

My name is Jack Hickey and I'm a first year student studying Biological, Earth & Environmental Science. I am running for the position of Representative of the College of Science, Engineering & Food Science on the Students Union on the upcoming Students Union elections on March 6th and 7th. I have worked on various committees over the last few years with positions up to and including being the PRO of the local Darkness into Light committee which raises money for suicide prevention charity Pieta House, and one of my current positions as treasurer of my local SVP. During the time I have spent here in UCC, I have pushed myself to get involved in the various extracurricular activities, enriching both myself and the college. I am a very active member of UCC St Vincent de Paul, where I am the First Year Representative. Being the First Year Representative is a very versatile role and allowed me to become involved in many different aspects of the committee. I have been involved in the planning of both Homelessness Week and Social Justice Week to name just a few events. Through my work with societies and volunteering, I have become acutely aware of the fact that not all aspects of college life are as they should be. I've consulted various groups over the last few weeks and am determined to rectify the problems and issues they identified as soon as possible.

1. *Aim towards 100% Wi-Fi coverage in all locations* – It has been brought to my attention that the Wi-Fi signal is not as though it should be in certain locations, such as in the Kane Building. If I were to be elected I would ensure that the appropriate works would be taken to remedy the situation and give satisfactory broadband speed in all locations.
2. *To bring more Events to the satellite campuses during promotional weeks such as R&G Week and other promotional weeks* – I feel strongly that some of the satellite campuses are still heavily excluded from the festivities/activities run during promotional weeks such as R&G Week. Students have expressed disappointment to me that despite great efforts being made to be totally inclusive, selected locations are still excluded from promotional weeks/days, in particular, the Cork Enterprise Centre on the North Mall Campus has been cited as a particularly badly excluded area. If I were elected, I would ensure that events are organized and well publicized for these locations during promotional weeks.
3. *Gender neutral Toilets* – Concern has been expressed in consultations that at certain locations, gender neutral toilets are not available or are simply disabled toilets labelled as gender neutral, and are used for both purposes. I do not think this is right or fair and will ensure that proper facilities are provided to alleviate pressure from the current insufficient facilities in certain locations. Something as simple as using the bathroom should not be a stressful experience for students who identify as non-binary. We are failing these students and I will endeavour to change this should I be elected.
4. *Quiet Spaces/Sensory Rooms* – Student mental health is an issue I'm very passionate about. I have been involved in the strategic planning of mental health facilities of youths in the South Tipperary HSE area and would have found that probably one of

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the most beneficial facilities introduced to a learning environment is the quiet space. I feel that the introduction of quiet spaces to all campuses that don't currently have one would make a fantastic addition. A quiet space is scientifically proven to have a beneficial effect on ones learning and in particular, it would be a massive advantage for students whom struggle with mental health issues such as autism/ADHD/ADD. We have fantastic mindfulness courses available to students in the college but what good are these if students don't have a facility to practice mindfulness in college during the working day.

5. *Peer Support* – On orientation day only, being split into groups of 20 to meet our Peer Support Leader was a fantastic idea, I thought. After that day we were left to fend for ourselves and being in the College of SEFS, most of our lectures contained over 300 students. If elected I will organise more opportunities for students to meet in these intimate groups of twenty with their PSL within the first month of college to help them meet their peers and integrate into the UCC community more quickly and easily.
6. *Microwave/Hot water facilities* – I would make sure that these facilities are available to all students, regardless of the campus they find themselves studying in. In the current economic climate, it is simply unacceptable to only provide facilities to purchase food and I feel very strongly about this issue.
7. *Languages* – As a student who enjoyed German & Irish at second level, when I came to UCC College of SEFS, I found I started to lose my grasp of these languages. As graduates of SEFS leave UCC, I would hope to increase their employability as much as possible. I would hope that I could start an era where a much higher volume of Scientists/Engineers could be produced with the versatility of a languages student. Currently, there are modules available to take at a cost of €340 in the European Languages, whilst Irish is offered at a limited level by An Chuallacht. I would push that all SEFS courses could have at least 5 credits of an elective to increase students employability.
8. *Piano/music facilities to be available to students of all faculties* – I would lobby the Music Department to make their facilities available to students of other colleges where possible. Currently practice rooms are only available to full and part time students of the school and as a pianist, I feel students shouldn't have to cease their pastimes when they move to UCC. I have been made aware that there are approximately 2 pianos on main campus and they are not publicised enough.
9. *Drop-in Clinic* - I would hold a drop in clinic weekly where I would be available to meet with students face to face, to discuss any issues they may have. I feel that students would benefit greatly from this, as discussing issues over email is not always appropriate. It would also be easier for myself to grasp exactly what they are experiencing and how I can best assist them.
10. *Reps being elected too late* – I would push the relevant SU officers to ensure that Academic and Entertainments Representatives are elected promptly. If students

change course it is easy to hold a by-election for a new representative. Certain class groups have expressed this issue. The sooner social events are organised the easier it is for students to integrate into UCC life.

11. *Panopto/Lecture Notes* – It is essential that we nurture students of all learning styles whether they are kinaesthetic auditory or visual learners. I will insist that lecturers would use the fantastic Panopto/video recording facilities in place. Lecturers have been known to make the argument that students simply would not turn up to lectures. My solution would be to record the lectures and if they were not willing to post them immediately, they could at least be posted before reading week to help students who may wish to listen to the lectures rather than reading notes. Furthermore, I would insist that Blackboard would be utilised more, as it is a fantastic facility and not all lecturers use it.
12. *Placements* – Many have expressed concerns at the fact that not all degree programmes have a placement. I will strive to introduce a system whereby students whom take a summer placement on own initiative could have it accredited for in their academic transcript, even if it does not count towards their 240 ECTS credits over the course of their studies.
13. *CIT/UCC* – A number of students on the Biomedical Science programme have expressed dismay at the fact that the different institutions have not aligned their semesters and hence it causes a prolonged exam period, contributing to stress of students. I would present it to the education officer and would strive to rectify this issue as soon as possible. I recognise that it may be difficult to align the entire colleges calendars but I'm sure a compromise could be reached, even if it meant that Biomedical Students would be slightly off kilter in one of the institutions.
14. *KSG* – more vegan options should be available in all facilities, regardless of the location. Also, it has come to my attention that it is cheaper to purchase food of a lower nutritional value than healthy foods. Lastly, I would insist that receipts would only be printed if the customer wishes in order to reduce waste.
15. *Degree Streams* - I would make the information sessions for the various degree streams that students pick mandatory, as some students simply don't realise how important it is to attend these events. I would also hope to hold duplicate events earlier on in the year to give students more time to think about their options. Currently in my own course, there is only one such event which takes place in March.
16. *More information on course transfers* - Currently there is a lack of information online about the availability of transfers from degree programmes. I wish to make this information easier to access. Some students think they can't change programmes or feel that it is a massive ordeal to change. Some have been known to then continue to delve deeper into an area that simply doesn't appeal to them. Making information more freely available will target this issue.

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17. *Engineering Building need a breakroom* – students currently only have the option to eat in the computer labs and then they are getting in trouble over this. The surplus of students cannot be accommodated for in the main rest during peak times. I would ensure a room could be established where students could consume food and also install Hot water/Microwave facilities.
18. *Scientific Essays/Writing* – An issue for SEFS students that is extremely prevalent is the lack of knowledge of writing scientific documents. There are already some fantastic skills courses available in The Skills Centre but I will push the education officer to have a specific course developed for SEFS students to show them how to write a Scientific Essay. Many first second and even third years have expressed anxiety to me that they are still unsure about what exactly is required when writing a scientific essay.
19. *Freshers Packs* – On a sidenote not particularly related to SEFS alone, one of my suggestions for the freshers packs this year would be to include a travel coffee mug and a subscription to the Coke Zero Bikes. It may cost more in the short term but the benefits would be immense in the long run. The travel mugs would be in keeping with our Green Campus Campaign and also with regards to the bikes, students totally would use them more and more if the initial subscription was free. This increased revenue would make it more viable for the Coke Zero Bike management to install a bike hub at the Western Gateway Building.

I would like to thank you for taking the time to read my manifesto. Certain aspects of college are failing people and I want to make UCC life as inclusive and fulfilling as possible. I sincerely believe I would make a good Representative as I am a friendly, outgoing person who enjoys meeting new people. I would like to urge people to come out and vote on March 6th and 7th. Voter turnout is at an all-time low so every vote counts. You have a voice so please use it!!

REMEMBER:

Don't take the mickey, vote for Hickey!!!