

BETH O'REILLY

FOR
VP FOR
CAMPAIGNS

DIA DHAOIBH!

My name is Beth O'Reilly and I am a recent Politics and History graduate from UCC. Last year I was lucky enough to be elected the Commercial and Fundraising Officer for UCCSU and throughout the year have had the most amazing opportunities to change UCC for the better. In my role I have headed multiple campaigns over the course of the academic year, as well as digital events and fundraising opportunities. I currently sit on the Campaigns Strategy Committee and have worked with the team to help shape USI's national campaign Education for All. I also sit on the UCC Societies Executive as the SU Representative, and throughout my four years in college I've dedicated a lot of my time to Societies. I've been a committee member of the International Relations Society for four years, as well as the Secretary General and Convenor for Ireland's largest Model UN conference NatMUN.

All of my time in UCC I have had the aim of making the student experience more inclusive, and strengthening the student voice. I'm running for the role of VP for Campaigns so that I can continue the work I have begun on a larger scale, and work with the USI Executive team to cement students as a group of influential change-makers in Ireland today.



WHY CAMPAIGNS?

COVID-19 has completely changed the way that students engage with campaigning. Coming from a job that focuses on student centric digital marketing, I believe that I am more than capable of utilising my skills to improve the USI's digital presence in a way that increases both our online and in-person engagement. I want to completely revitalise the way that the USI uses social media and the website to ensure that our messages reach as many students as possible. I aim to coordinate engaging campaigns that boost student awareness of who the USI are and what they do.

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EXPERIENCE AND QUALIFICATIONS



- First officer to hold the role of Commercial and Fundraising Officer of UCCSU
- Representing the Southern region on the Campaigns Strategy Committee
- Headed the UCC MyCOVIDPlan campaign which received local media attention
- Headed UCC's End IBSA campaign
- Digital co-ordinator of the national End IBSA Rally
- Co-ordinated UCC's Education For All actions including video editing and press releases
- Managed press releases for UCC's Freshers' Week
- Digital Events Co-ordinator for UCC's Freshers' Week
- Co-ordinated UCC's Digital Welcome site
- Launched the Student Advertising Portal to advertise student businesses
- Launching UCC's Class Rep Achievement Awards
- Digital co-ordination of UCC's DoGood.ie (*re-launching soon*)
- UCC Societies STAR Award 2019
- Held Chairperson, Secretary and PRO positions on International Relations Society
- USG for Press and Media ÉireMUN (2017 and 2018)
- Political Events Officer for UCC LGBT Society (2017)
- Experience with digital marketing, video and sound editing, web design and graphic design from these roles and personal Youtube channel with over 1,900,000 lifetime views
- Experience as an activist and public speaker

CAMPAIGN FACILITATION



DIGITAL COORDINATION OF CAMPAIGNS:

This year has shown us that the use of technology can allow us to create events that are more accessible for all students. When COVID-19 restrictions begin to ease, I will advocate for us to **utilise these digital avenues** as well as physical protests/sit-ins/etc. in order to engage a wider audience in USI's campaigns. As well as this, I will ensure that each campaign run by USI is accompanied with a **planned digital strategy** in order to **maximise online engagement** which will be circulated in good time to each MO ahead of any campaigns.

A well rounded digital strategy will increase social media engagement with campaign materials, and I have **experience creating digital marketing content** of a high calibre as well as graphic design, video editing and sound editing experience which I will utilise in order to ensure that any and all digital materials are of the highest quality.

This would include:

- An **overhaul of the USI website**, making it more user friendly and easier to navigate
- Immediately upon entering the role I would focus on **boosting the follower count of the USI Instagram and Twitter pages** to increase visibility of digital campaign materials
- Encouraging other officers to utilise their USI social media accounts more effectively through the creation of a **Social Media Strategy handbook**, which would also be circulated to all MO's

CAMPAIGN FACILITATION

CAMPAIGNS CALENDAR:

This year, there was a huge amount of work done by MOs running campaigns on their own campuses as well as larger USI co-ordinated campaigns. In order to allow for easier promotion of all campaigns, I would propose creating a **USI campaigns calendar**. This would have a similar idea to the USI calendar (17 UO14) but with a specific focus on campaigns, and would **allow for MOs to submit their own campaigns** to the Campaigns Calendar in order to increase possible collaborations across the MOs. These calendars would be released on a monthly basis mapping out the planned campaigns for the months ahead and **noting the dates of specific actions** so that SU Officers can keep track of the various campaigns happening across the country.

INTERSECTIONALITY:

The student movement comprises of hundreds of thousands of students - each from unique backgrounds facing unique challenges. While it is incredibly important to ensure that our large scale campaigns reach as many students as possible, we also need to ensure that those students who face additional obstacles are platformed and listened to in a way that allows their contributions to influence the way our campaigns are shaped. I will work with the VP for Equality and Citizenship to ensure our campaigns are inclusive, but also to promote campaigns around specific marginalised groups when their voices needs to be amplified.



CAMPAIGNS TOWN HALL:

Currently the VP for Campaigns works with the rest of the USI Executive team, the elected Campaigns Strategy Committee and the Campaigns Working Group. However, I think it's of vital importance that we also open a **forum for students** to share their ideas on which campaigns they would like to see and what actions they think would be the most effective. I'm proposing a **bimonthly meeting** advertised to students (split by region) called the Campaigns Town Hall where we can **get feedback from students** across the country, working with the Regional Officers and the NUS-USI to arrange this. By allowing students to feed their ideas into our campaigns they will be more likely to engage with our actions when they take place. This will also provide a huge opportunity for **promoting the work of the USI** to MO's, as well as helping to **foster a better relationship** between the USI and students on the ground.

CAMPAIGN IDEAS

STUDENT ACTIVIST TRAINING WEEKEND:

Students are some of the most engaged activists across countless political and social movements in Ireland. **We cannot run effective campaigns as a national representative body if we are not encouraging students to become activists themselves.** However, not only are young activists at risk of burnout as a result of balancing their work with college and jobs, we also must ensure that student activists are educated, media trained and exposed to a variety of different routes of pursuing activism. I would propose a weekend long Activism Training where different on the ground organisations could give workshops on how to be the best activist you can be, as well as allowing activists to socialise with others from different backgrounds. Some examples of workshops would be:

- Social Media Campaigning and Online Activism
- How to effectively contact your representatives
- How to stage efficient and sustainable protests
- Preventing activist burnout
- How to promote diversity in your movement

Intersectionality is of huge importance to any movement and I think that it's important to educate student activists on a range of different issues so that they can recognise the way that different marginalised identities approach different topics. This training weekend will also give platforms to on the ground community led organisations and trade unions so that students can see the wide variety of groups that they could get involved with (almost like a Clubs and Socs Day!).

IRISH STUDENT MANIFESTO:

While this year has been tumultuous for all students, it has also seen many students become politicised and engaged with national issues on a larger scale. If elected, I will make the formulation of the Irish Student Manifesto (15 UO18) a priority, in order to fully **formulate a key set of demands** shaped by students to present to the government and in particular the Department of Further and Higher Education, Research, Innovation and Science and the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage. This document will be **shaped by the Programme for Government** and will focus on the issues that most prominently affect students. . I will also work with the NUS-USI President to ensure that the manifesto reflects the realities of being a student in the North, and will examine the policies surrounding higher education in the North of Ireland to ensure that it is truly an **all-island manifesto**.

CAMPAIGN IDEAS

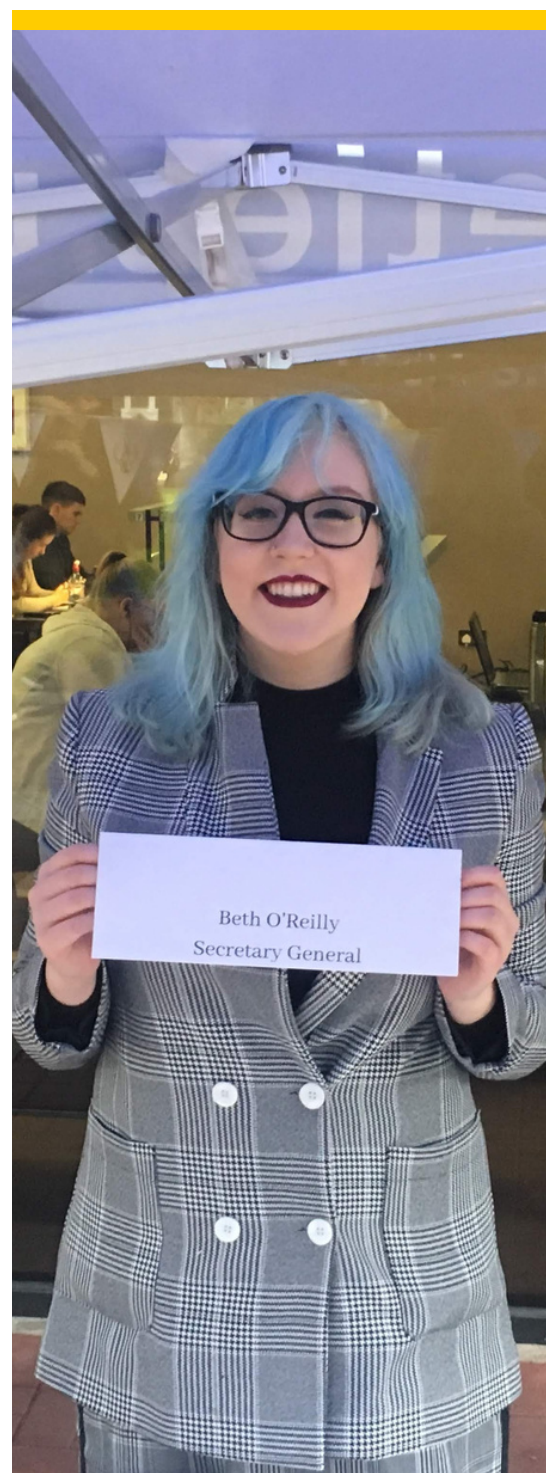
CLIMATE JUSTICE:

I have always been an environmentalist and students are some of the most vocal activists in the climate movement. We need to ensure that all of our campaigns and actions are done in a climate-friendly manner and also to focus our efforts on campaigning for stronger environmental protections - including increased public transport in rural areas, assisting MO's with climate friendly initiatives and platforming student activists campaigning for a Just Transition. If elected I will:

- Ensure that all USI campaigns are run as sustainably as possible, producing little to no waste and utilising digital technology to assist with this
- Promote and platform of student climate activists and student climate activist groups at campaigns and events
- Work with climate action groups to promote the cause around MO's across the country

STUDENT ENTREPRENEURS:

During my time in UCCSU, I launched the Student Advertising Portal to great success which helps to promote student run and founded businesses. We also took charge of UCC's DoGood.ie (*launching soon*) which provides a digital storefront to small businesses free of charge with optional charitable donations with each sale. I would love to continue this scheme on a national level, working with MOs to promote the work of student led businesses and ventures.



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CAMPAIGN IDEAS

STATE FUNDED HIGHER EDUCATION:

The higher education fees in Ireland are quite simply unacceptable. While the review of the SUSI grant is welcomed, we are past the point of no return. Students need state funded higher education and we need it now. While the student voice is strong, we need more stakeholders to become invested in our fight for the abolishing of fees. This means the issue of fees must be on the forefront of everyone's mind, whether they are a student or not. We need **widespread media attention** on this issue, **well coordinated strikes and protests** and **collaboration** with second level students, trade unions and university staff to ensure that the government cannot put this issue on the back burner any longer. We need direct and strong action to illustrate the power of the student voice. Sharing a twitter graphic simply isn't enough anymore and I aim to **mobilise the MO's** so that our voices cannot be ignored any longer. While this will mainly be focused on a large national campaign, I'll also work with MOs to help with **campaigning on their issues on the ground** - eg. repeat fees, work surrounding student contribution fees and other miscellaneous costs surrounding higher education.

STUDENT NURSES AND MIDWIVES:

The consistent exploitation of student nurses and midwives has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and we must demand better. Working with INMO, the VP for Academic Affairs and MOs across the country, I will continue the momentum of the campaign to pay student nurses and midwives a liveable wage. We are going through one of the largest health crises that our generation has ever seen and as students we must continue to vocally stand up and fight for the rights of student nurses and midwives. I would push the government to **pay student nurses and midwives at the HCA rate**, utilising a national campaign and (if needed) advocating for a national strike until student nurses and midwives are fairly compensated.

REOPENING OF THE NIGHTLIFE SECTOR:

With nightlife currently completely closed, the eventual re-opening of our nighttime industry presents a unique opportunity to **reshape the Nightlife industry of Ireland**. Not only does our nightlife provide opportunities for student socialisation, it's also a **huge sector of employment** for students. The promise of an introduction of night mayors in major cities shows that the country is on the path to rethinking our nightlife sector and I want to make sure that we use this time to work with the Give Us the Night group and the EMC Working Group to ensure that the re-opening of the nightlife sector takes into consideration the **needs and wants of students**.

UNION DEVELOPMENT



ENGAGING WITH MOS:

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a huge level of disconnect between the USI and MO's across the country, as a result of not being able to physically meet and chat to officers and students. Next year, it will be of vital importance to rekindle the relationship between the USI and MO's, on both a sabbat and student level. Through initiatives like the campaigns calendar and Campaigns Town Hall, I aim to work directly with students and sabbatical officers in each of the MO's and foster this ever important relationship so that we can campaign as a united front.

MEMBER ORGANISATION AUTONOMY:

For smaller MOs, autonomy between the Students' Union and the college can be difficult to forge. I want to help support MOs who wish to create a sense of union autonomy by helping to create a Best Practice Charter in collaboration with the Regional Officers. This charter will lay out the best practices as indicated by the needs of MOs to help with creating a sense of autonomy within the Students' Union.

NUS-USI:

- Supporting NUS-USI campaigns like #StudentsDeserveBetter and #NUSDecoloniseEducation on USI platforms to increase reach
- Ensuring that all materials circulated for the large scale USI national campaign is either inclusive of or catered to students in the North (working with the NUS-USI President to ensure this)
- Ensuring that students in the North are not tacked on at the end of a campaign and are continuously sharing their voices through the formulation of every campaign to ensure greater inclusivity
- The 'New Decade, New Approach' (agreed in January) legislates that an Irish Language Commissioner be installed to "protect and enhance the development of the use of the Irish language" in Northern Ireland. This is a huge step for Irish language rights in the North. Working with the LU Gaelige and the NUS-USI President, I will fight to ensure that students voices are heard in the fight for Irish language rights in the the North

CONTACT ME



I'm more than happy to have a chat to discuss any of my ideas in my manifesto and would love to hear more about what you want the next VP for Campaigns to achieve over the next year. The USI must be shaped from the bottom up and if elected I promise to always be transparent and accountable to the student body. With the ideas in my manifesto, I want to reshape the way the USI campaigns work, and focus on facilitating the decisions of the students and the needs of SUs across the island of Ireland.

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