

Manifesto

Who am I?

Hi everyone, my name is Imasha Costa, my pronouns are she/her, and I am running to be your Student's Union Education Officer for the academic year of 2022-2023.

I am an international student, and am finishing up on my Bachelor of Arts, where I focalised on English and French. I have been involved with UCC student life since my first year of my degree, however hard it may have been at first, but I was very grateful to be able to access different societies and be more involved with student life. I have been involved with student media since June 2020, especially with the University Express, first as the Arts and Literature Editor, and then the Editor-in-Chief, the following year. I am also currently involved with the Feminist Society, as their Consent Officer.

As an international student, I have found much difficulty guiding my way through the education system of UCC, as well as be looked out for. One of these experiences would have to be when I had to set up a GoFundMe earlier in this academic year, because I genuinely could not afford to pay the 12,500 euros a year that they charge me which resulted in me almost losing my visa. I was very grateful for everyone that gave me a hand. However, education should not be a privilege, it should be a right.

As your Education Officer, here are a few things that I would like to work on, and hope to make better within UCC.

- International Students
- Recording of Lectures
- Bettering Class Representatives
- Post-graduate Students
- Consent Workshops/ Bystander Intervention Programmes within the curriculum
- Timetables
- DSS

International Students:

International students have been neglected quite often from the voices of UCC student body, and have been excluded from the community whilst paying extortionate fees.

As your Education Officer, I will aim to achieve:

- An International Rep per college, which will be elected alongside class representatives
- Work with the SU President to put a push for a cap in international student fees, which is done similarly by CIT.
 - o International Med/Health students pay upward of 40,000 – 50,000 euros an academic year for their degree
- Continue working with the USI with the F*CKTHEFEES campaign, to gain more awareness to the amount of fees paid by students yet the lack of access they have to their education.
- Work with the Welfare Officer, to help incoming international students have better access to housing.

Class Representatives:

Class Representatives are elected earlier in the academic year by the course body, however, sometimes there is the possibility that many students do not know who they're class representative is, what their role is or how the class rep can communicate with a large class.

- Achieve to set out guidelines/ checklists for per semester, to make sure that class representatives are fulfilling their role
- Make sure class representatives are trained both in Active*Consent and the Bystander Intervention Programme.
- Allowing Departments to allow communication between Class Representatives and their course colleagues, especially for larger courses such as Arts.

Consent Workshops/ Bystander Intervention Program

One of my major aims for the academic year will be to implement consent workshops and the bystander intervention programmes within the curriculum across the four colleges. These two programs are vital for the student body, and are necessary for making sure the conversation of Consent and how to intervene is spoken loudly. These programs will be implemented within the

courses as a credit system, where a student is required to complete this before they can complete their module/course.

The Active*Consent Workshop and the Bystander Program are both certified programs, and students will receive a digital badge/ certificate on completion. Working with the Welfare Officer, to make sure that students have respective helplines to reach out, these programmes will allow the community within the university to better itself.

Recording Lectures:

Recording lectures has been crucial to students over the past academic year, in the case of physical and or mental illnesses. Many students that are also disadvantaged and are unable to attend the lectures at the time, find it easier to catch up on the lectures afterwards, and make sure that they are up to speed with their lectures. Students also find recorded lectures easier to use when it comes towards preparation of their final exams. As Education Officer, I will aim to continue encouraging lecturers and staff to record their lectures, and better the relationship between staff and students.

Time Tables/ Hybrid Learning/ Placement Learnings

For many Med/Health Students there is difficulty with accessibility when it comes to their timetables. Some changing every week, which doesn't allow planning or scheduling work, due to students working part time as well. Lecturers often either cancel or move the lectures to another day without proper notice either.

- Aim to make sure that all lecturers give at least 24 hour notice before rescheduling or cancelling a lecture, unless in a case of emergency
- Introduce a Week A; Week B plan for courses with alternating timetables.
- Work with Departments to make sure, that in the case of Guest Lecturers, to make sure that these classes are scheduled well early in advance to prevent any clashes.
- Work with Departments and the UCCSU president to make sure that Department Heads or College Heads, take accountability on who organises the timetables, and that rooms are booked far in advance, with a deadline of the last day of organizing timetables.

Students have recognised that Hybrid Learning is an important way of teaching, especially when it comes to larger lectures, due to risk of infection or being a high-risk person. However, many students have been unfortunate with the fact that online lectures would end up back to back with in-person lectures. Many students are also commuting from different parts of the County, and are therefore not always able to make it to their lectures on time.

- I aim to make sure that students have a room, that is accessible, where they are able to do their Online Lectures and have places that even allow them to charge their devices.

- If a lecture has been moved online, but the room is still booked, to encourage lecturers, and departments, to make sure that students are able to use the “empty” room.

For students in placement, especially Nursing Students, assignment titles for modules are not given beforehand but are usually given either the week or day before placement starts, preventing students from being able to complete these assignments whilst on placements. Placements are usually a standard 30 hour week.

- My aim would be to communicate with lecturers to make sure that assignments are given during the start of the course, so that students are able to finish them before placement begins.

Disability Support Service [DSS]

For many students, accessing the DSS is almost impossible, as many cannot access it without an actual diagnosis, yet diagnosis for ADHD and Autism are expensive and not covered by the university.

My aim would be to work with the welfare officer to create a working group to make sure students are able to communicate their concerns in regard to physical and or mental disabilities, and allow this working group to then communicate with the DSS. Working alongside the College Reps, it will be important to advertise the resources that are provided by the DSS to students and help make the university more accessible when it comes to lecture recording, accessibility to buildings.

Alongside creating a working group, I aim to make sure that students are aware of the services that DSS provides. And to help better their experience on Campus and throughout the university experience.

Vote #1 Imasha Costa as your Education Officer

Help me, help you make an Impact, #ImpactWithImasha

