USI manifesto

**General Welfare**

·                     **Student Safety Week**

I plan encourage all member organisations to hold student safety week, with intention for it to be at the beginning of semester one of each academic year. As a student living within a safety crisis, I feel as though this would be incredibly beneficial for all students to ensure that their safety remains an integral part of college life.

This will see the likes of consent workshops and bystander intervention training, as well as information with regard to how students can stay safe while on nights out. This would include information surrounding how to spot if a drink has been spiked, protocols that can be followed if you think somebody may have been spiked, as well as how any incidents of sexual assault, spiking or domestic violence can be reported.

I would also like to provide students with adequate information as to how they can stay sober in the college setting should they wish to do so. I would encourage Students’ Unions to be available as a point of contact for students who wish to go sober throughout the academic year and be able to provide them with the adequate resources that are available to them.

·                     **Students’ Union Welfare Group**

I would love to create a forum for all VPs for Welfare across the island of Ireland. I would propose a revamp of the current forum in place by following a structure for each meeting. This would see a theme attached to each meeting (for example, academic pressure), followed by an agenda and soundboard.  This would ensure that any reoccurring issues can be dealt with adequately and ensure that welfare officers can help each other in their roles. I would also arrange guest speakers that have expertise in a certain field to give us more information on what we can do to work more effectively.

I would also like to provide these Vice Presidents with bi-weekly emails and weekly check-ins with any relevant progress that has been made within the realm of welfare that students can benefit from.

·                     **Black Students and Students of Colour Advisory Group/ Travellers Advisory Group**

To ensure that all student voices are heard, I plan to create an advisory group for black students and students of colour, as well as an advisory group for travellers.

By doing so, I intend to encourage more students to join and report any incidents of racism or prejudice in the college setting.

**Health**

·                     **Reduce mental health support waiting lists**

I plan to lobby government departments and relevant stakeholders to ensure that the waiting times for students to receive adequate mental health support is greatly reduced. I would also lobby ministers and HSE mental health services to make students a priority for mental health assessment to reduce the length of the waiting time that they face.

·                     **Lobby for the expansion of health care services on campus**

I want to lobby The Department of Further and Higher Education for publicly funded on-campus healthcare for students. I would also encourage on-campus doctors to accept medical cards to ensure that the on-campus doctors are accessible for all students.

Similarly, I want to maintain a close, collaborative relationship with ISHA (Irish Student Health Association) to work toward free on-campus health care.

·                     **Sexual Health Information**

In hopes of eradicating the stigma around sexual wellbeing, I plan on providing more information around vaccinations and medication that can promote safe sex.

These include, but are not limited to, information around Hep A&B injections and the HPV vaccine, as well as providing students with where this can be administrated.

Similarly, I wish to provide information surrounding PrEP prescriptions, and plan on encouraging students to use SmartScript to avail of prescriptions if they do not feel comfortable talking to healthcare professionals in person.

·                     **Continuation of Tackling Period Poverty**

I want to make period products more accessible by having them available for free in every college. I would therefore lobby students’ unions to ensure that they include the price of period products into their budget to make sure that no student is faced with period poverty throughout their academic studies.  I will also be looking into how we can tackle period poverty through sustainable Irish suppliers.

About Me

I’m Sarah, my pronouns are she/her, and I’m running to be your next VP for Welfare.

I am a final year student, living the student experience first-hand. From this, I understand he struggles that are faced by students throughout their time in third level education.

We are living through a safety crisis and coming out of a pandemic. As both a student and as a class rep, I have seen the struggles that students face with regard to their welfare across the board.

I want to be a point of contact for students across the island of Ireland when they feel as though their welfare has been neglected. Whether it is with regard to students’ mental welfare or physical welfare, I aim to support them in any issues on a wider scale.