathering for postgrads to relax, meet and chat about their college experience with a cuppa!

SHAG WEEK



MSU's SHAG (Sexual Health Awareness & Guidance) Week 2 focused on drawing attention to the more serious topics surrounding sexual health, such as Domestic Violence and Image Based Sexual Abuse, while also providing some fun workshops (such as Masturbation 101) to further the education and awareness provided in SHAG Week 1 around the topic of sexual health.

FOURTH MSU CLUBS & SOCIETIES COUNCILS OF THE YEAR

Clubs Council: This session was a very informal session with students and it seemed more so that it was an adjusting period for committee members to the new semester. The Events and Engagement forum was used as a space where students could destress. We also had the election of the deputy chairperson for the clubs council – Clubs Council member Katie Kennedy, captain of the trampoline club was elected and voted in unanimously.

Societies Council: This was an informal session where many students got to share their event experiences and ideas at the Events & Engagement forum. There was a great sense of community and collaboration in this council! We also had the election of the deputy chairperson for societies council - Societies Council member Aaron Thornton, president of the Visual Media Society was elected and voted in unanimously. We also had to re-election of a Societies Council Member to the Student Senate; David Corish of Film Society.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

FOURTH SITTING OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE MSU STUDENT SENATE (17.02.21)



WHAT HAPPENED IN SENATE?

- Senate lasted 4 hours, with lots of great discussions and motions passed.
- Senate received updates from the MSU Operations & Finance manager, Director of Democratic Affairs & Director of Facilities & Services.
- Executive officers were questioned on their work since December & all officer reports were approved.
- The LEAD Caucus submitted an item around the MSU Elections, the senate floor engaged in discussion around MSU Election delivery & student engagement. The MSU President explained the work put into election preparation by the MSU staff in January to make elections more accessible to students and ensuring better support is available to candidates.
- The MSU President submitted an item of note around MSU Email Newsletter Action plan for semester two.

MSU FAKE PUB



FEB. 15th - Tickets on Eventbrite

In response to feedback that there were limited opportunities for students to meet online, MSU partnered with comedian Steve Bennett to run an online event series called 'Fake Pub'. An online social club event that allowed students to meet each other with Steve providing the MC and comedy duties. Steve provided comedy and music in the main room while students could also join break-out rooms, such as the 'Smoking Area', where they could meet and chat with others. The event proved really popular and was held at regular intervals throughout Semester 2.

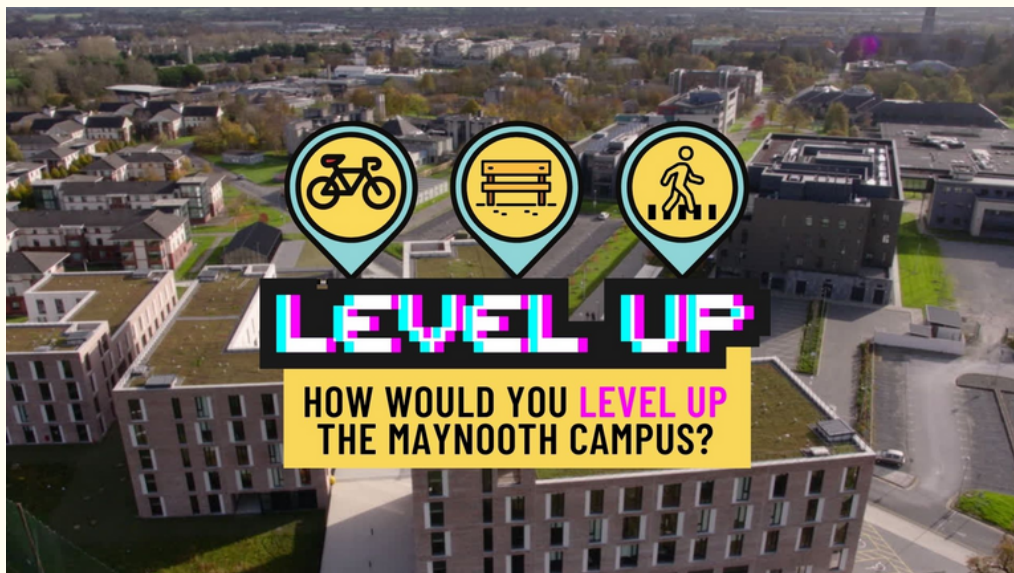
JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

LEADERSHIP SERIES X ELECTIONS



MSU hosted its second annual Leadership Series, this year taking place online with the aim to empower and inspire students to take up leadership roles & learn all about the opportunities available to them to lead during their Maynooth University experience. The campaign focused on sharing inspiring quotes and stories from leaders. There was a week-long interview series with student leaders involved in MSU, clubs and societies, other students' unions and social justice groups telling their stories & top tips for success!

'LEVEL UP' CAMPAIGN



'Level Up' was a manifesto initiative of Julian's (VP Education) borne out of frustration with how some campus infrastructure is not fit for purpose and discourages sustainable mobility and accessibility (Footpaths going nowhere, lack of pedestrian crossings etc.). This campaign aimed to highlight particular infrastructure issues to the University and request that they fix it. It did this through developing a consultation tool that allowed students to highlight their problems with the infrastructure. This was then translated into a report and presented to the University Estates Department to inform decision-making in this area.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2021

POSTGRADUATE LIFE PANEL

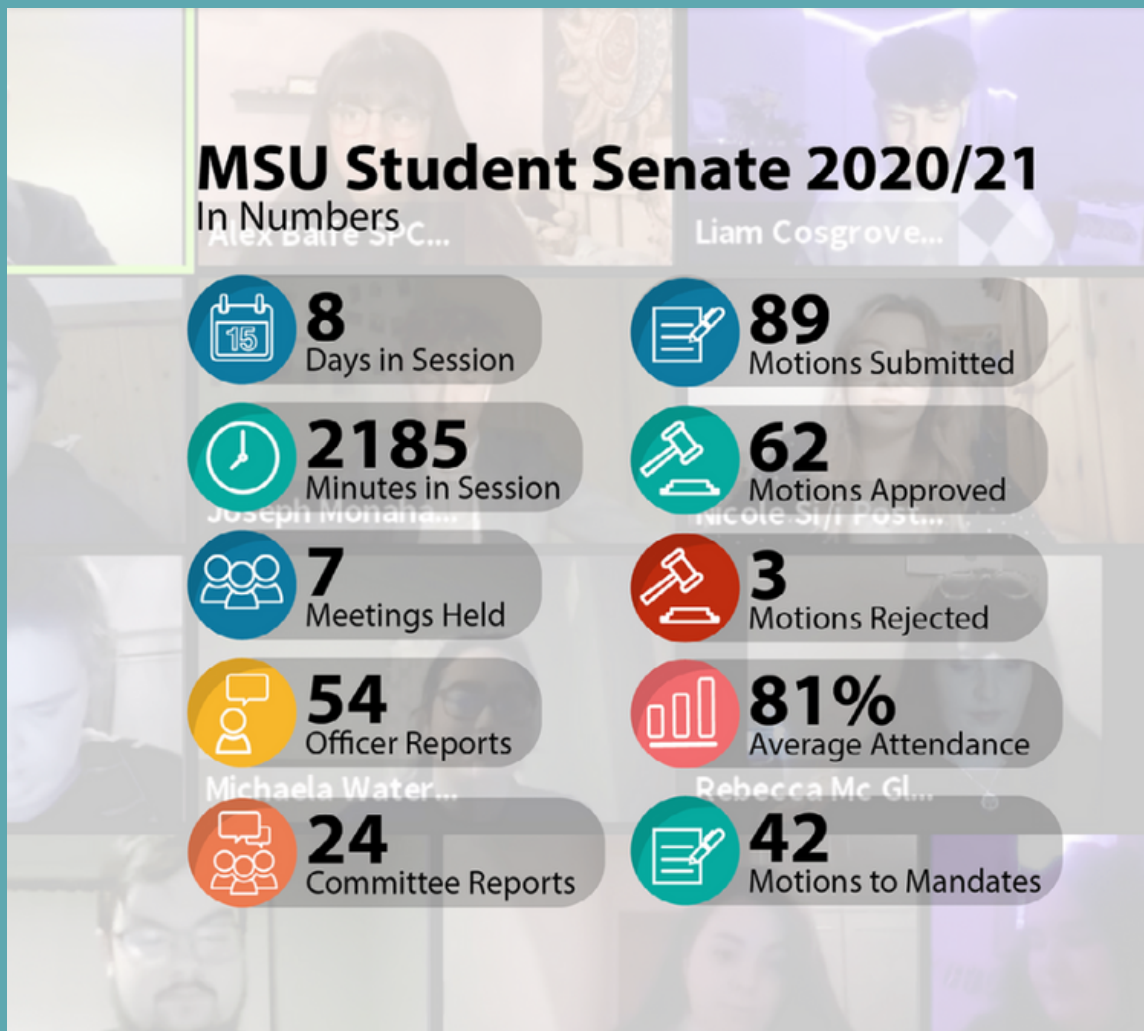


MSU's postgraduate Life Panel was the second event of MSU's postgraduate Representative's postgrad student life offering. The panel discussion included many different postgrads in MU and aimed to give student-to-student advice as part of the MSU Leadership series. The panel was a great success with attendees engaging well with the panellists and asking loads of questions about the life of postgraduate students. The panel has led to many positive outcomes such as the addition of an annual panel to our policy book as well as some Instagram LIVE Sessions to inform students of certain courses.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AMBASSADOR (SEA) TRAINING

MSU Student Engagement Ambassadors (SEAs) are students who work to increase inclusion and engagement across campus. An SEA is a student who is passionate about getting involved, meeting new people and gaining experience. They are the backbone of engagement and act as a point of contact between students and events happening on campus. Student Engagement Ambassador Training took place over the 27th February and 6th March 2021. Each ambassador was trained in engaging sessions on motivational interviewing which helps with confidence building, empathy and advanced listening.

MSU SENATE MEMBERS 2020/21



- Speaker of MSU Student Senate: Gavan McLaughlin
- Clerk: Dillon Grace
- Clerk Assistant: Louise Freaney
- MSU President: Kelly Rennick
- VP Education: Julian Nagi
- VP Welfare & Equality: Ciarán Watts
- VP Student Life: Bukky Adebowale
- Arts, Celtic Studies, & Philosophy Faculty Convenor: Katie Kennedy
- Social Sciences Faculty Convenor: Seán Masterson
- Science & Engineering Faculty Convenor: Jemma Molloy
- Oifigeach na Gaeilge agus Gnóthái Cultúrtha: Sinéad Fitzgibbon
- Postgraduate Representative: Nicole Carr
- Arts, Celtic Studies, & Philosophy Faculty Assembly Member: Craig Smith
- Arts, Celtic Studies, & Philosophy Faculty Assembly Member: Rebecca McGlynn
- Arts, Celtic Studies, & Philosophy Faculty Assembly Member: Lorraine Haigney
- Social Sciences Faculty Assembly Member: Anna Travers
- Social Sciences Faculty Assembly Member: Mary Reilly
- Social Sciences Faculty Assembly Member: Aoife Murray

MSU SENATE MEMBERS 2020/21

- Science & Engineering Faculty Assembly Member: Louis McCabe
- Science & Engineering Faculty Assembly Member: Joseph Monahan
- Clerk Assistant: Louise Freaney
- Science & Engineering Faculty Assembly Member: Alexandra McKenna
- Postgraduate Academic Representative: Gary Rock
- Postgraduate Academic Representative Laurie Doré
- Postgraduate Academic Representative: Peter Melrose
- Clubs Council Member: Aaron Thornton
- Clubs Council Member: Seán Keane
- Societies Council Member: Vic Peciulyte
- Societies Council Member: David Dyksy
- Accommodation Senator: Martin McDonagh
- Active Citizenship Senator: Liam Cosgrove
- Campus Life: Cait McGovern
- Charity Senator: Abigail Goldrick
- Community Senator: Aoife Deegan
- Commuter Senator: Lucy Christina Nolan
- DARE Senator: Gavin Fanning
- Ethnic Diversity: Senator Tina Adinga
- First Year Senator: Cara McMahon
- Gender Equality Senator: Kealan Hilley
- Green Campus Senator: Aoife Hynes
- HEAR Senator: Michaela Waters
- LGBT+ Senator: Ló Boyle
- Mature Student Senator: Michelle Corr
- Mental Health Senator: Jessica McMahon
- St. Patrick's College: Alexandra Balfe
- Study Abroad & Erasmus + Senator: Laura Flood
- Independent Senator: Emma Curran
- Independent Senator: Luke Buckley
- Independent Senator: Niall Daly
- Independent Senator: Jordan Quinn

MARCH/APRIL 2021

WE ARE MAYNOOTH DIVERSITY FORTNIGHT



We Are Maynooth aimed to raise awareness of; different cultures; struggles faced by people of diverse backgrounds; and different terminology that is related to diversity and equality, such as gaslighting, prejudice vs. racism. This campaign was an educational programme which promoted diversity and drew attention to positive stories and support that are available. We also ran informative events and issued campaign materials throughout the fortnight on diversity topics to provide information and signpost supports. We ran movie nights, instagram live discussions, workshops, a World Culture Quiz and discussion panels on broad variety of diversity themed topics.

SEACHTAIN NA GAEILGE (8-12 MÁRTA)



Seachtain na Gaeilge took place from 8th -12th of March. This event was organized by MSU's Oifigeach na Gaeilge, senators and officers and involved online events, Irish language phrases promotion and a social media challenge for students to use their Irish & win prizes. MSU hosted 'Cúpla Focal Cúpla Pionta', an Irish social session for beginners and fluent speakers to have the craic while using Irish and 'Craic 101' a collaboration with the International Office to play games, share Irish culture and teach international students some of the Irish language!

FIFTH MSU CLUBS & SOCIETIES COUNCILS OF THE YEAR

Clubs Council: In this council, the students took over! With the very first deputy being elected in the history of the MSU Clubs Council, it was about time to let the students lead that movement. Katie Kennedy took over as chairperson of the council with student life updates and levy project updates! This was a successful council!

Societies Council: In this council, deputy chairperson Aaron Thornton took lead to chair. Here, updates on student life and levy projects were given. It was great to be able to hand over reigns from the VP Student Life to the elected deputies for the first time in history.

MARCH/APRIL 2021

RACE EQUITY STUDENT FORUM

The Race Equity Student Forum was a session led by Tina Adinga (MSU Ethnic Diversity Senator) and Sam Blankensee (MU Equality Officer) to give space to ethnic minorities in MU and SPCM. The event was supported in planning by students Fiona Omobamidele, Vanessa Paszkowska, Hira Khan, Julian Nagi (VP Education), Bukky Adebowale (VP Student Life) and Ciarán Watts (VP Welfare & Equality). The aim of the forum is to provide a safe space to ethnic minority students on campus and allow for change led by these students to happen for the future. Discussions in five key areas were identified by students and led by students:

- Academic affairs
- Accommodation
- Physical campus
- Social & Cultural
- Representation

The event highlighted a number of areas needed to be addressed. This included things like staff awareness & university support, discrimination and micro-aggressions, inclusion, racism, the diversification and decolonisation of curricula and the future of the forum. It was a huge success as one of the very first student organised and student led discussions. It has since then contributed to a report which outlines a number of recommendations going forward.

USI ACCOMMODATION BILL



We supported the Union of Students in Ireland in the proposal of the USI Accommodation Bill in the Dáil in an effort to better protect student renters and students looking for accommodation. We did this by emailing TDs on behalf of students, as well as pushing out information around the bill across social media and getting students to get in contact with their local TDs to get them to support the bill!

MARCH/APRIL 2021

MAYNOOTH CAMPUS GREEN WEEK X MSU

The MSU President, Kelly presented a session on MSU Sustainability efforts during MU's Green week on Friday 12th of March. The presentation showcased MSU's paperless elections in 2021, which hasn't happened in our 45 years of electing students, sustainable changes made in the MSU workplace over the years and MSU Executive environmental campaigns and initiatives that took place throughout the year. MSU's sustainability efforts also got a feature in the Maynooth Green Campus, Green Shoots newsletter later on in the semester!

MSU EXECUTIVE (GENERAL) ELECTIONS

awaiting content

MSU STUDENT SENATE (GENERAL) ELECTIONS

awaiting content



Maynooth Students' Union
Aonreas na Mac Léinn Mícheálach



WHAT HAPPENED IN SENATE?

- Senate was a **long** sitting this time, ending around **11pm**.
- All officer reports were scrutinised and **approved** by senators.
- The **Oifigeach na Gaeilge** and the **Leader of Cácais na Gaeilge** sent correspondence for members of the senate to engage in a **polling** activity during the senate coffee break.
- We received updates from the **senior management team** in MSU, **USI** and an **environmental update** from the MSU President.
- Senate was paused with permission from Senate members to announce **election results**.
- A motion on the **27th Amendment** was brought forward and deferred to the **W&E Forum** for student input.
- Senate engaged in a **discussion** around the accessibility & experience of the **SUSI application process** for students and students with disabilities.

FIFTH SITTING OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE MSU STUDENT SENATE (10.03.21)

awaiting content

MARCH/APRIL 2021

MSU GOES GREEN



For St. Patrick's Day this year MSU lit of the Student Centre green for #GlobalGreening! This was a worldwide initiative to celebrate, we encouraged students to go green too, posting their green outfits on St. Patrick's Day. We also created a staff and student at home production of the Jerusalem dance to wish our members a great day.

MSU
Maynooth Students' Union
Aontas na Mac Léinn Mhá Nuad



MSU CHARITY PARTNER OF THE YEAR SELECTION

Every year MSU selects a Charity Partner of the Year and directs all its fundraising activities to that charity. This year, we implemented a new process and selected our Charity Partner for 2021/22 before the end of Semester 2. We opened a selection process whereby students could nominate a charity partner. Applications were sought and MSU Student Senate decided on the Charity Partner by means of a vote at the final Senate meeting of the year. The chosen charity for AY 2021/22 is

- The **Oifigeach na Gaeilge** and the **Leader of Cácas na Gaeilge** sent correspondence for members of the senate to engage in a **non-in Gaeltecht** during the senate comfort break.

SIXTH SITTING OF THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE MSU STUDENT SENATE (14.03.21 & 16.03.21)

awaiting content

- Senate was paused with permission from Senate members to announce **election results**.
- A motion on the **27th Amendment** was brought forward and deferred to the **W&E Forum for student input**.
- Senate engaged in a **discussion** around the accessibility & experience of the **SUSI application process** for students and students with disabilities.

MSU COMMUNICATIONS 2020/21



As a membership organisation, engagement and communication lies at the heart of everything we do. One of our major wins this year was the delivery of a robust Communication Strategy that was the culmination of almost a year of research, student feedback and qualitative and quantitative analysis.

Through this strategy we will ensure that mechanisms are put in place for MSU to engage with students, stakeholders and the wider community so that the activities, services and benefits that we provide are understood by all. We will continue to listen and act on feedback to help us improve in the way our members want.

Many of our communication activities and developments were in response to the recommendations of the strategy alongside manifesto aims of the elected officer team. In a pandemic year, our online communications were more important than in ensuring that we are providing content that students have interest in, want to engage with, and will ultimately inform and entertain our membership.

This year saw us introduce new communications measures such as Student Senate Updates, social media takeovers, regular update emails, and enhanced usage of our website. In particular, we placed significant emphasis on raising the awareness of the Officer team and how the various representative structures serve to represent the student body.

MARCH/APRIL 2021

SIXTH MSU CLUBS & SOCIETIES COUNCILS OF THE YEAR

Clubs Council: The last and final Clubs Council of 2021! In this council we reflected on the year, goals and accomplishments made! MSU is proud of the work that clubs have done as a whole. Without their sport, it has been a tough year however, they all pulled through much better than even they expected. We ended the year with a quiz, as you do!

Societies Council: The last and final Societies Council of 2021! Another reflection was done to appreciate how far societies have grown in the year! It has been wonderful to see how students have come together as a community in the midst of the year.

'EDUCATION FOR ALL' DAY OF ACTION 3

USI's education for all day of action was held as a virtual protest & took place to fight against fees and rent on March 24th. MSU members were out in force that day representing on the zoom call with 200 students around the country and clogging Twitter's timeline with calls for a fairer deal for students in Ireland. During the protest we heard from student leaders and experts about what's wrong with the higher education system and what's needed to make it more accessible to all!

TRANSGENDER DAY OF VISIBILITY

On Transgender Day of Visibility the MSU Executive joined with other SUs around the country in showing support for our Trans and Non-Binary students and calling for better Trans Healthcare in Ireland. We did this by emailing our local TDs, creating an online demonstration and tweeting!

MIGRANTS MINDS MATTER

The Migrants Minds Matter campaign with USI, the Movement of Asylum Seekers in Ireland (MASI) and student justice and equality organisation, STAND launched in November 2020 aimed at campaigning for an end to Direct Provision and sought to promote equal access to third-level education and supports for those living in Direct Provision. Events took place throughout the year to spread awareness but in March 2021 SU officers met with students living in Direct Provision to see what we could further do to support them while also campaigning for removal of barriers to education across social media as international protection applicants in higher education must be in the direct provision system for three years before they can avail of third-level grants & must pay international rate fees if they cannot avail of grants. The campaign also involved selling t-shirts and tote bags where all proceeds would go to an education fund for students in Direct Provision.

MARCH/APRIL 2021

MU SPORTS FACILITIES DEVELOPMENT SURVEY



March 2021 saw the execution of a MU Sports Facilities survey instrument prepared by Maynooth Students' Union. Over 1,000 students from across the population participated in this survey, contributing to a valuable data set on how students engage with the sports facilities on campus. The aim of this survey was to gather student feedback which MSU will present to Maynooth University to inform the development of a Sports Strategy and assist decision-making regarding proposed Student Levy spending. In particular, this survey gathered feedback and opinion on the proposed development of sports and recreational facilities and redevelopment and expansion of the sports centre.

USI CONGRESS

MSU took part in the Annual USI Congress representing our members in debates and policy decisions for the national students' union's policy stances. MSU had 14 delegates attend the virtual conference. MSU proposed and spoke on many motions over the course of the Congress and made sure to represent our members' interests in the best possible way. We also saw the election of our own VP Student Life Bukky Adebowale as the new USI Vice President Equality and Citizenship!

GREEN WEEK

Green Week, organised by the MSU VP Student Life, was held from 19th-23rd April 2021. There were events and conversations to continue the narrative around the climate crisis. Some of these events included an Instagram Live Climate Conversation with USI VP Equality & Citizenship, Marie Lyons.

Good Morning Maynooth was a special episode that week with guest speakers and climate activists Theresa Rose Sebastian and Aoife Hynes. In episode 10, "The Climate Crisis: Why Don't People Care?". It was one of the best Good Morning Maynooth episodes, jam packed with topics ranging from decolonisation, privilege and the big & little changes.

MSU'S FASTEST FUNDRAISER

Get Moving with the
BLUE TEAM

Get Fit with the
YELLOW TEAM

Get Sharp with the
GREEN TEAM

Get Skilled with the
PINK TEAM

JOIN A TEAM & COMPETE TO BE
MSU'S FASTEST FUNDRAISER
30 Day Challenge during April
Sign up now!

MSU CHARITY
PARTNER OF THE YEAR 2020/21
MS Ireland
MSU

Life
credit union

The goal was to break away from traditional running challenges as this isn't always appealing to everyone! Each officer is passionate about different things so the challenge was split where four teams went head-to-head.

The Pink team: 'Get skilled with Bukky' was a group that focused on hobbies such as (roller) skating, learning a new instrument, Rubik's cube solving, or even yoga. It's a mix of moving and brainpower! This team was supported by Student Engagement Ambassadors Michaela Waters, Cara McMahon and Charity Senator Abigail Goldrick.

The Green Team: 'Get sharp with Julian' focused on a number of challenges that involved things like reading a certain number of books in the month, learning a new language or even completing computer games! This team was supported by Student Engagement Ambassadors Mary Wilson Reilly and Shannon Flynn.

The Blue Team: Get moving with Kelly are a series of challenges that encourages people to move in whatever way they can (within a 5km radius of course) whether that's walking, cycling, or running or even doing the Everest challenge. This team was supported by Student Engagement Ambassadors Carrie O'Neill, Rhiannon Coleman and Róisín Maloney.

Yellow Team: Get Fit With Ciarán is based on fitness challenges such as burpee, skipping rope or crunch challenges etc. This team was supported by Student Engagement Ambassadors Astrid Abissath, Alie Martin and Natasha Fogarty.

The Blue Team was the Fastest Fundraiser with €2100 raised, Pink Team in second with €510, Green Team in third with €310 and Yellow team in fourth with €290.

MARCH/APRIL 2021

NATIONAL SURVEY OF STUDENT EXPERIENCES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE & SEXUAL HARASSMENT



In April MSU partnered again with the office of the VP for Equality & Diversity to encourage students to take part in the National Survey of Student Experiences of Sexual Violence & Sexual Harassment. Kelly interviewed Sam Blanckensee, the Equality officer in MU about the benefits of taking part in the survey for feeding into national policy and how it will cause an impact on actions of local institutions on the ground. MSU released informational content with trigger warnings encouraging students only to take part if they felt they could!

USI STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS IRELAND

The Student Achievement Awards, now in its eighth year, is the annual opportunity for the student movement in Ireland to recognise the contribution of students to improving the experience of their fellow students, and to wider society. The achievements of members of MSU were recognised with Jessie McMahon winning the Outstanding Mental Health Activism award and Nicole Carr winning Postgraduate Champion of the Year and MSU awarded Bonn na Gaeilge.



MSU was shortlisted for the Students' Union Team of the Year (medium) award. Other awards members of MSU were shortlisted for were Jemma Molloy (Part Time Officer of the Year), Bernice Basnayake (Academic Representative of the Year), MU Mental Health Society (Charity Champion of the Year), Kelly Rennick (Full Time Officer of the Year), Tina Adinga (Student Activist of the Year) and the SHAG campaign ran by Ciarán Watts (Welfare Campaign of the Year)

PART TIME EXECUTIVE OFFICERS



My name is Katie Kennedy. It was a delight to serve as the Arts, Celtic Studies & Philosophy Faculty Convenor in the 2020-21 Academic Year.

My role is primarily academic. I worked very closely with Julian, the VP Education on improving the Academic Rep structures in MSU. Over summer, I held regular meetings with Professor Colin Graham, the Dean of the ACSP Faculty. I also designed a feedback survey for last year's Reps alongside Jemma, the Science & Engineering Convenor. A second edition of the survey was developed towards the end of the year to guide next year's Academic Officer team.

As the academic year began, I took on further leadership roles within MSU. I served as the chair of the Student Academic Representation Review Committee, the vice chair of the Student Charter Committee and vice secretary of the Student Engagement & Feedback Committee.

During the academic year, I worked to create meaningful change by running regular Faculty Assemblies, representing student interest at the University Faculty and Faculty Teaching & Learning Committee, and attending meeting with Library staff alongside other Officers.

Over the course of the year, I've worked with Academic Reps to support them in dealing with issues relating to their classes. I invited guests including the Dean of the Faculty, a representative from the EDTL Project and the MSU President to address the Reps.

My focus was beyond just academic matters. I was involved in organising the Sustainable Fashion Week, something I am very passionate about. A highlight of the week was co-hosting a quiz alongside the MSU President. I am a member of the ACSP Faculty Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team, working hard to improve gender equality across Higher Education. I was also involved in planning the MSU Student Life Awards and I presented the Environmental and Sustainability Activism of the Year.

All the best,

KTK

PART TIME EXECUTIVE OFFICERS



Hey all,

I'm Jemma Molloy and I am the Science & Engineering Faculty Convenor in MSU. I have absolutely loved my time in the role. Starting off my term I had little to no experience in the Students' Union and felt like I had thrown myself in the deep end but I could not have asked to have been part of a better team.

From putting my name in for an Academic Rep position in second year to this, I had never seen myself being here. Over the year, I was involved with loads of different meetings and campaigns and it opened my eyes as to what it takes to be a good Student Representative. This year was tough, especially trying to juggle online working with online learning but every single part of it has shaped who I am now. From co-hosting a quiz, organising a panel discussion, going to a virtual protest, chairing Science and Engineering Faculty Assembly, representing Science and Engineering students at the SE university faculty and SE teaching and learning committee, being shortlisted for Student Achievement Awards Ireland Part Time Officer of the year, being a part of so many amazing committees, and being a voice for Women in STEM.

The highlight of my year was chairing the Inspirational Women in STEM panel discussion that was part of the MSU Diversity Fortnight. There was phenomenal and empowering discussion from all participants who came from different backgrounds and experiences. It was amazing to see their passion for STEM and gender equality. Through diverse opinions and insights it was an amazingly powerful discussion that enlightened and engaged all attendees.

Throughout the year I have been helping academic reps with their issues and have got to meet and work with the most amazing people. I had never seen myself being able to get so involved and to love every second of it. I know that this year was not what anybody was expecting but MSU make the most of it and I am so grateful to have been a part of it.

All the best!

PART TIME EXECUTIVE OFFICERS



Hello,

My name is Seán Masterson and I'm the Social Sciences Faculty Convenor.

Throughout this year, I worked on many projects within MSU in order to benefit the lives of our members.

I worked with the MSU President on developing our engagement with our members studying in Saint Patrick's College Maynooth and integrating MSU representation structures into the College.

I was appointed chair of the MSU Student Charter Committee by the VP Education. Over the year we reviewed the charter and have a set of recommendations going forward to the VP Education-elect.

I served on the University Faculty Teaching & Learning Committee where I developed close links with staff, leading the appointment of a second student member of the committee.

I chaired my Faculty Assembly and worked closely with my Academic Reps to solve issues for their classes.

I took a leadership role in producing the Academic Rep handbook as part of the Student Engagement & Feedback Committee. This was a particularly pleasant task because I love policy with all my heart.

This was my year as a Faculty Convenor but also as my final year as an undergraduate student. All in all, I had a great time, thank you!

Seán

PART TIME EXECUTIVE OFFICERS



Haigh a chairde, What a year it has been - we all deserve a good night out ASAP! I'm very grateful to have been part of the MSU this year to brighten my days up and continue to work in student representation, despite the pandemic. I took on a bit of a new role this year, and I arrived late! I am the Postgraduate Representative on the MSU Executive - before this year, I had never been on exec so I didn't know much about my place in the team and I definitely didn't know that much about postgraduates as I just graduated from my undergrad in 2020. I was elected in November - whereas the rest of the team were elected last March and started their terms in July - even so, they welcomed me with open arms and it is truly one of the best teams I have been a part of!

This year, I have worked really hard and achieved many things but I'd just like to highlight three of those things...

- I organised the election of 3x postgraduate students to our Student Senate and promoted these positions - this is the first time in years that all of these seats have been filled and I ended up changing how these positions are elected and the position names, so going forward MSU will elect 2x Taught Senators and 2x Research Senators in our bi-annual elections.
- I organised, promoted and held postgraduate events, which is the first time that MSU has held events that specifically include the postgraduate cohort - we organised, promoted and held a virtual coffee morning for postgraduates to socialise and meet their officers in an informal setting. We also had a postgraduate student life panel to help inform undergraduates of what it's like to be a postgraduate and this event was a huge success.
- At the start of Semester 2, the brilliant MSU Communications Manager, Eddie, and I came up with the idea to create a Postgraduate Engagement Strategy - which I like to call a 'fun thesis' as there is a lot of reading, research and hard work involved in it. This is currently underway and I'm so excited to continue working on this and have it approved by our Student Senate in the new academic year.

I have loved every second of my role this year, so much so that I decided to run for re-election in March - and won! I am delighted to be able to continue working on postgraduate representation and engagement - any 2021/22 postgraduates reading this, please get in touch!!!

Lastly, I'd like to tell anyone reading this that if you're *thinking* about getting involved with MSU - do it, it has definitely changed my college experience for the better getting to be a part of so many teams and meet so many great people! Have a safe and happy summer everyone :)

PART TIME EXECUTIVE OFFICERS



Haigh a chairde!

I'm Sinéad Fitzgibbon and I'm the Oifigeach na Gaeilge in MSU for the academic year 2020/2021. Coming into this role I knew very little about SU politics, and I never saw myself being involved in the students union until I was convinced to take my love of Irish and just run with it and it's possibly the best thing I've done in my time in Maynooth University.

While I didn't have much experience within the students union, I was constantly supported by the rest of the Executive team, the students union staff, and other students involved in the students union, as well as by some university staff. Even during the rough parts of the year, I was never alone and always had an amazing group of people supporting me every step of the way.

Over the past year I've got to be involved in things I never thought I'd have the opportunity to even know about until afterwards, I've gotten to go to meetings, offer my opinions, have my voice heard, attend a virtual protest, chair meetings and discuss the proposed Irish leaving certificate curriculum changes at a governmental level.

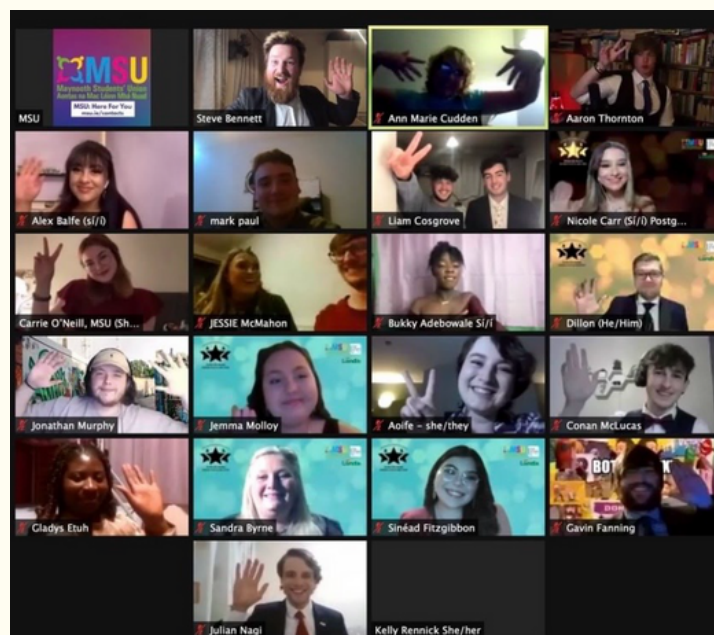
For me, the highlight of the year was definitely seeing how the use of Irish at every senate sitting improved from sitting to sitting. We went from there only being the bare minimum of Irish used, to motions and mandates being passed that supported the development of Irish within the students union. Seeing the developing interest in the language this past year has been an experience like no other.

MAY/JUNE 2021

FIRST EVER MSU STUDENT LIFE AWARDS



These awards were in the making for years. As a result of this year's challenges, MSU was determined to make this event happen to celebrate the outstanding achievements of our members. A fantastic team of staff and representatives spent months carefully considering and planning the awards, logistics and the big night was a huge success!



The online ceremony recognised and celebrated the amazing efforts of students in furthering the Maynooth student experience over the academic year across a number of categories. Congratulations to every one who was nominated for an Award- we are proud of you all!

MAY/JUNE 2021

FIRST EVER MSU STUDENT LIFE AWARDS

The inaugural MSU Student Life Awards night took place on Tuesday, 4 May 2021. The awards received 92 student applications with 39 being shortlisted across 10 categories. The MSU President chose to present three MSU President's Awards. MSU conferred Honorary Membership on a non-Sabbatical Officer for the first time in history. Judging panels consisted of 3 members per category with judges coming from the MSU Executive officers, MSU staff members, Maynooth University staff members, past MSU sabbatical officers and other experts from external organizations. The event was ran by MSU staff and student teams, an inhouse production, entirely live using zoom & YouTube with an ISL interpreter present. MSU also raised €1270 throughout the night from attendees watching the stream for MS Ireland.

Awards Winners 20/21

1. MSU President's Award x 3 - Micheala Waters
 - Gavin Fanning
 - Aoife Hynes
2. Honorary Membership of the Union - Nicole Carr
3. Student Representative of the Year - Niall Daly
4. Environmental and Sustainability Activism of the Year - Aoife Hynes
5. Outstanding Mental Health Activism - Jessica McMahon
6. Contribution to Charity Award - MU Disney Society
7. Dedication to Volunteering Award - Jessica McMahon
8. Best new Student Representative of the Year - Alexandra Balfe Vivic
9. Inclusivity Award - Tina Adinga
10. Student Staff Member of the Year - Peter Kearney
11. Gaeilgeoir na Bliana - Craig Mac Gabhann
12. Student Led Project/Initiative - MU Business Society Presents: Maynooth Talks

ACTIVISM & CAMPAIGNING

Bukky: This year we saw activism in a new light. With being behind screens, there was a challenge to allow for the student voice to be heard. This pushed us to be creative, innovative and brought about the birth of Activism webinars, podcast episodes, Tik Toks and Instagram Reels.

Kelly: MSU worked with USI and SU's across the country to lobby for publicly funded education, legislation against IBSA, trans health care in Ireland, equal access to education for those in Direct Provision and more rights for student renters.

MAY/JUNE 2021

WHAT ARE YOU GRATEFUL FOR?



For the second semester examinations period, MSU ran a Destress campaign to aid students in their exam preparation and offer them the necessary respite between exams. A Good Morning Maynooth episode focusing on beating exam stress was broadcast; the EDTL project ran an Instagram takeover around good exam practice. The MSU Londis provided free icecream and €1 coffee for students. Julian was available for students every day for in person and virtual chats.

DESTRESS MAYNOOTH



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MSU VLOGS

This year MSU set up a brand new instagram account for the sole purpose of having a more transparent and fun platform, while using our main account for information and event purposes.