



STUDENTS' UNION

AN FOCAL

THE OFFICIAL PAPER OF THE STUDENTS' UNION

University of Limerick

ORIENTATION PULL-OUT INSIDE



Carpark or cash cow?

AN FOCAL REPORTER

STUDENTS and staff in ULS reacted with anger to the news in August that the charge for the pay car park is to go up 50% to €3. The fee was originally applied to users of the car park in an effort to pay for the building of the facility itself but is now, according to ULSU President St. John Ó Donnabháin, being used as a 'cash cow' for the University.

The University's Vice President with responsibility for Finance, Ailish Quinlivan, explained to An Focal that the increased fee will be used to fund the new 'Living Bridge' which will connect the North and South campuses; 'The price increase is to provide capital funding for the Pedestrian Living Bridge. The Governing Authority agreed that this project, only part funded by the State, was essential for the proper use of the North Bank Campus in order to properly facilitate students and staff.'

However, the Students' Union has hit back at the University, saying that the increase 'is a joke', and that expecting students to fund

capital projects in ways such as this defeats the purpose of free education. The SU President was particularly disappointed, given that this is an issue which was highly controversial at last year's Governing Authority meetings, and which previous president, Fintan Breen, succeeded in preventing. 'The issue was brought up in numerous meetings and at our request it was ousted in the first instance. We've fought this at Governing Authority throughout the year but it has now been passed.' said Mr. Ó Donnabháin. However, he added that the issue will not be allowed to rest; 'We are very concerned that once these car parks fund themselves, they should become free for student use. We don't want this hike to spread across the college.'

The new fee means that students who arrive too late in the day to park in a free space may have to pay up to €450 a week in parking fees. This cost is clearly beyond the reach of most students, who may already be financially stretched by the running costs of their cars.

Student affairs controversy

STUDENTS' UNION representatives were shocked to learn in July that the University position of Student Affairs officer had been cut. However, after almost a month of pressure from both the Students' Union and the staff union, Amicus, the University has renewed Ms. Kiely's contract until March.

Student Affairs Officer Elaine Kiely was given less than two weeks' notice that her contract would not be renewed by the University, which cited funding as the main reason for the cut. According to the new

Director of Student Affairs, Dr. Bernadette Walsh, 'The contract post for the Student Affairs Officer had funding for one year only in 2003-04 from HEA initiatives. It was subsequently renewed by the university for 2 different time periods despite that there was no HEA funding available for it and the contract was renewed again last October '05 until August 10th '06. Funding was unavailable then and unfortunately is not now available either.'

The move followed the appointment of Dr. Bernadette Walsh as the new

Director of Student Affairs. Dr. Walsh replaced Jeremy O' Callaghan, who resigned amid rumours that his hands were being tied from above with regard to expanding and developing student affairs.

Student representatives were delighted to hear the news at the end of August that Ms. Kiely was to be reinstated for a further 7 months, but wished to dispel any notion that this was to be the end of the matter. ULSU President St. John Ó Donnabháin said he welcomed the news, but that the Students' Union would



BY DEIRDRE O' SHAUGHNESSY

now 'call on the University to maintain this office into the future, and ensure that we don't have more of the same chaotic confusion come March.'

More on this story:
Editorial p2
El Presidente p8

Shop move delayed by vandals

PLANS to move the Students' Union shop have been considerably delayed due to the actions of a vandal. Site notices had been put in place at the East gate, the main gate and on the front of the Scholars bar. No objections were received and the obligatory six weeks notice was nearly at an end before it was discovered that the notice at the Main gate had been ripped down. This meant that the council could not approve the application and has resulted in the shop applying for planning permission again, resulting in



BY ALANNAH TURNER

a further six week delay.

It was originally hoped that the shop would be open by November but now, because of the delay, it appears the opening date will

be postponed until after Christmas. The plans for the shop move have been developed over a considerable amount of time and excitement about its impending change is high among the Directors.

Duncan O'Toole, Chairperson of the board and, former ULSU sabbatical officer and owner of Java's Coffee House on Catherine Street, stated that "this is a great opportunity. It means we can offer students a better service and increased range in the new shop. A large priority will be given to improving the

speed of service in the deli area. In the bigger shop we can increase the number of special offers to encourage students to purchase weekly shopping at ULSU shop".

The Students' Union shop and Spar are joining forces to provide a better service to students on campus. Although this act of vandalism has resulted in a delay spirits remain high in anticipation of the opening of the new premises. "We anticipate that we will be open for business in the second term" a positive Mr. O'Toole stated.



EDITORIAL

STUDENTS living in the Limerick area will have heard a lot in recent weeks about two separate actions the University took over the summer, both of which had the potential to affect students badly. Both these actions are described in detail on the front of this edition, and both have the potential for damaging effects on students old and new. They have been reported in the Limerick Leader, the Limerick Post, the Limerick Independent and on 95fm.

The first issue - that of the axing and subsequent reinstatement of the position of Student Affairs Officer - had the potential to have a truly disastrous effect on students, particularly first years. Thankfully the axe has been lifted temporar-

ily, meaning that there's some breathing space and that Orientation will not be affected this year. This does not mean, however, that this is the end of the battle - read El Presidente on p8 for more on this.

The second story is one which will be sure to attract a lot of attention from student drivers - the car parking increase. This issue is one which has been opposed time and time again by the Students' Union, but to no avail. Students who drive to college will certainly sit up when they realise that not only will they have to tax and insure their car from now on, but also pay up to €450 a year in parking - see Breandán Ó hÉamhaigh's article on p18 for a more detailed breakdown. In a summer when it has been found that students' cost of living is higher than



BY DEIRDRE O' SHAUGHNESSY

ever before, with the maintenance grant amounting to a paltry €86 a week, this increase was entirely unwelcome.

Taken together, these issues show a serious diversion of the University's focus away from students and towards capital projects such as the now-infamous living bridge. This in turn begs the question: should the university be sacrificing students' welfare in favour of a scenic campus?

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International Education Division

The International Education Division at the University of Limerick extends a warm welcome to all new international students

Feel free to call by to meet the staff in the International Education Office
Location - E00-30

Opening hours 9.00am -5.00pm (closed for lunch 1.00pm-2.15pm)

Orientation Programme for International Students: Erasmus Students:

Date: 21st and 22nd September

Time: 9.00am

Location: Meet at Main University Reception Area

Study Abroad Students:

Date: 21st and 22nd September

Time: 9.00am

Location: Meet at Main University Reception Area

Full Time Undergraduate and Postgraduate Students:

Date: 18th September

Time: 10.15am

Location: Meet at Main University Reception Area

In addition to the orientation programme for international students, a full orientation programme for full time students to take place as follows:

Undergraduate Orientation: 19th - 22nd September 2006.

Postgraduate Orientation: 21st and 22nd September 2006.

Library expansion gets green light

STUDENTS will be relieved to learn that the university has been given the green light to extend the existing Glucksman Library building. Completed in 1998, phase 1 of the building was designed to house 350,000 volumes and provide 1000 reader places. Detailed planning for phase 2 has recently begun with the aim of providing a further 800 reader places and space for a further 350,000 volumes. The project will be managed under the national Public Private Partnership process.

According to Lindsay Mitchell, Associate Director of Management Services in the library, "This is an exciting opportunity to design learning spaces to meet the needs of our students and other users and, through the Students' Union, we will be arranging a number of focus groups with students at the start of the new semester. We're looking forward to hearing your views on the kind of library building you'd like and the kind of spaces you need for study and learning." Ms. Mitchell also expressed the library's

gratitude to benefactor Lewis Glucksman, who died this summer. Library management also hope to incorporate the latest technology in the new sector of the building.

The Students' Union has been pushing for an improvement in library facilities for many years, says ULSU Education Officer Alan Higgins. "We're really delighted about this expansion - it's a step in the right direction towards providing a quality service for students. Our hope is that the extension will address the current space

issues facing students rather than providing accommodation for more administrative offices."

A 'Student Speak' survey carried out by An Focal last year said it all - one of the main concerns of students for the coming year was the availability of books in the library. Last year saw the extension of opening hours in the building to 11pm at night and weekend opening, a great improvement on the previous early closing time.



ULSU attend USI training

AN FOCAL REPORTER

UL sabbatical officers for the first time attended The Union of Students in Ireland's annual Union Organisation Seminar during the summer. This event has traditionally been restricted to member organisations of USI, while ULSU has not been affiliated to the organisation since the early 1990s. A combination of reasons, mainly costs, influenced the disaffiliation of UL and a number of other third level institutions, among them NUI Maynooth, DCU and CIT. Mary Immaculate College is also not a member of USI. At the conference were representatives from such diverse institutions as the University of Ulster, Sligo IT, Griffith College Dublin and IT Tallaght.

The UL officers were the only non-affiliated Students' Union representatives to attend the seminar, prompting speculation from affiliated members that ULSU was interested in returning to the fold. SU President St. John Ó Donnabháin stressed the importance of keeping open the lines of communication with other colleges around

the country and stated that currently ULSU is keeping an open mind on the whole issue of reaffiliating. Affiliation fees are the main barrier faced by UL, and one of the reasons opposition to USI has traditionally been quite strong in the Union.

The seminar consisted of five days' training in NUI Galway. There were sessions on negotiation techniques, public speaking and campaigning, which were intended for all officers, as well as more specialised sessions such as Sexual Health talks and a class on dealing with the media.

All five sabbatical officers found the seminar useful in terms of both training and meeting other officers around the country who face similar challenges in the day-to-day running of their unions. One of the main problems voiced by many officers from various institutions was the lack of participation in their unions by the general student population, while Alcohol Policies were also mentioned as a universal issue.

BY MICHELLE NI GHABÓID

JUNE 30th saw a motley crew comprising of Students Union sabbatical officers old and new along with many University staff assemble in the Students Union Common Room for the Handover Reception of the Students' Union. This year the Students' Union celebrated its 35th anniversary and to mark the occasion a substantial collection of former officers was present. The strong attendance was indicative that there is life after UL even for those who found it more difficult to leave.

Former Sabbatical officers have had to deal with issues ranging from spiralling debt, to fighting for students' right to repeat exams to the age old 'no fees' fight. The Students' Union executive 05/06 did not experience such turbulent times as former executives but still placed student welfare and service provision at the top of their agenda. Frank Fogarty, Welfare Officer 05/06 said that the best thing about being a sabbatical officer was being able to help students and actually make a difference.

Fintan Breen ULSU President 05/06 made a heartfelt speech in which he thanked those he and the rest of the sabbatical officers had



worked with in the past year. He pointed out that while the University authorities might not always have agreed with the Students' Union opinion they respected that it was a voice which had to be heard. The University's President Emeritus Roger Downer summed up the importance of the students union very well when he said that "without the students, the University would be nothing". Mr. Breen paid a special tribute to his fellow officers and the permanent staff of the Union.

Earlier this year President of UL Roger Downer retired after 8 years. During his term, President Downer worked diligently to promote research

and development in UL as well as seeing the University expand to the North Bank Campus. In recognition of the work of Dr. Downer, Fintan Breen made a presentation on behalf of all UL students.

St. John Ó Donnabháin accepted the torch of President of ULSU 06/07 from Fintan Breen and said he looked forward to working with everyone in the Union and the University and representing students at all levels. St. John and the other new sabbatical officers (Sinéad Hickey, Alan, Higgins, Alannah Turner and Deirdre O' Shaughnessy) have received the Union in good condition. The shop and the

Union are returning a substantial profit, which is in no small way a reflection of the diligence of previous Students' Union executives and the efforts of the permanent staff of the Union.

The Sabbatical Officers 05/06 have all moved on to "proper jobs" according to lecturer John Breen (father of Fintan Breen) and we thank them for all their work and wish them the best of luck. And so, the baton has been passed. This year's sabbatical officers now have the choice to follow the lead of their predecessors or break the mould. The choice is theirs! Go n-eirí go geal leo.

Chaplains go public

BY DEIRDRE O' SHAUGHNESSY

A NEW drop-in chaplaincy centre will open its doors in the Student Centre courtyard this year. The centre, to be run by Catholic chaplain Fr Koenraad Van Gucht and Church of Ireland chaplain Rev. Patricia Hanna, will be housed in the courtyard.

According to Fr. Van Gucht, 'The main aim of the chaplaincy is to offer a service of support and encouragement to students through a ministry of friendship, not only by a day-to-day presence on campus but also in times of crisis, such as bereavement and financial difficulty.' The drop-in centre is intended to be a friendly space with few formalities, where the chaplains can 'build friendly relationships with the student body'. He adds that 'The main idea of this new Chaplaincy centre beside the bookshop is to make the chaplaincy service more visible and accessible so that students will readily know who and where we are

without having to seek us out only in times of need.' The current offices beside the medical centre in B block will be kept open, for those students who wish to make private appointments. The chaplaincy service also provides masses and services, times for which are available in the Contemplative Centre. Rev. Patricia added, 'we have waited for some time for a more public, visible and readily accessible space to facilitate chaplaincy and students. I would love to see the space develop as a place where students from different backgrounds, and varied religious commitments, can explore the issues of the day in a relatively relaxed way with both formal and informal meetings.'

The opening of the chaplaincy drop-in centre is a move forward for Student Affairs in general, agrees ULSU Welfare Officer Sinéad Hickey. 'The new drop-in chaplaincy is a great development for students, and provides a new place for students to come relax and



Catholic chaplain
Fr Koenraad Van Gucht

enjoy quiet and peaceful surroundings particularly during stressful times such as exams.' Ms. Hickey added that 'This comes at a time when Students Affairs have faced uncertainty through the eradication of the Students Affairs Office so I welcome this move and congratulate Fr Koenraad and Rev. Patricia on this development'.

Linda Stevens, the Director of Campus Life Services, which manages the



Church of Ireland chaplain
Rev. Patricia Hanna

Student Centre, believes that 'The drop-in centre will provide a place for students to have a chat with others and the opportunity to explore with other students the value of a spiritual dimension to modern day living.'

FUSU up and running

AN FOCAL REPORTER

FUSU, the Forum of University Students' Unions, held its first meeting of 2006/07 in Galway on July 21st. FUSU, as the name suggests, is basically a discussion forum for University Students' Union officers in which they can compare and highlight issues relating to their own universities. The forum is particularly useful for UL, DCU and NUI Maynooth as the only university students' unions not to be affiliated with the Union of Students in Ireland. Representatives from all these colleges, as well as from Trinity College, UCD, UCC and NUI Galway attended, with those from the University of Ulster and Queen's University Belfast not present.

One of the major issues which came up at the forum was whether DITSU was eligible for inclusion and if that was advisable, considering that the forum has in the past been restricted to universities. One issue with this was whether including DITSU would lead to inclusion of all the IT students' unions, which would be contrary to the purpose of the forum, which was set up especially to deal with issues faced by university students in particular. However, the forum decided to invite DITSU to attend future FUSU sessions as the college is recognised by the European University Authority as a full university, and it is likely to apply for university status in the near future.

DITSU President Bob Coggins said: "We're very excited and we've seen ourselves over the last few years in a position where we are of a similar size and on a similar budget to university unions. I think it's beneficial for us and for the current members of FUSU to have us involved.", while St. John Ó Donnabháin, ULSU President agreed that the inclusion of DIT into FUSU was to be welcomed as it both strengthened the forum and UL's links with DIT.

An Focal Briefs

UL spearheads hunt for Google Global Project Manager

It was announced on Tuesday that the University of Limerick will lead the search for the latest addition to Google's top level management. UL is seen to be one of the best sources of Digital Media Localisation experts in the world, according to Cyndy Cartwright, the Senior Analyst with Korn/Ferry International, a leading international head-hunting agency. According to the agency, "The University of Limerick has been highly recommended as the premier academic institution that teaches the best minds in the localization/internationalization business", due to its unique Grad Dip/MSc programme. The announcement coincided with the beginning of the 6th Annual Internationalisation and Localisation Summer School in UL.

EUNIP Conference

June saw academics from all over Europe in UL for the Annual EUNIP Conference, organised by Dr. Helena Lenihan of the Kemmy Business School. Minister Brian Cowen spoke to the Conference in Adare Manor, stressing the importance of cooperation between industry and the education system, in order to ensure the continued growth of the economy and stating that; "The drive to make this country a more competitive, dynamic and knowledge-based economy requires a massive contribution from the enterprise and education sectors."

Library benefactor dies

AN FOCAL REPORTER

Lewis Glucksman, the well-known Wall Street financier and philanthropist who funded the UL library, died at his home in Cork during August. He studied at the College of William and Mary and New York University, where he taught business and helped finance the Lewis Glucksman Institute of Research in Securities Markets. Mr Glucksman, whose wife, Loretta Brennan Glucksman, has Irish roots, died after a fight with bronchial pneumonia.

The Glucksmans together have contributed a great deal to the University of Limerick and Mr Glucksman was Emeritus Director of the UL Foundation, the body which fundraises for and built many of UL's larger projects, including Dromroe Village, the UL Arena and the University Concert Hall. The Lewis L. and Loretta Brennan Glucksman Library & Information Services Building was completed in 1998 at a cost of €17.72m. It was so named in

recognition of Mr. and Mrs. Glucksman's generous contributions to and support of the development of the University throughout the years.

"He was a man of huge integrity and a man of his word," said UL's founding President, Dr Edward Walsh. "I remember going to his office in New York and first discussing the possibility of financing projects in UL. Not only was he extremely generous to UL but his network of international contacts helped UL in a huge way. The library is only one building he contributed to." He is survived by his wife Loretta, two

daughters, three stepdaughters and six grandchildren. John O'Connor, Acting President of UL said Mr Glucksman's "enduring legacy of commit-

ment to learning and scholarship will benefit many current and future generations of students, faculty, staff and the people of Limerick and the broader community. We are fortunate to have counted Lew as a great friend of UL." Library management have also expressed their sympathy and gratitude to the Glucksman family, saying "We were saddened to learn of the death of Lew Glucksman in July - he and Loretta have been remarkable philanthropists to Irish education in general and to this Library in particular and we are deeply appreciative of their generosity."



Lewis Glucksman

An Diospóireacht teanga is mó sa tír

AR an Aoine 11ú Samhain 2005 d'fhógair Enda Kenny, Ceannaire Fhine Gael go bhfuil sé mar polasaí an phartaí an Ghaeilge a chur mar ábhar roghnach ar siollabas na hÁrdeiste. Thosaigh an diospóireacht teanga is mó sa tír seo le blianta. Tháinig Conradh na Gaeilge amach I gcoinne, tháinig Na Gaeil Óga amach I gcoinne, bhí agóid mhór lasmuigh de lároifig Fhine Gael ar Upper Mount Street, agus tháinig níos mó ná 150 daoine amach ar na sráideanna I gcoinne an polasaí. Is an tsuimh politics.ie le daoine ag gearráin faoi FG agus daoine ag moladh FG. Bhí an Chonradh agus gníomhairí teanga eile ag scríobh chuig na nuachtáin éagsúla faoina míbhuntáistí a bhaineann leis an moladh seo. Ansin, I mí Bhealtaine nuair a chuir siad an moladh seo os comhair an Árd Fheis I mBaile Átha Cliath. Glac ballraíocht Fhine Gael leis an moladh agus ansin thosaigh an craic

Bhí preasócáid ag Chonradh na Gaeilge os comhair Dáil Éireann chun feachtas nua a sheoladh 'caith do vóta ar son na páirtithe atá ar son na Gaeilge' Thosaigh troid poiblí idir an Chonradh agus Fine Gael, nuair a d'fhoilsigh FG preasráitís I mBéarla amháin ag freagair an Chonradh. Chuaigh Uachtarán an Chonradh ar Today FM ag diospóireacht le Fearghus O'Dowd ó Fine Gael agus bhí na línte aeire ag teasú an trathnóna sin. Tháinig preasráiteas isteach ó Na Gaeil Óga, USI, agus eagraíochtaí óige eile ag dul I gcoinne polasaí nua Fhine Gael, nó Fine Gall mar atá daoine ag cur orthú faoi láthair. Thosaigh Glór



na nGael achannaí ar líne I gcoinne an polasaí agus go dtí seo tá níos mó ná 9,500 tar éis é a shíniú, thosaigh siad ag taisteal na tire le achannaí crua ag bailiú ainmneacha freisin agus tá níos mó 4,000 bailithe acu le cabhair ó Na Gaeil Óga (I mBéal Feirste, Baile Átha Cliath agus Gaillimh) agus tá a lán den tír fós le taisteal.

Anois, tá daoine ag labhairt faoin nGaeilge, ag labhairt faoi todhchaí na Gaeilge agus stádas na Gaeilge sa tír seo. Tá na Cumainn Gaelach agus craobhacha Na Gaeil Óga agus an Chonradh níos láidre anois, cé go bhfuil daoine ag chlárú chun a chuid tacaíocht a léiriú don Ghaeilge. Ach is é an nglún óg na ndaoine atá ag teacht amach anois. Na gníomhairí óga, daoine (de réir FG) nach bhfuil dearca maith acu I leith na Gaeilge cé go tugann an chóras oideachas agus an riachtanais fuath láidir leo don teanga.

Le linn na blianta tá daoine ag rá nach bhfuil na gníomhairí teanga ró gníomhach sa tír seo, agus go bhfuil siad leisciúil ó thaobh cur chun chinn na Gaeilge. Tá sé seo tar éis athrú, tá daoine amach ar na sráideanna ag bailiú sínithe, ag tabhairt amach eolas teanga agus ag agóid ar son na teanga. Tá réabhlóid tar éis teacht anois. Réabhlóid na Gaeilge mar a deireann t-léinte Na Gaeil Óga. Agus tá sé sin fíor. Cathaimid a bheith buíoch do Fhine Gael, tá siad tar éis an diospóireacht teanga is mó sa tír seo a thosú, tá daoine ag féachaint isteach ina chroí, ina anam, ag féachaint ar an áit ina bhfuil an Ghaeilge, agus tá sé soiléir go bhfuil an teanga I chroílár anam muintir na hÉireann. Ach cad é an réiteach don agóid seo I gcoinne Fhine Gael? Dar leis Na Gaeil Óga agus an Chonradh, cathaigh Fine Gael fáil réidh leis an bpolasaí seo, agus polasaí eile a dearadh, I gcomhobair le pobail na Gaeilge. Dar le Fine Gael tá an polasaí seo chun a bheith curtha I bhfeidhm nuair a (dá) mbeidh siad sa chéad rialtas eile. Ach de réir na rudaí atá ráite ag an comhaontas ghlas agus na Lucht oibre, ní bheidh siad ag tabhairt tacaíocht don polasaí seo. B'fhéidir go mbeidh an céad rialtas eile ag titim go luath buíochas leis an nGaeilge!



By Breandán Ó hÉamhaigh

An Focal Briefs

Dance Research Forum Ireland

The Dance Research Forum Ireland 2006 Conference took place in UL's Irish World Academy of Music and Dance in June. According to the conference's promoters, the conference provided a platform for both dance academics and dance artists in Ireland and abroad, and included academic-based papers, practice-based research presentations, lecture demonstrations, dance workshops, concert, a poster exhibition and artistic contributions.

Students in the driving seat

The spate of deaths on Irish roads, which has included one UL student, Colin Heddarman so far this summer, has encouraged UL students to give each other a helping hand in the difficult trial of the driving test. On the ULSU web forum, www.ulsu.ul.ie, students direct each other to helpful websites, as well as telling of their own experiences in the driving seat.

UL wedding

In a sight common to UCC's Honan Chapel, staff and visitors to the University were surprised and delighted to see a vintage car complete with bride pull up in the Student Centre one fine day in August. Joe Gibbs, who graduated from UL in 1985 with a degree in Computer Engineering, married Marina Gallagher, who jokingly remarked that she did not attend UL, and so it could not be called a true "UL wedding". The ecumenical Contemplative Centre is a space in the student centre which is used during the semester for both Catholic and Protestant religious worship and also for meditation and contemplation, as the name suggests. Other activities, such as tribal drumming classes, have also taken place in the centre. The cspace is an oasis of calm in the busy college, and is overseen by Catholic chaplain Fr Koenrad Van Gucht and Church of Ireland chaplain Patricia Hanna.



Future bright for UL graduates

BY DEIRDRE O' SHAUGHNESSY

Figures released by the University of Limerick Careers Service have shown that the future is bright for students carrying out their studies in the Shannonside university.

According to Mary Sweeney of the UL Careers Department, UL graduates from 2005 have hit record levels of employment, with only 3% unemployed almost a year after they finish college. According to the figures collected by the department, the changes in employment patterns in 2005 show a significant improvement on the 2004 statistics, with a 6% jump in employment.

The Careers Service surveys graduates every year

between April and June one year after they graduate in order to ascertain their sectors of employment, salaries and overall situations. This year's figures show that 62% of graduates are employed in Ireland, with 6% employed overseas. 24% are undertaking further study, with 5% unavailable and only 3% seeking employment - in effect, full employment. Ms Sweeney suggests that, in the current climate, "anyone who wants to work will find work", stressing, however, that first jobs may not always meet expectations.

Despite this, salaries have increased by 9%, outpacing inflation and resulting in the majority of recent graduates earning between €25,000 and €29,000.

Of those employed in Ireland, there has been an interesting change in focus from Dublin, according to Ms. Sweeney. With 37% employed in the east of the country, and 36% working in the Mid-West, she believes that graduates are more concerned with quality of life issues than previously, that "Dublin is no longer the mecca", and that Limerick and the Mid West in general are now attractive propositions for young professionals beginning their careers.

Another interesting development in the figures is that there has been a substantial shift in the destinations of graduates working overseas. The UK is down to 23% and only 44% of graduates employed abroad

are in the EU. The Far East accounts for 20% of graduates, many of whom are teaching English, with 23% in the Middle East. This may be seen as a surprising development given the unrest in the Middle East, but could also be a reflection of the growing trend of working to travel among young Irish people.

These figures reflect the results of an Ulster Bank survey carried out earlier this year which found that UL and WIT students are more likely to enter the workforce on completion of their primary degree than graduates from any other college.

First published in the Limerick Independent

Postgraduate News

Hey Everyone,

My name is Maja Niebrzegowska and I am doing MA course in English Language Teaching. I will be your new postgraduate representative until the end of June 2006. If you are a postgraduate student, you are automatically a member of the Postgraduate Student Association (PSA) of which there are two major elements; *representation and entertainment/interactive integration*. As your representative I am happy to meet with you individually to discuss problems of any nature, any time that suits you.

REPRESENTATION

The PSA represents postgrads on lots of University committees such as Academic Council, Governing Authority, Academic Programme Review Committee, Library Development, Environmental Committee, Waste, Student Affairs and more. As you can see much of my time is spent running from meeting to meeting! However it is essential to have postgraduate representation and feedback going back to the University. In order to represent the postgraduate community effectively, I need a constant stream of feedback from you to know how you are getting on, and what problems you are encountering. My agenda will then be set in response to the issues raised by you.

ENTERTAINMENT

Most of you will get to know me through entertainment events that I will be organising during the year. The variety of events will differ as to address as many taste as possible. These will include table quizzes, barbeques, music gigs, as well as sport events and cultural events like poetry reading and music sessions. The PSA centre is your centre, so if you need a venue just call in and ask. The PSA also has the responsibility of

organising the postgrad charity ball, and that is generally held in April.

PSA CENTRE

The PSA has its own centre, and this is located in the corner of the Stable's Courtyard. We are currently in receipt of the *Irish Times*, *Limerick Leader* and *The Village magazine*. There is also tea and coffee making facilities and all I ask in return is that you return and wash the cups. You can find scrabble and a chess/draughts set in the common room and there are more sets to come. All postgrads and Mature students, both Irish and International, are welcome to stay and chat for as long as they like. I also hope to run some lunchtime events in the PSA, such as lunchtime gigs, so if you are in a band, or would like to plug a band/singer, call in to me and talk about it.

KEEP INFORMED

Please keep informed about the PSA. It's your money that goes to fund the PSA so it's in your best interests to see what I do with that money. The best way to do this is to visit the website at www.ul.ie/~psa and sign up to the mailing list in order to receive details via email about what is happening so you can plan to be there. Also, check An Focal, and the noticeboards for details of upcoming events. The PSA page also has a copy of the postgraduate charter and advice about funding and supervisors.

GET INVOLVED WITH THE PSA

As is the case with any student association, it is important to have a system of checks and balances in place in order to ensure there are no dodgy practices! The activities and membership of the PSA are governed by the PSA constitution. The constitution

provides for the election of a new executive, and these elections will take place at the AGM in October.

Part from the position of president (which is the only full-time paid position within the PSA) there are four other executive positions - deputy president, treasurer, publicity officer and events officer. These positions will all be vacant from October, so have a think about whether you would be interested in becoming a member of the PSA executive. There will be more information about these positions closer to the election date.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The first postgrad event is a welcome reception in the PSA on Thursday of week 1. It will start around 8pm and drinks and nibbles will be provided. If you are anyway musically talented please bring along some instruments and enthusiasm! This will be a good opportunity to get to know other postgrads, and also to familiarise yourself with the PSA. You also get the chance to ask me questions! You can contact me on (061)213473, email me at psapresident@ul.ie, or call into my office.

Welcome to UL, and don't forget to sign up to the mailing list!

Maja Niebrzegowska
President, PSA



SABBATICAL OFFICERS CONTACT LIST

AONTAS NA MAC LÉINN

St. John Ó Donnabháin President

Uachtarán, Aontas na Mac Léinn, Ollscoil Luimnigh
President, University of Limerick Students' Union



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Ollscoil Luimnigh

Palestine Solidarity Society

LAST year the UL Palestine Solidarity Society was established with the aim of raising awareness among students and staff at the university of the injustices experienced by Palestinians in the face of illegal Israeli occupation. We also wished to show other aspects of Palestinian life such as food, culture and music. The society wishes to work with organisations in Palestine and Israel towards promoting a just and lasting peace there. Last year the UL Palestine Solidarity Society topped off a very successful year of actions, cultural events and a conference, featuring Palestinian and Israeli speakers, by winning Best New Society from the Students' Union at the Clubs and Societies Ball. This was a great honour and reward for the work of the previous academic year.

Although the university has been on holidays for the past while, events in the Middle East most notably in Gaza and Lebanon demanded our attention. As Israeli military aggression caused huge loss of life in Gaza, the West Bank and of course Lebanon, the UL PSS in conjunction with the Ireland Palestine Solidarity Campaign and Amnesty International held a vigil in Limerick city on 3rd August. The vigil was attended by up to 200 people. Haidar El Mawla from Lebanon, John Lannon Amnesty International, Ed Horgan former Irish army commander and peace activist, Jan O'Sullivan Labour TD and Zoë Lawlor UL PSS spoke at the vigil. Speakers called for an immediate ceasefire in Lebanon and for full compliance with international law from Israel and all parties and for a boycott of Israeli

goods until such compliance.

The UL PSS also joined with the IPSC and the Irish anti-war movement for a demonstration in Dundalk, Minister Dermot Ahern's constituency to call for an end to Israeli occupation and breach of international law.

All in all, it has been a very busy summer for the UL Palestine Solidarity Society. We are hoping that this new year will see many more cultural and political events and that students and staff will join with us in working in solidarity with the people of Palestine and for peace.

For further information on joining please contact: ulpalestine@eircom.net



UL Debating Union

UL Debating Union had a great year this year, with great motions and speeches, and even better nights out. The year kicked off with a 'meet and greet' where the fourth years let us know what the society is all about, and gave us freshers a great welcome. They put on a lively debate for us about living in "the republic of Eddie Hobbs", and the night in Molly's that followed ensured that we signed up for the year to come.

We had a number of controversial and highly interesting motions such as "This house would annex Palestine, rather than see it run by terrorists", "This house would drop the debt" and "This house believes homosexual couples should be allowed to adopt", as well as some more light-hearted ones "This house believes in polygamy all the way". Most weeks the debates were carried on over in the Stables, where some of us will remember waltzing around the pub and many of us got free pints for karaoke- fair play to Mike who got into the final and sincere apologies to anyone who happened to catch the rendition of 'Fairytale of New York' Stuart and I did, in

November!

We went to a number competitions, such as the Irish Times debates, and intervarsities in UCC, Trinity and NUIG, all of which were followed by memorable nights out. Some of our teams did quite well, but more importantly a good time was had by all! We hosted our own intervarsity in April where the motions surprised but impressed many of those in attendance, examples being "This house believes CSI undermines the criminal justice system" and "This house believes European Cup Rugby should be played in clubs and not provinces". Friday night was followed by a night in Molly's, and we frequented the Sports Bar for dinner and drinks following the final.

Our biggest in-house event was the annual Ciarán Treacy memorial debate, where the motion was "This house would abandon America's war on terror". Several former Ciarán Treacy winners came back to judge and fourth years Sarah Carew and Michael Keary took first and second place respectively. As always, we followed it up with an informal get together, this time in the Sports Bar where

we celebrated with Sarah and commiserated with the other six speakers, who ranged from first years to fourth years.

In keeping with the vibrant social aspect of UL Debating Union, most of us went along to the Clubs and Societies Ball, where we got dressed up, danced the night away and ended up in a sing-song that went on 'til the early hours. We also had a barbeque in Kilmurry to finish off the year which was a great success and followed it with a night in the Lodge.

We meet in the Jonathon Swift Theatre (B1023) beside the main canteen, at 7p.m. on Tuesday's starting in week 2, so come along and see what we're all about. Snacks and refreshments will be provided and we would love to see you there. On behalf of UL Debating Union I would like to say goodbye and the very best of luck to our fourth years who graduated recently, and a warm welcome to all the new first years whom we look forward to having a great year with.

Katie Harrington
PRO, UL Deb U



The Graduate School

Research Induction Programme for all new postgraduate research students

Date: Tuesday, 7 November 2006

Time: 9am - 5:30 pm (Lunch included)

Venue: O'Brien Room, Castletroy Park Hotel

All new research students registering to undertake a research degree at the University of Limerick are required by the University to participate in the Graduate School's research induction programme. The programme aims to provide essential and introductory information to all new research students on a range of important topics, including the research environment at UL; good practice in research, ethics and research misconduct; health and safety issues; management of your research project, identification of your training needs and the creation of a personal development plan, effective use of the library and IT support, and professional development and career planning.

The research induction programme also provides an important opportunity to meet other research students and a range of faculty and staff involved in the day-to-day provision of research services to postgraduate students.

For further information and registration please contact
Anne O'Dwyer, Research Training Coordinator, Graduate School, 2nd Floor,
Foundation Building, ext 2672, or e-mail anne.odwyer@ul.ie

For further information on graduate opportunities, scholarships, academic regulations, training workshops, etc. please visit us at www.graduatelstudies.ul.ie or call to the Graduate School Office in the Foundation Building.

Spraoi Luimnigh

BEIDH Spraoi Luimnigh ar siúl in Ollscoil Luimnigh idir an 13ú agus an 14ú Deireadh Fómhair 2006. Tá sé eagraithe ag an Cumann Gaelach Ollscoil Luimnigh i gcomhpháirtíocht leis Na Gaeil Óga Luimnigh. Le tacaíocht ó Aontas na Mac Léinn agus Aonad na Gaeilge Ollscoil Luimnigh agus Na Gaeil Óga náisiúnta. Tá an imeacht seo dírithe ag daoine óga le Gaeilge agus le suim sa Ghaeilge. Le linn na Deireadh seachtaine beidh ceardlanna ar obair choiste, maoiniú na Cumainn Gaelach, Feachtasaíocht agus déileáil leis na meán, Amhránaíocht, damhsa ar an sean nós, dráma, agus Bodhrán. I dtaca leis an taobh sóisialta de, beidh BBQ, díospóireachtaí, Céilí, Bréag agus Kíla eagraithe.

Dar le Breandán Ó hÉamhaigh Uachtarán an Cumann Gaelach 'is deis iontach é seo do dhaoine óga teacht le chéile agus aithne a chur ar a chéile mar phobal teanga'. Dúirt sé freisin go bhfuil an imeacht seo tábhachtach don Cumann Gaelach san Ollscoil. 'Mar Cumann nua anseo ar an gcampas, is rud mhór é go bhfuil imeacht mar seo againn'.

'Is Cumann nua muid, a bunaíodh i mí Dheireadh Fómhair seo caite, agus mar sin, is cóisir Breithlá é Spraoi Luimnigh'.

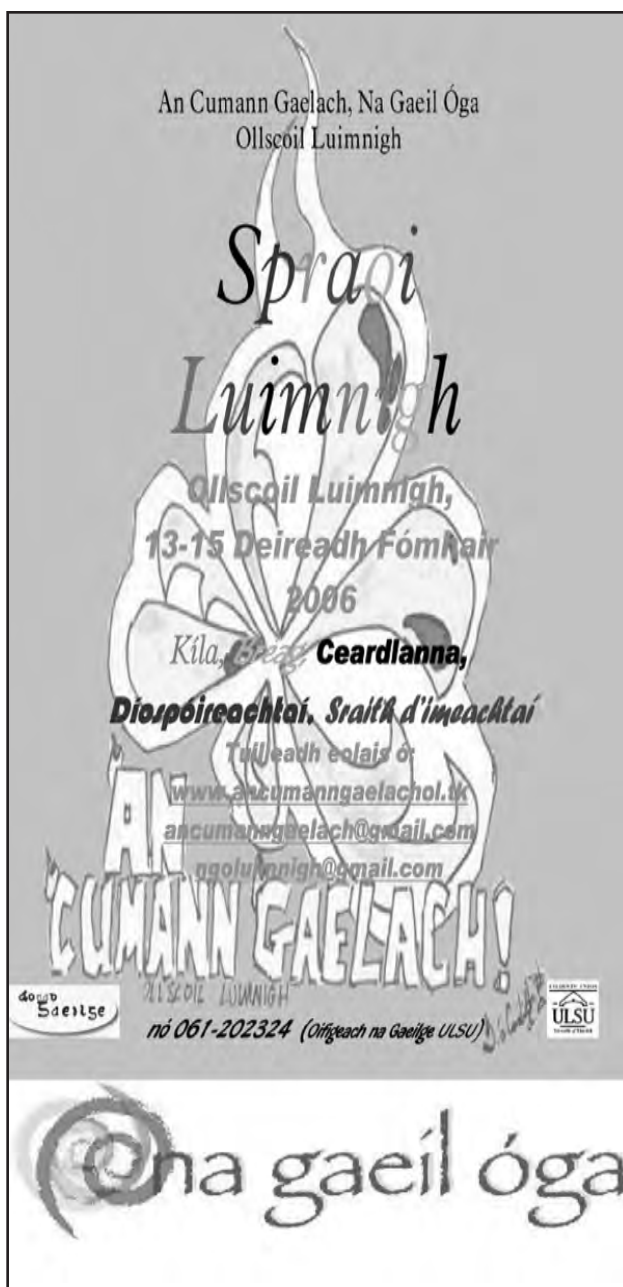
Dar le, Seán Ó hAdhmaill, Cathaoirleach Náisiúnta Na Gaeil Óga agus aoi-chainteoir ag ceann de cheardlann Spraoi, 'Is deis iontach é seo do Ghaeilgeoirí Óga a teacht le chéile agus spraoi a bhaint as na himeachtaí sóisialta atá eagraithe ag an gCumann Gaelaigh agus Na Gaeil Óga Luimnigh nua bhunaithe'.

'Ach níos tábhachtaigh fós cuirfidh an traenáil a bhéas ar fáil do na micléinn go mór le héifeachtacht ár imeachtaí agus ár bhfeachtais amach anseo agus ba mhian linn é seo a rothlú amach fud fad na tíre'.

'Tá muid ag dúil go mbeidh an-rath ar an deireadh seachtaine seo agus tá súil againn go mbeidh fás ar an rath sin amach anseo'.

'Guím gach rath ar eagraithe na himeachta.'

Le haghaidh Tuilleadh Eolais is féidir leat teagmháil a dhéanamh leis an gcumann Gaelach nó Na Gaeil Óga Luimnigh ag: ancumanngaelach@gmail.com nó ngoluimnigh@gmail.com Nó i dTolglann na Gaeilge



El Presidente

St. John Ó Donnabháin

One of the biggest campaigns we've been running over the summer has been the Student Affairs Officer (SAO) campaign. This office looks after loads of really important student functions in the University, co-ordinating Orientation Week, Health promotion and the Student Advisor system, among many other things. The SAO is basically our strongest link to the college, and a crucial link between all the different student services provided - a centrally important person in the University for the well-being of all students.

We were told at the end of July that this job would be chopped. Naturally, this provoked an outraged reaction from everyone in the Students' Union, and we immediately set about contacting the college and telling them how unacceptable this was, as well as sending out press releases (which got a lot of coverage in the local media) and planning a big campaign alongside the staff Union, Amicus, to have the SAO reinstated. A serious amount of pressure was applied, and this was planned to continue and get bigger and bigger.

But, thankfully, the University seems to have somewhat come to its senses, and the post of SAO is being reinstated. This is brilliant, and shows that the college can be forced to reconsider their choices when the students' voices are loud and our arguments strong. And we want this to positive change in attitude to continue into the future.

At the same time, we're not out of the woods yet. The SAO contract has been extended only until next March, but we want to be sure that these vital services will continue long after that. We'll be bringing this up at all of the important meetings in the University over the next while and letting them know just how serious we are on this issue. And if the message doesn't get through, then our plan of a huge SAO campaign will come back onto the agenda. The SAO is crucial to students' lives in UL, and we won't accept anything less than a full service for all of the students!!!

Keep a lookout for more on this story!



KNOW YOUR RIGHTS

With ULSU Welfare Officer Sinéad Hickey

Part-time employment

The Rights of Part-time employees are always a bone of contention, so basically I'm going to set the record straight for you.

Each year many students have to work part time to fund their way through college. Most students fall into the category of regular part time workers. A regular part time worker is defined as someone who has worked for an employer for at least 13 weeks and for at least 8 hours per week. This gives you certain rights under the Protection of Employees (Part-Time Work) Act of 2001 and the Regular Part Time Employees Act of 1991.

An appeal can be made to the Employments Appeals Tribunal if an employer tries to prevent a worker from qualifying under the length of employment or hours worked clause. A part-time employee should not be treated less favourably than a comparable full-time employee.

If you work for the same employer for at least 8 hours per week you are entitled to:

1. A written statement of terms and conditions of employment.
2. 14 weeks maternity leave

3. Time off for ante/post natal care
4. Minimum notice before dismissal
5. Protection from dismissal which results wholly or mainly from pregnancy.
6. Trade union membership/activities

Part-time workers and overtime

Part-time workers are entitled to overtime if the full time employee to which they compare themselves is paid overtime after working his/her maximum hours per week.

In order to claim overtime however, your employer can determine that part-time employees must work the same number of hours as a full-time employee before you can claim overtime. So, if you work 20 hours per week, any hours worked between 20 and 39 hours must be paid at the normal rate.

Holiday entitlements of part-time workers

Under the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997, a part-time worker's annual leave entitlement is 8% of the hours worked in a leave year, subject to a maximum of 4 working weeks annual leave.

AN FOCAL

ATTENTION Freshers!

WELCOME to what promises to be the best four years of your life! Whether you are young or old, an Irish or an international student, an undergrad or a postgrad, ULSU is here to help. 3,500 students are expected to undergo Orientation in UL this week, and while most people will get along without a hitch, we're here in case you don't.

College life is full of the unexpected, particularly in first year, so if you're worried about anything at all remember that we are here to help. We're **your** elected representatives and you pay our (admittedly meagre) wages, so no matter what the issue **we're here for you**.

During Orientation week you'll have many new things to deal with - new housemates, new classmates, new pressures and new freedoms. As Napoleon Bonaparte once said, 'Nothing is more difficult, and therefore more precious, than to be able to decide'. For you, this saying will prove true over the next four years as you make decisions affecting both your personal and professional life.

Despite moves to the contrary in many universities and third-level institutions (including this one), college is not just about academic achievements. By virtue of even getting this far you've proven that you're among the best and brightest this country has to offer. However, in order to get through your four years in UL, you will have to learn other lessons: how not to fight with the housemate who continuously steals your milk; how to

live with people who aren't your parents and don't love you unconditionally; how to pay an ESB bill; how to make friends without your mammy arranging a play-date; how to drink responsibly; how not to contract an STI; how to grow up.

If that sounds daunting, remember all the support structures that are here to help you make the transition without too much heartache! A Students' Union serves the students' interests on a one-to-one level, within the college and on a local and national level. Sinéad, the ULSU Welfare Officer, is here to answer any queries you have about mental and sexual health, accommodation, finances, and loads of other things. Alan, the Education Officer, will be happy to help you with any queries about academic affairs. Alannah, Campaigns and Services Officer, oversees the running of all the Students' Union services like the shop and the nitelink and will discuss any campaigns you think the SU should run with you. St. John,

the President, acts for you within the University and locally to ensure that UL students get the best deal possible. Deirdre, the Publications and Publicity Officer, edits An Focal and its magazine Review (out in Week 4), as well as maintaining the website, www.ulsu.ul.ie and the bebo page, publicising the union locally and setting up (hopefully) an online radio station.

The best way to settle into college is to join something. Everyone you meet who ever joined a Club or Society or became a class rep will tell you this, because it's true. It's the best way of meeting people with whom you have something in common and of forging lasting friendships, as well as learning skills that will benefit you all your life. You have plenty of options - you could write for An Focal or Review, become a class rep, get involved in the radio station, join a Club or Society or even set one up.

And don't forget, if you have a problem, we're here.

**ULSU, working for
YOU!**



Orientation Week Ents

Hey hey hey

Welcome welcome welocme

We're trying to say everthing three time just so you remember what we say!!! But it just takes too long so I'll just do it for the important bits. So I was saying Welcome!!! Welcome back to those of you who have been here before, welcome to UL for those of who have just arrived.

I've been trying to figure out the best way to write this article and get the info across to you so I've decided to interview myself. I'm going to ask the tough question and I wont let myself get away with not answeringso read on!

So whats on offer in the world of UL Ents this year?
The veritable kitchen sink!!!!

No Seriously whats happening?
Well ther's a kitchen sink and maybe a whole lot of other things.

Any chance of specifics?

Ok here it goes
In first semester we have a couple of interesting ditties.

It's a mixture of different events the main staples being a pile of music with a dollop of comedy... with a twist of wrestling..... a sprinkle of movies.....and the odd pinch of something a little bit different.

To start with we've just had a blast through Orientation Week. All the daytime entertainment that we had lined up last week is on again this week. So that's more Human Table Football(give it a go), more swingball tournaments culminating in the grand final on Thursday.Loads more bouncy castles music and comedy, isn't life great!!!!!! Classes and the library can wait til at least Week 2. By the way its all outdoors so if it rains we'll have a plan B, if anyone can think of one then let us know!

Night time this week sees the start, of feckin fivers on Wednesday. We had a few good nights last year and we aim to repeat that again this year. Already in the mix we have.....

But earlier in the week Monday night to be precise(maybe I should have started with this) sees the annual and ever popular Fuck School Freshers Ball. One last chance to don the old uniform (well outside the privacy of your bedroom) and celebrate the fact that you're all grown up now.

By the way if you decide to hang around this weekend then Trinity Rooms is the place to be. One of the legends of dance music David Holmes is playing in there on Sunday, what a great way to end/start a week. Its free with UL ID so get there early.

Week 2 is when we kick into gear the midweekers start over the course of the semester. We have lots of midweekers lined up to entertain you, including bands, comedians, wrestling , hypnotists and maybe even a couple of interesting movies.The first midweeker introduces you to the wonderful world of the hypnotist. Come see your best friends live out their fantasies in front of everyone. It's

the kind of night that can make or break a reputation. The Hypnotist is the Rag Week favourite Zak Powers and this time we give him the luxury of an indoor show, so no need to wrap up!!!

If you decide to hang round for the weekend then you have the chance to catch another Eightball gig , this time at the Concert Hall, The Frames bring their collective talent to the stage on Saturday night. Get your tickets now cos they're selling out the door.

So that's the first two weeks there's something there for everyone. If not then there's loads more to come! Already in our plans we have

Andrew Maxwell from the Panel and a host of other comedians all in conjunction with the crazy people at the Laughing Soc. For music heads we have Juliet Turner, Luka Bloom, The Blizzards, The Flaws, The Immediate and DC Pakt and that's just for starters. If music and comedy aint your bag then maybe you might want to try out our Wrestling gigs later in term the Irish Whip Wrestling Assocaition are coming to town, google them it's a great site!!

And finally mark March 12th in your diaries cos that the start of Rag Week. Keep tuning into these pages to find out whats on and whats planned. We aim to make this a great year to party on campus so get involved and have a laugh!



Homework with Alan Higgins, ULSU Education Officer

Lectures and Labs-Home and Away can wait!

IT'S approaching one o'clock you have a lecture, lab or tutorial-but then you remember if you go your not going to find out if Alf and Colleen are going to realise that is it love and not the greasy steam of the diner-what do you do?

While you may be told that Labs, Tutorial and Lectures are 'optional' in reality they are more than hour slots for filling space on your timetable. They are important if you want to gain the full college experience, a good degree and co-op place. There three main ways in

which you will have contact with Lecturers and Tutors in UL, depending on what course you are doing-Lectures, Labs and Tutorials. They are where you are introduced to topics, which will enable you to discuss and explore the subject matter of your course.

Lectures involve presentations being given by a lecturer who studies in the subject area. They are the ones who will be marking your assignments and correcting your exams and you'd be surprised who they remember from lectures. The lecture introduces core concepts and ideas in the topic, this is to allow you understand and apply the more complicated aspects. They take place in lecture theatres

ranging from 50 to 500 people.

The Purpose of Labs and Tutorials is to allow you to discuss, develop and apply the information you gained from the lectures and most likely from other material you are asked to cover for the course. Given in small groups of about 15, this gives the opportunity to clarify anything you don't understand or practice material you can draw on for exams or assignments.

While it is your choice, choose to attend!! You could miss a hint to the end of semester exam.

Anyway, Home and Away is repeated at 6:30 on RTE Two!!

Life in UL

Daniel Sullivan tells you what's what

Why are we here? This is a common question that many of you have been wrestling with over the summer while you sat in and watched episodes of Lost you had downloaded illegally over the net. All that sun, sand and suspicion, who hasn't been thinking about heading to the beach or a tanning salon, Yes; it could well give you cancer and no; looking orange does not mean you are some sort of minority group.

Most of you ticked some box or other on a form to get here so well done on making such an astute choice. For the minority that are here due to their strange karma, breathe deeply and get on with it.

We should start with establishing some agreement on what 'here' means. Here is 'UL', which still stands for University of Limerick despite the attempts of our neighbours across the water wishing to rename it to University of Clare/Limerick. And to think at one time we were 'Nearly In Higher Education'. Some could insist, as is their way, on calling it University Clare/Limerick Actually - UCLA. Truth is there is as much chance of that happening as there is of the GAA accepting the rule that people have to play for the county they were born in, sadly eliminating Clare hurling and football in one fell swoop. Passports are not required to enter the North (Clare) Campus, though there is an ongoing immunisation program facilitated by the medical sciences department.

Limerick: a unique place...correction there is a place somewhat like it in the 5th circle of hell as described by Dante, but it's generally warmer at this time of year... Of course the telly has been helpfully showing Angela's Ashes recently, it is worth noting that they had to go to Cork to find slums of the appropriate type. You will variously hear people refer to it as town or the city.

Tips on Things to try and do over the course of the academic year.

- Get a bike! Given the amount of bikes that get liberated each year it is quite surprising not to see more people travelling about on bikes. In doing so be sure get a really good lock. And by good I mean one with its own private security firm and access to WMDs.
- Explore the walk into town via the canal. It is currently being upgraded by city council. I would suggest doing it in groups as that makes it easier to resist the temptation to go for a dip or decide to take that once in a lifetime chance to pace yourself against a visiting Olympic athlete. Last summer Limerick was awarded the 2012 Olympics. OK, some people think it was London but since the majority of the venues will be a short plane hop from UL, in the RyanAir tradition we're claiming it.
- Learn shorthand. I don't mean the practice of your hand being too short to reach your pocket when it is time for your round either. Too many have perfected that technique in recent times. I mean the scribbling thing you see reporters doing, when they are outside of bookmakers. Inside the bookmakers they engage in a different type of scribbling. It doesn't take long and you will be able to take notes in no time.
- Join stuff. And I don't mean cheeks of a bottom with glue either. I mean join clubs, societies, do active doings, sign petitions, and generally get involved. Note that whatever you do will be resurrected to destroy your career in public life in latter years.
- Try learning to dance, there are lessons available all over the place, there is salsa and tango, salgo and tansa, and other generally jiggy polkary.
- Sex: that thing your parents will be having more of now that you're no longer under their feet quite so much. You didn't really think that harness in the shed was for a horse they were going to buy you? It's probably best to avoid any such activity yourself as it will lead to excess sleep and failure to achieve career goals. If you do get up to anything please do so safely and for all our sakes don't post anything about it on Youtube, Bebo or MySpace. Other people than you thought may be watching.

Legends and Myths of UL:

J.R.R. Tolkien considered calling the second book in Lord of the Rings The Thirteen towers in honour of the towers in the main building. Just as well he didn't really, can you imagine how long the film would have been?

The reactor: ok, just do not go looking for the reactor. The college reacts very badly to people wandering about the campus with homemade Geiger counters. A word to the wise, do not dip into the fountain or drink the water.

Plassey is named after a place in India, this is true. However, the legalities of the land grant were never completely cleared up so we await the day the authorities in Delhi reclaim the place.

Some of the walls move. This has never been proven. However, there was a minor incident some years ago involving a rushed renovation job and there now exists a room with no access to it at all. The staff member involved has not been assigned a new room by buildings due to their failure to clear out their previous office and can be seen wandering the campus with their belongings in a trolley.

If you are reading this then you belong here. Enjoy the time, it can go really fast.



BY DANIEL SULLIVAN

Living away from home

Paula O' Sullivan shows you the ropes

Come close my dears and learn from the experienced! Living on or off campus? There are things you should know! Living with friends or strangers? Don't fret, here's to hassle free habituation for the next nine months or so...

Now, living with friends always seems like a dandy idea. Maybe it is, but the grass isn't always as green as you might first think. Remember to give each other space to do your own bit of growing up. Don't forget about said friends when new ones come along, go out- have fun! Try merging new groups of friends from different courses together, it'll make for good house parties!

Love thy neighbour! Neighbours can be mighty handy when you run out of sugar (I.e. food) and for finding your way through Milford Grange after a nightclub in my case. They could easily be just a year ahead and be full of the wisdom you have not yet received, like how much the fine is for getting caught in the fountains by security... Thanks lads.

If I can teach you anything may it be to lock your bedroom door. Whether in Kil-murry or College Court make sure you lock your door if even popping down to the shop for munchies in your slippers. There's danger lurking in them there bushes- and they're after your laptop. Now its not really dangerous around if you're careful, but people have had things stolen and don't let it happen to you.

Don't tell people where you keep your cookies. The fridge is never big enough. Expect to have people turn up in your room at 3 a.m., even if you haven't been out yourself. It's always your turn to make the tea. Living with strangers can turn out to be lots of fun, if its not you can always be an honorary housemate at your friends place until you can move out. Someone will have a brother or a dad that can fix that hole in the wall before the landlord sees it. So don't worry, you'll find your feet. Welcome to the student body of U.L. You'll love it!





With lots of student friendly features, including an upfront* interest free overdraft of up to €650, you'll find surviving college is a little easier with the Ulster Bank Student Account.

To find out more drop into any Ulster Bank branch or log onto www.ulsterbankstudents.ie

*Available for Ulster Bank student customers on request. The overdraft is an authorised limit (0% APR). Student Account is only available to full time (minimum course length 2 years) third level students resident in the Republic of Ireland. Credit available to over 18s only. Overdrafts are payable on demand. Security may be required. Ulster Bank Ireland Limited is regulated by the Financial Regulator.

A photograph of an older man with grey hair, wearing a black tuxedo jacket over a white shirt and a black bow tie. He has a confused or skeptical expression on his face, looking slightly to the side. He is standing in a field of tall, dry grass with a dense green hedge or forest in the background. The lighting is bright, suggesting a sunny day.

Survival's a little easier with the Ulster Bank Student Account

 **Ulster Bank**
let's do things differently



Alan Higgins speaks to outgoing Class Reps of their experiences

CLASS Reps Council grew significantly in the last academic year, primarily through the hard work and effort of last year's Education Officer, Paddy Pratt; with his 'brave' decision to introduce the Orange Hoodie paying off as a recognisable sign to Class Reps. But being a Class Rep is more than just a Hoodie. It is even more than sitting in Council for an hour every fortnight. It is about representation, by being the voice and support to your fellow Classmates.

Why do people choose to be a Class Reps? From discussing it with some outgoing Class Reps, their reasons included to find out what is going on in the University and the Union or simply as First Year European Studies Class Rep, Jamie Cuthbert, put it: "I wanted to represent the needs and issues raised by my class throughout the year." But you don't just have to be interested in attending meetings, a large part of being a Class Rep is organising the Class Party.

Class Reps also develop key skills, such as public speaking, time management and interpersonal skills. It is the development of these so-called 'soft skills' which have become of increase interest within Universities and employers. A Higher Education Authority report

identified that employers ranked personal qualities/personality, transferable skills and enthusiasm higher than academic performance.

This is reflected it what can be the most rewarding aspects of being a Class Rep. Óisín Collins, a former Chair of Class Reps Council explained that the best thing about being a Class Rep. was "being able to solve a problem that helped someone in your class." Jamie also said: "Getting to know all the other Reps and getting to know your class better," was the best part of her experience of being a Class Rep. She continued saying, "Its also great for first years getting to know new people."

Jamie and Óisín would urge all students to be a Class Rep, both agreeing that being a class rep is a "great opportunity do something of value in your four years in UL," said Óisín. Jamie says that: "it's a great experience that will stand to you for life."

But there has also been criticism of Class Reps, such as that they only get involved for the Hoodie or the free entry in to the local nightclub-'the perks'. However Jamie says that "I don't think that takes over when you decide to go for the position."

The SU President encourages all Students' to be a Class Rep, "Class Reps are really important because they tell the Union about what's happening on the ground, if we didn't have Class Reps the whole place would fall down!"



Wellbeing

With Sinéad Hickey, ULSU Welfare Officer

FIRST time away from home, no parents to nag and you are experiencing true freedom - right?!! But your world comes crashing down when you're standing over the cooker, checking the back of a packet of noodles for the instructions of how to cook them. More than anything right now you would love Mammy's steak, potatoes and veg. Yet you have to settle for 12cent packet of Tesco noodles which has an overpowering taste of salt that has almost left you dehydrated. The next four years is going to be painful... or is it?

Remember you can enjoy your new found freedom without relying on noodles and beans on toast for four years. Simple recipes can be very tasty, and stock your food cupboard and fridge with ingredients that are quick to prepare and easy to cook. Suggestions for meals include:

- Soups- easy to make and nutritious, especially if you add lots of vegetables. You can use canned or packet soup as a base and add your own herbs, spices and leftovers.
- Pasta- quick and easy to prepare. Keep pasta sauces in your cupboard and add your own variations and flavours.
- Rice- try making fried rice or risotto, or mix cooked rice with leftover vegetables and meat.
- Vegetables and fruit- make vegetable curries, stir-fries and vegetable patties and soups. Canned and frozen vegetables make a handy addition to last minute meals. Fruit is good for a quick nutritious snack.
- Meat and fish- tinned tuna is a great cupboard stand-by, and local butchers have relatively cheap meat.

Study, exams, stress and healthy eating

Healthy eating is especially important when you are under stress. When you are rushing to try and meet deadlines, it's easy to skip meals and forget about healthy eating. But this is when your body needs good nutrition the most.

When you are under stress or you need to concentrate, a healthy diet will help to keep you focused. You can't keep up the pace if you only snack on takeaway food or bowls of cereal. Keep up your energy levels with healthy snacks and regular meals.

Home Sweet Home

By Aoife Breen

TO many, college is synonymous with partying and drinking, but most of all it's associated with a lack of regulations and complete freedom for the first time from the watchful eye of parent folk. Not for me. The start of college meant getting up in the morning to drive across Limerick with Daddy (who, coincidentally, works in UL).

That's right. I didn't embrace the world of surviving on toasted cheese sandwiches or hot chicken rolls, nor did I inhabit a house with a bathroom that has a ceiling of flaking. I didn't endure the environment of hazardous living amongst empty beer cans and vodka bottles strewn in between a three-week-old take-away and a pizza box. I never had to sniff my clothes before putting them on in the morning, unsure of whether they were clean or not, and the thought of putting out the rubbish never crossed my mind. Yes, for college, I live in my comfortable, clean, quiet family home...with a full fridge and a working washing machine.

Having moved out of home for my cop placement - which was in Dublin - it is now possible for me to safely assess the joys and irritations that come with living in the company of my beloved parents. And there are many of both, I can assure you.

Initially I suppose I can harp on about the wonderfulness of having mammy to do my washing, cleaning and cooking as well as my general maintenance. She ensures that I eat wholesomely and regularly and allows for

five-a-day portions of fruit 'n' veg as well as my three dairy servings that the National Dairy Council of Ireland now advocates.

Meanwhile my living-in-college counterparts live in a dizzy whirl that forbids them from knowing where their next meal will come from. Vegetables become a treasure of home (usually a very far bus journey away) and a diet established on chips or rice is accompanied by all varieties of chicken. Curried chicken, chicken goujons, roast chicken, southern fried chicken, chicken in breadcrumbs, chicken nuggets, chicken bites, barbecue chicken, and for the very exotic, stir-fried chicken.

But, let us not forget the staple food of the chicken-orientated student - the Hot Chicken Roll. Sitting in a freshly (or not so freshly) cooked baguette, any student in existence far from his hometown can easily convince his mammy that he ate well: "Yeah, I had chicken and lettuce and sweet corn today." It almost sounds nutritious, and as if a lot of thought went into the preparation of the meal. Cunning, eh?

My chicken-loving friends living on campus must also be without the TLC that only a mother can bring. You know, when you're feeling sorry for yourself and you want someone to bring you tea and toast. Yes, living at home has its perks. I can get all the loving attention that only a mammy can provide. She'll bring my tea, nicely sweetened, and dote on me, fuelling my self-pitying sorrow. Yes, when you're feeling blue, there is nothing like living at home to ensure a speedy recovery.

However, this also has its downsides. Sometimes mummies can take it too far. Some-

times they can be a bit over-concerned, shall we say. It's only a cold, I'm fine thanks. No, I am going out. But mammy won't take no for an answer.

Another disadvantage that I suffer is that not living on campus means I've been sometimes tucked up in bed for over an hour when friends in Castletroy have decided to go out in pursuit of entertainment. Similarly, they can enjoy the company of many at a moment's notice should they so desire to engage in an evening of frolics and partying. I, however, must wait until the folks leave the country, or the county at least.

On consideration of the many ups and downs of living at home, it is difficult to assess which is more advantageous to the life of a college student. In a way, however, I have the best of both worlds. And any incoming student who will remain in the abode of his parents will too if you follow my humble advice: befriend those who live on campus. That way you don't have to become malnourished, nor do you have to worry about light bulbs or electricity bills, but you can still turn up for the party. And because you live at home, you know that when you return to your bed, you won't find a mysterious couple engaging in romantic acts, nor will you have to deal with the unsightly vision of a broken glass and beer-can-ridden kitchen reeking of stale alcohol the morning after, just before you discover someone's eaten your hot chicken roll that was in the fridge. Yes, indeed, living at home has its bonuses.

You are not alone - just ask

Alan Higgins, SU Education Officer, introduces the many academic support services offered at the UL

ONE of the great things about University Life is that you get to have independence, you get to decide who much, or how little work you do. But independent learning does not mean learning alone. If you are having difficulty with elements of coursework and subject matter or just finding college in general a bit challenging there is a variety of services provided to give you that extra bit of help.

Support Services range from the specific to the broad. There are four learning centres on campus for Maths, Science, Information and Communications Technology and Languages, with the success of these centres, if I think that your subject area would benefit from a learning centre get your Class Rep to contact the course leader or see what the Students' Union can do for you. In the mean time the Students' Union operates a grinds list service, which allows Postgrads offer grinds to undergraduate students in a central location. It is hoped that this service will be developed further over the course of the year.

There are also other supports to deal with more general aspects of academic life. The Centre for Teaching and Learning offers Study Skills Seminars on such things as note-taking and exam techniques. The Library is the heart of academic life, however it can at times feel like a jungle, don't fear the Library staff and services are always willing to help. The Library services also provide seminars and publications on using the library resources and reference material. There is also a wide variety of supports which will help you in all your subject areas.

Unfortunately things also get tough when you are in college and it is important to firstly to recognise when you are in trouble or need a break. A good way to a mix is to join a Club or Society. There are also other student supports designed to help students, including Counselling, Disability Services and a wide variety of other programmes run by both the Students' Union and the University.

No matter what challenges or difficulties you may face know that you're not alone. Ask your Class Rep or drop into the Students' Union. You most defiantly won't be the first to face your particular problem and there is someone who will be able to help you-just ask!!

USEFUL SITES-EDUCATION

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Learning Centre:
www1.csis.ul.ie/prospect/ictcentre

The Mathematics Learning Centre:
www.ul.ie/~mlc

Language Resource Area:
www.ul.ie/~isu
www.ul.ie/~ics/languageresourcearea

Science Learning Centre:
www.ul.ie/~slc

Centre for Teaching and Learning:
www.ul.ie/tandl/

**Students' Union
 (for Grinds List and Education Information):**
www.ulsu.ul.ie

Library:
www.ul.ie/%7Elibrary

Student Academic Administration (formerly Student Services):
www.si.ul.ie/

Student Handbook (for information on Academic Regulation and Procedures): www.ul.ie/studentacademicadmin/files/student_handbook_2006-



An overseas student's life at UL

by Rei, Wang and Yue Li

I have been studying in the University of Limerick for two years. As an international student, I have experienced this differently from others. Therefore, I would like to share my story with you. It will be my pleasure if it could give you a little help when you start your new college life.

I knew that it was a beginning of a wonderful new journey with hard work and strong will when I am full of hope to study in Ireland. No surprise, I found it very difficult to understand what my lecturers said. I was sitting in the classroom and got lost for a quite long while, and I made many stupid mistakes as well. The only thing that I could do was take my time and keep my mind and heart open. I knew that I could not give up my enthusiasm just because of language. Fortunately, lecturers and classmates are very friendly and helpful; they help me to improve my English and study from various aspects.

The college life is fantastic at UL, Irish students like sports, pub and social activity and gathering for fun like most countries' college students. I don't drink alcohol like most Chinese girls, but this is not a problem or barrier for me to make friends with my classmates and housemates, because they are so friendly and warm-hearted. There are so many clubs and associations at UL Students Union (ULSU). It is encouraged to join a club that you are interested in; it will enrich your college life and give you opportunities to do exercise for healthy lifestyle.

Of course, I feel homesick and lonely sometimes - most international students do have this feeling in some stage. Moreover, I have to work part-time and economize my life expense as the annual tuition fees are high (more than nine thousand a year) for non - EU students. I think all of those experiences are gifts in life, I am feeling that I am growing up. Thus, I have made one simple rule for my own happiness: Every day above ground is the first day of the rest of my life. I have no excuse to be unhappy.

Over all, the life at UL is colourful and happy. Best wishes for every international student who is going to start their new life here.

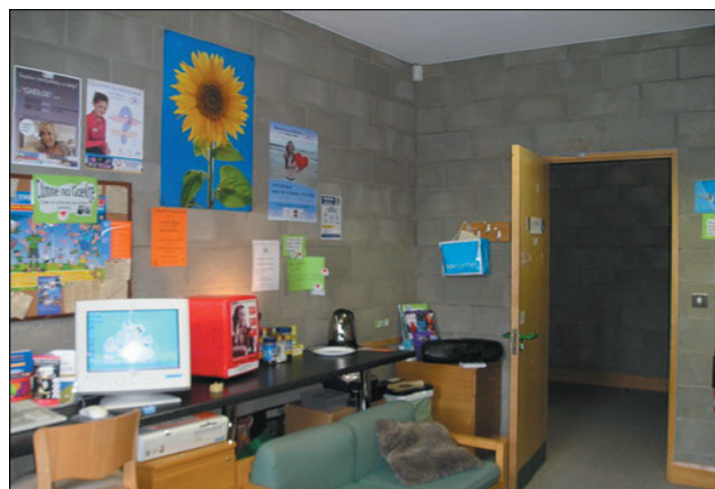
我是利默瑞克大学二年级的学生。在这两年中，作为一个中国学生，我的经历和别人稍有不同。因此我很高兴和你分享我的经历，如果我的经历能对那些要在这里开始大学生生活的中国学生有些帮助，我将十分荣幸。

在开学的第一天，我就知道我即将开始一段新的旅程，这将是我人生旅程一段很美好的经历但并不是终点。并不意外的，刚开始的一个学期我几乎完全听不懂，几个熟悉的单词不停的穿梭于我的左右耳之间，我就像块木头一样做在教室里，当然我也犯过很多愚蠢的错误。我唯一可以做的就是鼓励自己不要放弃，对自己耐心些。我知道我没办法让自己的英语在一夜间就变得完美无缺。我更加的知道我不会因为语言上的阻力就放弃我的热情。我想语言上的障碍是让很多中国学生都头痛的问题。我觉得最重要的就是，不要怕犯错误。犯错误是我们年轻人的特权，是年轻才可以拥有的一种财富。此外不要放弃你对于追求梦想的热情，热情导致成功。

想家，孤独，还有要自己学会照顾自己，这些都曾经是我的苦恼。但我想这些都是人生给我的珍贵的礼物，我能感觉我在悄悄的长大。我给自己规定了一条快乐守则：现在的每一天都是我剩下人生的第一天，我没有理由不快乐。

我祝福那些即将在这里开始新的大学生生活的中国学生，希望你们利用这个机会，享受人生。

Tolglann na Gaeilge



Dia dhiabh agus bhur chéad míle fáilte chuig Ollscoil Luimnigh agus chuig saol na hOllscoile. Má tá tú ag léamh an píosa seo is léir go bhfuil Gaeilge agat, agus mar sin, beidh tú ag iarraidh í a labhairt le daoine eile. Má tá tú ag iarraidh í a labhairt, is féidir leat buaileadh isteach ar Tolglann na Gaeilge in Aontas na Mac Léinn. Bhunaigh Tolglann na Gaeilge i mí Meán Fómhair anuraigh chun áit a thabhairt do muintir na Gaeilge anseo Gaeilge a labhairt. D'éirigh go geall leis, agus bíonn daoine ann an t-am ar fad anois. Osclaíonn an Tolglann ag a 10 gach maidin agus fanann sé ar oscailt go dtí a 11 san oíche. Is féidir leat buaileadh isteach chun cupán tae nó Caife a dhéanamh agus an Ghaeilge a labhairt le do chairde nó le éinne eile atá ann. Bíonn imeachtaí ann go rialta, ó cluichí cartáí go circle comhrá agus i bhfad níos mó. Buail isteach orm sa tolglann chun breis eolais a fháil faoi imeachtaí na Tolglainne. Tá a lán áiseanna sa Tolglann freisin: Leabhair Gaeilge, Ciotail, Cupáin, tae agus caife, tá ríomhaire ann freisin, le nasc do network na hollscoile, agus urlísi teanga. So buail isteach ar an dTolglann le haghaidh ceol craic agus chomhlúadar. Nó is féidir leat Ríomhphost a cheiladh chuig tolglann@ancumanngaelachol.tk

Beir Bua,

Breandán Ó hÉamhaigh

Welcome from the Library



Welcome from the Library

The Library staff extend a warm welcome to all students beginning their studies and returning to UL. The Library is one of the most heavily used services in the University and there is a lot more to us than just books.

Getting Started

Going on an orientation tour of the Library is well worth while for anyone new to the University - you will find out lots of important information and it will save time in the long run.

There is a variety of handouts and guides available in the foyer of the Library. Be sure to take a copy of the booklet *The Library: a Guide for New Students*, which is a beginner's guide to get you started

Existing Students

Students who are not so new to the University, especially FYP students, should find out more about the additional services that we provide. Do you know how to use our virtual library of electronic journals and databases? We run lots of great training sessions over the course of the year - some are drop-in sessions and others are organised through your lecturers (times are publicised widely around campus and on our web site). Attending a short training session can really help you in making the most of the Library and the web when trying to find books, articles and websites for assignments.

The Library also provides guidelines on the Harvard referencing style. Test your knowledge of Harvard referencing on our online tutorial quizzes available from our website or you can get a free copy of the *Cite it Right* booklet which you will need throughout the year.

Help

Help is always available and no question is ever too unimportant to ask - we will do our best to answer. Ask for help at the Information Desk on the ground floor or phone 202166, email libinfo@ul.ie or go to the Library website www.ul.ie/~library.

Tragic death of UL student

THEY say in life, one death is a tragedy, but one million deaths is a statistic. The sentiment certainly seems to apply in Ireland and in particular our roads. It is a rare weekend that we don't hear of deaths on the road, more often than not involving young people; our college peers, team-mates, colleagues and friends. One weekend in particular this July, 12 people were killed on our roads in less than 40 hours. Tragically, one of these

was Colin Hedderman, a fourth year UL student of Mechanical Engineering. Mr. Hedderman who was from Ballincollig, Co. Cork, was involved in a two-car collision near Lissarda on Monday, July 10th 2006 around 8:10 a.m. Colin was well-known to his fellow students and friends as a sportsman, and he was heavily involved in the university's water-polo team. A book of condolences has been opened at the University of Limerick Students' Union

for Mr. Hedderman.

It is easy to see looking at UL how many more young people are on the roads these days. One of the major issues raised during the Students Union sabbatical elections was the provision of more and better car parking facilities for students, and there is currently a controversy over a price hike of €1 per day for parking on-campus.

On a national level the pressure is on, and will hopefully stay on for the

government and the Gardaí to act, meaning road safety will undoubtedly become a huge issue in the upcoming general election. Drinking and driving is still a common problem in Ireland, our roads are still amongst the worst in Europe, and the education and testing systems for new drivers on our roads are farcical at best. Personal responsibility is still a huge issue however; the fact that the upsurge of young people driving and the upsurge of accidents on our

roads are linked is undeniable. With a younger generation of drivers, a new attitude to driving is needed from drivers themselves and passengers. Friends don't let friends drink and drive, or speed, or do anything that endangers their lives or others.

The Garda National Traffic Bureau has released statistics dated up to the 21st July 2006, which show that there have been 229 deaths on the road this year so far, up from 209 for the same period

in 2005. New laws have been introduced allowing Gardaí to do random breath testing, which is set to discourage drinking and driving and many more offences are now punishable by penalty points. The effects of these measures are already being seen, and one can only hope that this pattern will continue.

Lighting Up

BY JACK DOWNEY

*Here comes another winter of long shadows
And high, high, high, high hopes.*

*Here comes another winter, waiting for Utopia,
Waiting for Hell to freeze over*

- The The (Heartland)

PRETTY soon winter will be upon us and we will find ourselves coming to college in the dark, going home in the dark and feeling pretty much in the dark while we're here. So this is a good time to bring up the subject of seeing and being seen on the road.

Those of you who ride bicycles, take some time to study people driving cars. Many of them wear glasses, some of them are distracted on their mobile phones and a goodly proportion of them have not the remotest idea where the extremities of their cars are. In other words, if you want to survive any journey on a velocipede, make sure that you stand out vividly.

This is no time for trendy black costumes and sleek black bikes. No, for the canny cyclist, yellow is the new black. Specifically, bright, reflective yellow that is available on various jackets and waistcoats. For someone like me whose sight will never win prizes, a bright yellow cyclist is much easier to avoid than a ghostly shadow - even a shadow with a red light on the bike!

The problem is: The driving test is conducted in daylight and, while the theory test may instil some of the concepts, we're basically clueless when it comes to using our lights.

First up: Your parking lights are for use when you are parked. Remember that when you run into the shop, leaving your car running outside. Make sure you've turned everything else off. Another nice gesture is to go down to parking lights when you're stopped at the traffic lights - it reduces glare for everyone. But do not drive with them alone!

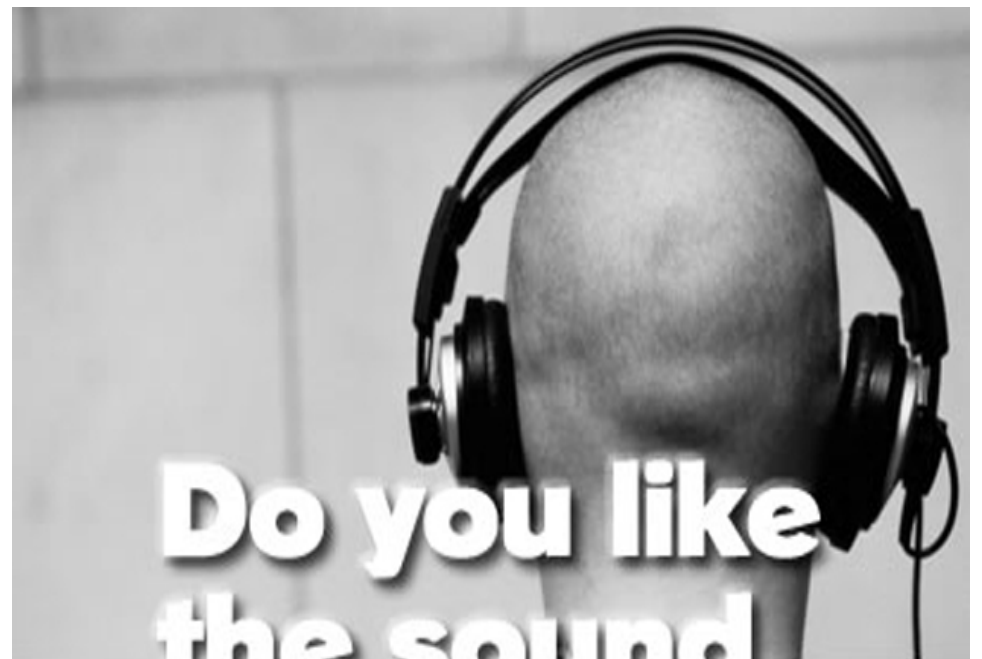
Dipped headlights are for use on the move. They serve not only to see with, but also

to be seen. They should be put on when visibility is poor such as during heavy rain. Remember that someone coming against you may be planning to overtake. Make sure s/he knows you're there! Around town, there should be no need to use full headlights.

Finally a word about fog lights: Since it is fair to say that the average motorist hasn't a clue what these are for, let me explain. The rear fog lights are there so that you can be seen. If the fog is thick and you have difficulty seeing ahead, remember that the same applies to those behind you. If a car does take up position behind you, please turn yours off. Even in fog, they are intensely dazzling.

Front fog lights, in contrast, are there to help you see. They are designed for use in fog (and strangely enough, snow) so no effort has been made to address glare for oncoming traffic. The inventors, in their innocence, assumed that something called a fog light would be only used in fog. The idea is to provide some visibility when your dipped headlights are reflected back on you by the elements. It is illegal to drive with your front fog lights on when weather conditions are good (1963 Road Traffic Act, Lighting of Vehicle Regulations: Article 49 (8)).

So in summary, cyclists can never be too brightly lit; motorists, however, have to use more judgement. Too much light makes you a nuisance; too little makes you a hazard. From my observations, just enough light makes you a very rare sight indeed.



**Do you like
the sound
of your own
voice? We
will too!**

**ULSU is looking for
interested students to
set up and run its online
radio station**

**For more information email:
deirdre.oshaughnessy@ul.ie or call into
the SU and ask for Deirdre**



PSA Problems

Daniel Sullivan asks if it's time to give up the good fight and put the PSA to bed

While the nation basked in the sun over the course of the summer month, the Postgraduate Student Assoc. was plunged into crisis. For just under a week the PSA was leaderless. Yet, did anyone notice?

When students left for their holidays the unopposed elected of Katrina Farrell in early May to succeed outgoing Pres. Maria McHale seemed to be progressing smoothly. However, on June 21st just ten days before she was due to take office Ms Farrell decided to remove herself from consideration for the position. This meant the position was re-opened. It should be noted this re-opening occurred after the taught postgraduates had left denying them any opportunity to participate in the process.

A number of deadlines for submission of names then passed and were extended until the end of the final week of President McHale's time in office, at which point two candidates came forward. The resultant election saw a very low turnout of just 85 and a single vote dividing the victor

Maja Niebrzegowska from Mohammad. Rahman the unsuccessful candidate. As the election took place the Thursday after President McHale had stepped down from office this meant that the PSA had no leadership during this time, no one to open the PSA rooms, to turn on the microwave or empty the potty. The election campaign was largely marked absent. Neither candidate was able to circulate manifestos to the postgraduate population as ITD failed to respond to inquires to do so, no posters were visible at prime locations nor were the hustings which held in the PSA were well attended. In fact, no one came to hear the candidates. They had to content themselves with their own company. The newly elected President Maja Niebrzegowska spoke of the difficulty of taking office with no transition period, as Pres. McHale had left for pastures new. There appears to exist a general disinterest amongst the postgraduate student body regarding the PSA. Pres. Niebrzegowska hopes to be able to address some of this during her term, but she is realistic about the need to focus on clear priorities. These are outlined elsewhere in this issue. At the time of writing the other principals

involved were not available for comment.

Since 25 signatures are required for nomination it would appear that neither candidate was able to draw support from beyond their initial pool of friends and well-wishers. While wishing the incoming president the best of luck, it is difficult to deny the suggestion that someone elected by less than 5% of the postgraduate electorate has been denied a mandate for any action during their time in office. This is not to criticise either of the candidates rather it is to suggest that the position of PSA President or the very existence of the PSA itself requires examination.

The upshot from this period has pushed a number of questions to the fore. Amongst them is that while postgraduate students certainly have differing needs to the undergraduate population, is this enough to justify a separate organisation? Or is the PSA President being expected to take on roles that are really the responsibility of the rest of the SU exec? What mechanism exists should no one go forward for the position of President? In essence, is it time to put the PSA to bed?

Pimp my Piggy bank

Breandán Ó hÉamhaigh asks why the University feels the need to raid his savings account

THE University has announced that the charge in the pay carpark is to go up from €2 to €3 in September. Only a euro some might say, but to a student that tots up. Considering that quite a number of students commute to college, myself included, this is going to make a difference. At the moment, most of us end up in there every day, at a current cost of €2 per day over a 5 day week that comes to €10. Multiply that by 15, the number off weeks in the semester, and it is €150, and by two semesters, and you have €300. And that is without adding the extra €1 per day which equates to €150. Taking into account the fact that the average student

working a weekend job earns about €150 per week, in most cases less, we are looking at an increase of one entire weeks wages in car parking charges. To put it in a motoring context, it costs €151 per year to tax a 1 litre car and €282 to tax a 1.4 litre car, so we will be paying an increase that is the equivalent to the road tax we pay on our cars.

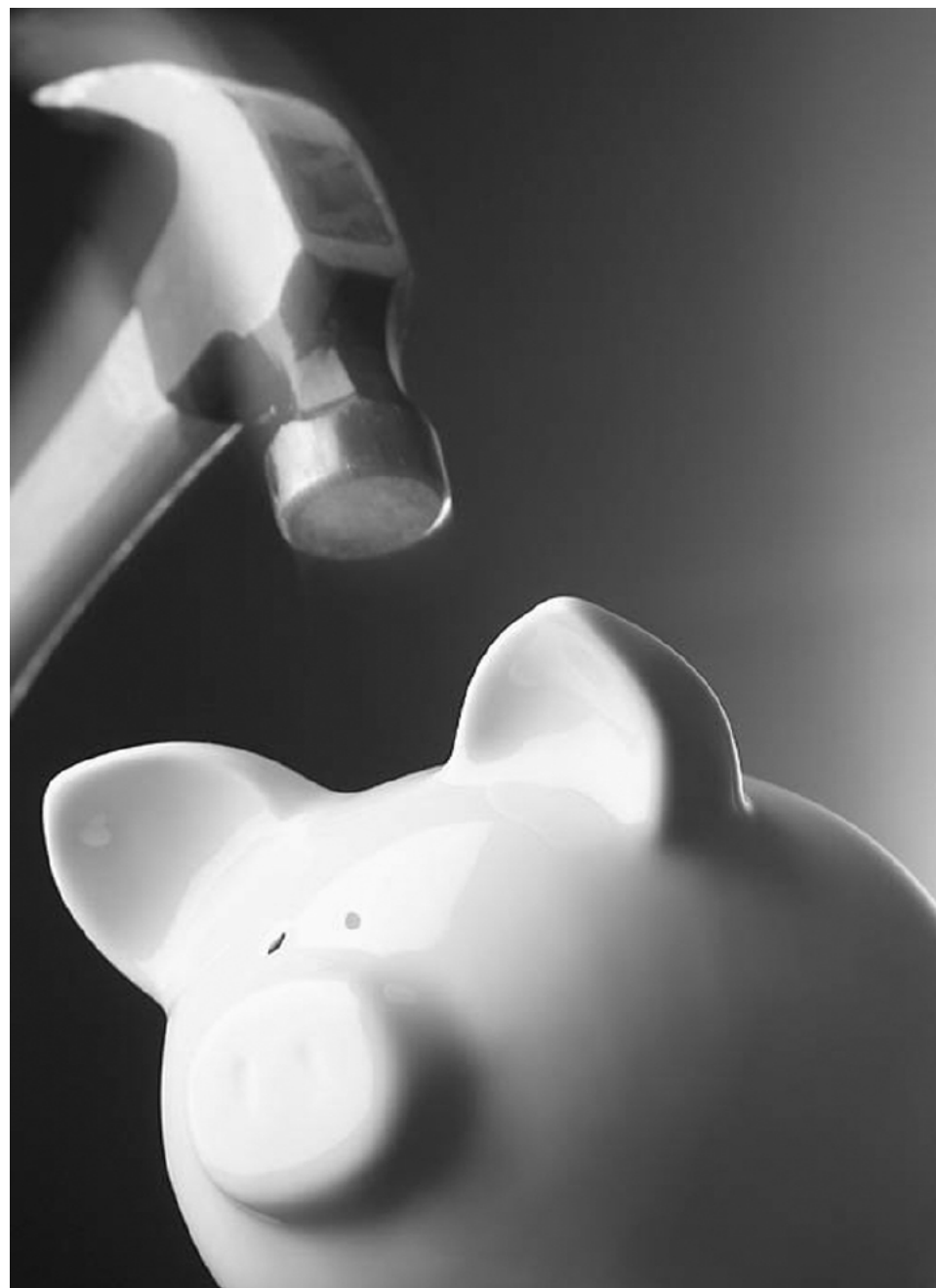
When one takes into account that the price of petrol has increased by over 10 cent per litre during the summer we are looking at a very bleak year for student drivers. Basing it on my own personal costs for a years driving, it is looking as follows:

- Insurance €800
- Car tax €282
- Petrol €50 per week
- Parking €450 per year.
- Servicing €60 as needed, usually 4 times a year.

Giving a **grand total** of €3272 per year.

Quite a nice amount of money, and this is before I feed myself, or socialise. Last year €30 petrol did me for a weeks driving, and parking was €300. Never mind if the Govt raises car tax in the budget...

To the best of my knowledge, the pay carpark was originally meant to be charged for until the carpark itself was paid for. Now, we are being told that not only is it paying for the 'Living Bridge' but it is being put up to €3! Not only is it against the promises made by UL, but it is also going to cause hardship and inconvenience to the student population. Cop on UL, and stop using me as a piggy bank for a blatant waste of money, would a normal bridge not do you?!



What they said this summer

- *"Ye'll do great I'm sure. No pressure or anything but, if it's crap, every one'll be like - what a pack of useless feckers in the SU, and the voter apathy will increase yet again and idiots will once again get elected and re-elected unopposed and the SU will crumble to pieces and it'll all be because you organised a bad freshers week. Again, no pressure!"*
- a 'friend' of Publications and Publicity Officer Deirdre O' Shaughnessy, who was enquiring about the plans for Orientation Week.
- *"Keep an eye on whinging St. John"*
- a 4 year old visitor to the SU who clearly spotted the dictatorship potential of SU President St. John ÓDonnabháin.
- *"There's a burning smell coming from my filing cabinet"*
- ULSU Education Officer Alan Higgins upon moving into his new office.
- *"Are you in the Environmental Society?" "Yes, why?" "You look like an Environmentalist"*
- an exchange between Head of Buildings Brian Hand and President St. John Ó Donnabháin
- *"Students' Union? Clubs and Societies? What does this have to do with us?"*
- A senior member of University management addressing a meeting at which two SU officers were present.



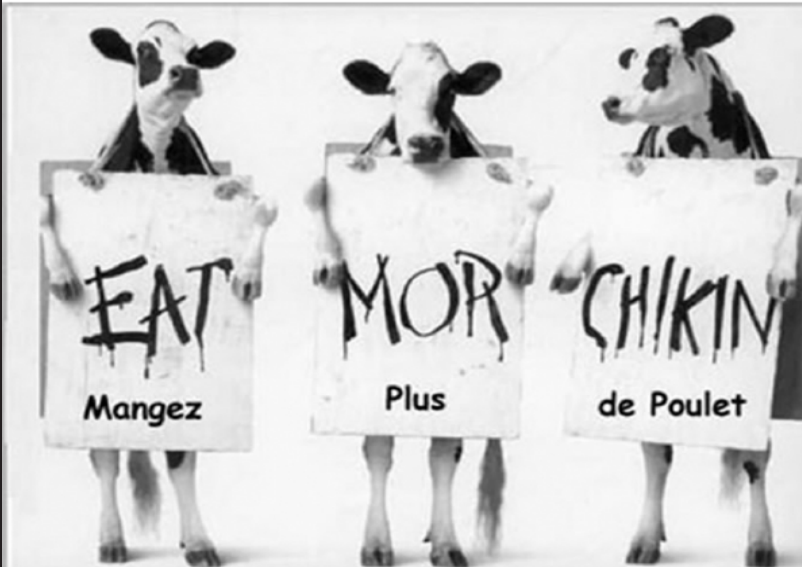
An Focal Without you?

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Campus Sport

Mountain Bike UL

MOUNTAIN Bike UL was formed in September 1998 to promote the sport of cross-country mountain biking in the University of Limerick. It was created with an ethos of pursuing the sport in a recreational and fun manner. Since then, the club has expanded into XC racing, having hosted National Points Series races as well as intervarsity races; trials riding, club members being a frequent sight around UL's campus; and downhill, further enhanced by the purchase of a Kona Stinky Deluxe for the club last year.

We have many cycles in the week to cater for

different skill and fitness levels, from the complete beginner to the hardened veteran. Our Sunday cycle is traditionally a weekly slow beginners' cycle aimed to introduce people to the sport, however this year we will hold a few beginners' cycles at the start of semester and monthly beginner cycles after this as specified on the club schedule for semester 1. The beginners' cycles take place in Cratloe, a reasonably flat forest 13km from Limerick. Normally the cycle follows the riverbank path to the forest, but for the first few cycles, lifts will be provided to Cratloe. The skills required to ride

trails are taught in the first few beginners' cycles and these cycles will not require much physical fitness or any previous mountain biking experience.

On Tuesdays, we use our club circuit for training to increase fitness and skills. It is a technically challenging mile long loop in Cratloe woods that we cycle for an hour or so. On Thursday, we hold our advanced night cycles in Cratloe woods. Club lights are available. On Saturday, advanced cycles are also held. These cycles require high levels of fitness and endurance, covering in excess of 80km in many cases.

Many trips are planned for this semester, including weekend trips to Carlingford where cycles are planned in the Cooleys and in Lumpers; Wicklow; and Kerry. More information on these will be posted on the forum at <http://www.skynet.ie/~mtb> club. Trips are also planned for Sundays including the Glen of Aherlow (Slievenamuck), Crag Woods in Killaloe, The Clare Glens and Keeper Hill near Newport.

Club bikes and helmets are available and have to be booked on the cycles section of the forum. The club can be contacted at mtbclub@skynet.ie or on the forum.

Week 1 (01/10/06): Cratloe. (Beginner)

Week 2 (08/10/06): Cratloe. (Beginner)

Week 3 (14/10/06 - 15/10/06): Carlingford.

Week 4 (22/10/06): Glen of Aherlow.

Week 5 (29/10/06): Cratloe. (Beginner)

Week 6 (04/11/06 - 05/11/06): Wicklow.

Week 7 (12/11/06): Cratloe.

Week 8 (18/11/06 - 19/11/06): Kerry.

Week 9 (26/11/06): Cratloe. (Beginner)

Week 10 (03/12/06): Killaloe.

Week 11 (10/12/06): Keeper Hill and the Clare Glens.

Week 12 (17/12/06): Killaloe.

UL Vikings



UL Rowing Club welcomes new members

ULRC would like to extend the warmest of welcomes to all the new students enrolling this semester. You are about to begin some of the most enriching years of your life. As we all know, its

intimidating starting off new, but if you're active, sporty and are looking for something a little different, pop on by the Rowing Club stand at Freshers Week. We will have members there explaining what exactly is involved and

you'll be surprised how easy it is to catch 'the bug'. There are no requirements, save that you can stay afloat for a few mins and after a session or two, you'll be surprised how much you want more. The rowing club caters for all levels of the sport, from novices to seniors, and if you have rowed before, then we'd love to hear from you, exchange a few stories and so on, so if you're fun or

quiet, active or lazy, big or small, girl or boy or any other adjective you can think of, call up to us and give one of the fastest growing sports in Ireland a go....We can be contacted through the web ulrowing.com or text your name to 0 ULRC PHONE (0 8572 74663).

UL Basketball

Registration is our first order of call, sign up then for UL basketball.

There's training here for gach aon saghas, we'll light up your life by adding spice.

Take you on trips around the globe, Wales and Hungary we'll take you in droves,

The competitions alone are the greatest of craic, fresher's and varsities you'll never look back

With trainings and open sessions to cater your needs, we've got it all now take our heed

You won't find a club as random as ours, partying like crazy til the earliest of hours

Playing the best basketball ever seen, under the watchful eyes of Paul, Des and Noreen

So join up and embrace a new type of fun, head for the craic when the day is done

As once this magical journey ends, you'll have your team mates there as friends.

Training times:

Women's Varsity Team: Mon and Wed nights 21.30-23.00

Fresher Women: Mon 21.30-23.00 and Wed morning 7.30

Men's Varsity: Tues 20.30-22.00 and Thurs 21.30-11.00

Fresher Men: Wed 7.30-8.30 am and Thurs 4-5pm

Be a player, be a friend, be talented, be strong, be committed, be fast, be brave...be included...be there

Irish Intervarsity Championship 2006

UL Cricket Club created history by winning the Intervarsity championship held in Cork, 6-9 June. Under the excellent captaincy of Zulfiqar Dholkawala (Postgrad, MAE) UL swept past UCD, Dublin Business School and the hosts UCC at a sunny Mardyke to the lift the trophy for the first time in their history.

The results were:-

Quarter-Final: University of Limerick beat University College Dublin by 7 wickets. Mardyke, 7 June.
University College Dublin 142 (N Johnson 42, M Callaghan 36, Furqan Waris 4-16, Zulfiqar Dholkawala 4-28) University of Limerick 145-3 (Furqan Waris 81*, Azeem 20*, W Menzies 2-28)

Semi-Final: University of Limerick beat Dublin Business School by 271 runs. Mardyke, 8 June.
University of Limerick 382-7 (Furqan Waris 163, Zulfiqar Dholkawala 73*, Azeem 47, Yasir 2-69)
Dublin Business School 111 (Yasir 24, Ajay 22, R Hartigan 4-43, Azeem 2-7)

Final: University of Limerick beat University College Cork by 39 runs. Mardyke, 9 June.
University of Limerick 243 (Furqan Waris 67, Zulfiqar Dholkawala 36, Abassi 29, Raj 29, S Kulkarni 4-36, M Reid 3-46)
University College Cork 204 (R Durity 78, Jayant 43, Zulfiqar Dholkawala 4-27, Furqan Waris 3-49)

Furqan Waris's monumental achievement of scoring 307 runs in the tournament (at an average of more than 150!) must be noted. However just as crucial was the contribution of Roy Dunican a 1st year Games Development student playing in just his 3rd ever game who batted for 11 overs in the final while Ryan Hartigan scored heavily at the other end as UL recovered from 139-6 to reach 243 allout. Congratulations to all the lads, particularly Keith Whelan who has done so much to get cricket going again in UL. ULCC would like to thank Mr. Binman and Neasa O'Donnell, UL Sports Office administrator who provided the resources that allowed us to compete so successfully in the intervarsities this year.



TaeKwon-Do Club - Kicking High!!

TAEKWON-DO is a fast paced and challenging martial art, which originated in Korea. Training in UL is highly comprehensive and practical, involving kicking, boxing, self-defense and grappling. TaeKwon-Do is far more than just defensive methods, regular training promotes physical and mental wellbeing. TaeKwon-Do practitioners are noted for their excellent health gained from the discipline and patience required by the art.

TaeKwon-Do is a great way to get fit and stay fit and most of all it is fun. The club instructor Mr. Philip Fox, a 3rd degree black belt, welcomes all new members - no experience is necessary!

The academic year 2005/06 was very successful for the club when we took part in several intervarsities and national competitions, had lots of club members grade for new coloured belts including one new black belt, held a Kickathon which raised over €1700 for the Limerick Rape

Crisis Centre, taught a self-defence course, enjoyed varied social events (party nights, table quizzes, raffles, Clubs & Societies Ball), and last but not least had members travel to Arizona for a TaeKwon-Do summer training camp with funding from the UL Arts and Sports Fund.

So if you want to join an exciting martial art, do come and try out a class: training times are Mondays and Thursdays 18.45-20.15 in the gym of the PESS Building.

Outdoor Pursuits Club
Are you just hanging around?

Why not try it at the Climbing Wall?

Call in to the PESS building every Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evening from 7-10 pm!



Kick off University with Shotokan Karate

O.k., well done, you've made it to university, and what a great choice of university, for I don't think there is a college in the country that can compete with U.L.'s clubs and society scene. So, whatever else you do while you're here, be sure and sign up with one. For those of you who feel like there's a little karate kid inside screaming to get out, why not try the Shotokan Karate Club. About 1 in 10 people take up martial arts at some stage, and so with almost 2,000 new students, we should expect up to 200 of you having a go. Now, they say that for every 100 people that take up martial arts, only 1 will go on to achieve the black belt grade. If we do the math, then there are 2 new students out there that will come along to one of our training sessions and 4 years later walk out a black belt. Are you one of them?

Even if you don't feel like Chuck Norris (showing my age) in the making, come along and you might surprise yourself. Shotokan is a great way to improve your fitness, flexibility, and confidence.



The club is a great place to get to know other students and work out the stresses of study. Training is interspersed with various events during the year with club members heading off for competitions and seminars around Ireland and the UK. Being a relatively young club, now in our second

year, we have managed to rack up a considerable amount of awards in our short time, taking the podium in 3 nationals and of course who could forget the nail-biting final at the Irish Karate Intervarsity in Galway.

The Shotokan Karate Club train every Tuesday

evening from 8:30pm in the gym of the P.E.S.S. building (the old sports building). For more information visit www.ulkarate.com or simply turn up at one of the training sessions.

UL Sailing Club Cruise and Beginner's weekend

BY OWEN CLARKIN

Another year dawns and UL Sailing Club start off with a bang! As Freshers flood in from all parts of the country UL Sailing Club have organised an action packed beginners weekend in Schull, a beautiful village to the west of 'the People's republic' of Cork. The weekend is designed for those who have never sailed but don't mind getting wet and want to have some fun. It will be run from Schull community school and all boats and equipment will be provided. The beginner's weekend follows on the tradition of ULSC's competitive and non-competitive events run every year.

Last Year finished off in style for ULSC with the first annual Cruise run in over five years. The cruise was lake based this year and was run on 3 yachts: a 33ft Ketch, a 23ft Hunter and a 6 berth motor cruiser. Starting off in Dromineer (just south of Nenagh we headed North towards Terryglass and then on to Portumna where a big slap-up meal was cooked on-

board,

before invading the local nightlife, shocking many of the local heads! A few unnamed (and unexpected) couples took advantage of 'getting lost' in the ruins of the Norman settlement on the way home, thinking they had escaped notice...we know who you are! All was going well until the infamous Derek (AKA Tobago) decided to fraternise with my guitar...rattling off quiet a few tunes sending the night to sleep in style (and keep our neighbours awake)!

So we are all looking forward to an active year, jam-packed with great performances from our promising new teams in both Inter-varsity and national competitions, as well as a fun-packed year for all our new and old members, also showing some great 'performances' on our social circuit! Hope to see you all there!

For more info visit:
<http://sailing.skynet.ie/>
Or contact:
ulsc.email@gmail.com

BY MIKE RYNNE

PERU, Argentina, Nepal, Russia, France, Tanzania. Whether it's 6,000 meters above sea level or 300 meters below ground; trudging through snow fields or dangling by your fingertips. The University of Limerick's Outdoor Pursuits Club (OPC) gives you the chance to set your own limits and the support to help you surpass your expectations.

The past year has been a very productive one in the club. The highest peaks in Europe and Africa have been climbed. One of our more adventurous members climbed Kilimanjaro in Tanzania no less than three times in as many weeks. Elbrus, the highest mountain in Europe was attempted by two guys who have since graduated from the university. Unfortunately, they were pushed back by bad weather. Members have set new rock climbing routes on the burren and throughout the summer there has been a steady stream of both novice and

experienced climbers in the French Alps.

Not everyone wants to push the limits of their endurance or test the extent of their phobias. Many, myself included, have developed relaxing into something approaching an art form. It's all about having fun and there are so many options available in our club that you can find the activity that suits you. If spending several hours hiking in the rain doesn't sound appealing, then visit our climbing wall in the PESS building. This is the centre of the club's social scene, climbing is optional.

The philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche wrote that 'Madness is rare in individuals-but in groups, parties, nations and ages it is the rule.' The OPC is no exception, but who is to say that madness is necessarily a bad quality? Join the OPC and see the world from a unique perspective! For more information, visit our website at <http://www.skynet.ie/~opc/>

Join the OPC and see the world



ENTS WEEKLY BANDS

One aspects of Ents for the year that we are really looking forward to is the Irish Live nights. We will bring you the very best in new Irish music on Monday nights over the course of the semester.

It all kicks off on Monday Week 2 with a triple bill just cos we like the number 3. And cos we thought it would be a cool way to kick things off! Joining us on the night will be The Flaws, The Immediate and DC Pakt.

The Flaws



Are a Monaghan 4 piece who have been attracting a lot of press and record label attention in 2006. Their debut single 'No Room' was released in Ireland on March 24th as a calling card and was limited to 1,000 copies. On the back of that they featured with Tom Dunne on his "artist rising" section and joined the Nokia new music tour for the summer.

Expect big things later in 2006" - The Star Friday Jan 6th 2006
"Great Pop-Punk songs" - Alison Curtis (Today FM DJ)

Check out www.theflaws.com to hear some music and read some more.

The Immediate

Have just recently released their debut album "In towers and clouds" on plasticfantastic records. They are in the middle of a major Irish tour. This all follows on from a nomination as best new band at the Meteor awards. All this is making 2006 a massive year in their development.

Not every four-piece band can boast four vocalists, three drummers, three guitarists, and three bassists, but then again not every band possesses the versatility, range, and multidirectional eclecticism of Dublin quartet, The Immediate.

<http://www.myspace.com/theimmediate>



DC Pakt



Are a four piece band from Dublin whose influences range from 60's pop to 70's new wave punk and beyond. These young bucks have proved to be one of the most exciting live bands to emerge this year. Their first venture into the studio produced Departure, the track has since been included on the Faction One compilation released earlier this year and has become one of the most talked about songs on the compilation. The band are currently sitting tight in the rehearsal room piecing together some new material, and will be heading back into the recording studio in the very near future.

www.myspace.com/dcpakt

So see you there !! And tune into An Focal and the weekly flyer/posters to see what's on the way!