The DIT Examiner: the Newspaper of the Dublin Institute of Technology Students' Union, October, 1994

DIT Students' Union

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The future of the Sackville Place annex to DIT Cathal Brugha Street has been the subject of intense speculation in recent weeks. Is it closing? Is it not? Who is staying? Who is going? Just what is going on?

It was a situation that disrupted further the lives of students who were either entirely new to college life or were trying to settle down for another year. The uncertainty has meant that some students did not know whether to look for accommodation on the Northside or the Southside of the city because they simply did not know which building they were going to. Finally it appears that the situation has been resolved and the annex is to remain in the hands of the students' union president, Colin, "the size of a hot cupboard." There are currently three seats in the room.

I'm sickened by the situation. I think it's appalling for the students and staff to have been messed about so much. If the move had been planned, then that would have been grand, but it's been so disorganised."

He went on to say that the students now based in Rathmines would have to use the doctor and nurse facilities in Aungier Street, that they had no access to a photocopier and that they would have to fly about. It seems that they can now breathe again.

Meanwhile, some administrative sections of DIT Adelaide Road, the College of Music, have also moved to Rathmines and taken up residence in the old building. This has led to speculation regarding the faculty structure to be announced soon for the DIT.

DIT Plays Musical Chairs

The extension he referred to is the forthcoming development at the site of the current Marlborough Street annex, a depressing looking building which is to be demolished in the very near future. Students who presently have most of their lectures in this building will be moved to Denmark Street, now devoid of the social school, or the main building. Because the school is self-contained, it was decided that it would be easier to move it than other courses in DIT Cathal Brugha Street.

Frank McMahon, acting director of DIT Cathal Brugha Street, believes that the students will be very happy in their new home in Rathmines, that amongst other features, they will have better drama facilities in Rathmines House and an art room in the old Rathmines building.

"I think they [the facilities] are better. Apart from the distance, that it if we could put the whole building on wheels and move it down to Cathal Brugha Street, it would be an ideal situation."

But the students' union in DIT Cathal Brugha Street is somewhat less pleased.

"We're extremely annoyed that there has been so much moving around with the students," said Colin, "the size of a hot cupboard." There are currently three seats in the room.

I'm sickened by the situation. I think it's appalling for the students and staff to have been messed about so much. If the move had been planned, then that would have been grand, but it's been so disorganised."

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The DIT Examiner

DTISU, DIT Kevin Street, Kevin St., Dublin 8. Ph/Fax: 4783154

Back to the future

You made it. Whether you are a returning student already enlightened as to the obligations and opportunities of college life, or whether you are a first year for whom the whole business remains something of a mystery, the message is the same. You made it. You’re here. Most returning students will have no difficulty in slipping back into first term. Insouciant perhaps, knowing what’s expected of them and deligrating, or gay, as the case may be. For first years, it’s very often a different and more unsettling experience; not necessarily unsettling in a ‘I think I’m being followed by someone who drools’ manner but at the very least it represents an abrupt uprooting and replacement in a thoroughly unfamiliar social and academic environment. It is, quite literally, unsettling. Do not let it get on top of you.

College life is certainly challenging on many levels and you will find yourself tested in several new ways: much of your development as a person will take place over the next two, three or four years and how you deal with the immediate future will surely have a significant bearing on your long term plans. There may be times when you feel like you are that you neglect the side of yourself that needs to enjoy life, asserting your independence and welcoming the unknown. there is, no denying that, But these years are also supposed to be about embracing your independence, trying on any number of hats and feeling how they fit and it is very likely that the friends you meet in college will be with you for the rest of your life. Do the work, get the qualification - that presumably is the main reason you slogged so hard for the rest of your life. Do the work, the outside world will be grateful.

Paper’s Round

This is the second year of the DIT Examiner, the newspaper of the Dublin Institute of Technology Students’ Union. This year, we intend to publish more issues, one a month, than any other issue of the DIT Examiner, please contact the editor and any such matters shall then be clarified in the subsequent edition.

Class Reps

Reading through the interviews with the various convenors and deputy convenors in this year’s EDIT, and speaking to them on different occasions, it is readily apparent that there is one issue above all others that the individual unions are determined to tackle and that is the class rep. system. There is a strong sense that the development of an effective class rep. system will sooner rather than later prove most beneficial to students and to the operation and image of their union. Unfortunately, the perception remains that students’ unions everywhere have an image problem in that they are often seen as aloof and elite. The class rep system can help change that perception: if a full class rep council is set up in each college, students’ problems and grievances will be brought quickly to the attention of the union, thus communication is improved and issues are dealt with. Everyone is happy.

There are still class rep. positions to be filled and some positions on some unions’ executive. The rest is up to you.

Editor John Carroll
Production Rory Quinn
Printed by The Meath Chronicle

Clarifications

Should you encounter anything you feel is in need of clarification in this, or any other issue of the DIT Examiner, please contact the editor and any such matters shall then be clarified in the subsequent edition.

Student Discount Voucher Book

Save Over £100 with DIT Students’ Union
ONLY £3.50

Available From Students’ Union Shop, and Roving Student Salespeople

ONLY £3.50!
Making your mark in DITSU

As students in the DIT you are entitled to vote in the elections for the students' unions, both for the officers within your own college and for the overall president of the DIT students' union. Elections time is one of the liveliest, most revealing and, for some, most exasperating periods of the college year. Get involved and vote because the people elected will be running your students' union and the overall president will be representing DIT students on the DIT's Governing Body.

The following may seem like common sense at best and an insult to your intelligence at worst, but you'd be surprised at the numbers of people who, accidentally or otherwise, spoil their votes (in the 1994 DITSU elections for example, from a small scribble to a written comment may constitute spoiling).

Tips for Voting Properly
a) Write clearly and legibly the digits '1', '2', '3', etc in the boxes provided.

b) Do not write any comments or draw any pictures on the ballot paper.

c) Each preference must be consecutive, i.e 1,2,3,4,5 and not 1,2,4,5. In the latter case, the vote becomes non-transferable after the second preference.

d) In the case of the referendum you simply place a cross or a tick in either the YES or NO box and not in both boxes. The other box should be left blank.

Frank Crummey

Elections to DIT Governing Body

In order to comply fully with the strict nomenclature of the act of the Oireachtas establishing the legal status of the DIT and the Composition of its Governing Body and direct and indirect nominating bodies, it is necessary to fill the two student representative seats in the DIT Board of Governors. The act at present does not permit the custom and practice of a restricted elective community. The current student representatives, DITSU President Colman Byrne and DITSU Bolton Street Deputy Convenor Alison Flanagan, will stand for election to satisfy the terms and conditions of the act. This presents the student body with a perfect opportunity to reaffirm and further endorse the sitting student union representatives as the sole official and legitimate voice of DIT Students on DIT Governing Body.

The election data has not been fixed as we go to press but it is expected to occur in October or November.

NOBODY OFFERS D.I.T. STUDENTS A BETTER COACH SERVICE FROM DUBLIN.

SAMPLE STUDENT MONTHLY RETURN FARES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FARES</th>
<th>WATERFORD</th>
<th>WEXFORD</th>
<th>GALWAY</th>
<th>BALLINA</th>
<th>DUNGANVAR</th>
<th>SLIGO</th>
<th>BELFAST</th>
<th>LIMERICK</th>
<th>DONEGAL</th>
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ELECTIONS TO DIT

N.B. If no clear preference indicated

Counting the votes at this years DITSU elections

or (b) In the returning officer's opinion, there is a mark on the paper that is intended to reveal the identity of the voter.

The above criteria for spoilt votes give sole discretion to the returning officer. For example, anything from a small scribble to a written comment may constitute spoiling.

BUY YOUR TICKET IN THE COLLEGE

Tickets available in the DIT Student Union Shops at Kevin Street, Bolton Street, Cathal Brugha Street, Mountjoy Square, Aungier Street.

For group bookings and travel information call Busaras (01) 836 6111.

Remember, you need an ISIC Card with Travelsave Stamp to avail of Student Fares.

Ask about reductions on other services with ISIC Card.

You're better off on BUS EIREANN
Your first few weeks in college are very likely to be strange, disorientating, nery and exciting to one extent or another. You may find yourself feeling a little lonely or out of things, the new experiences a little more daunting than you expected. On the other hand, you might be itching to get involved in all aspects of college life, have all sorts of wild ideas for the year and are of the opinion that the day is simply not long enough. Whether you are the class shrinking violet or its hyperactive whirling dervish, the clubs and societies in the various colleges have an important role to play.

Dozens are set up every year, each designed firstly to further interest in and appreciation of the event, discipline, sport or group of (insert your own choice). Their other major function is to help people to get to know each other and to provide opportunities for them to socialise together. I don't wish to labour the point, but some societies and clubs are more renowned than others for their propensity for getting hammered at every available opportunity.

What follows is a list of the clubs and societies that existed last year and will almost certainly return this year. It is not complete and if you have an idea for one that is not on the list, give it a shot.

**DIT Kevin Street**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clubs</th>
<th>Societies</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Athletics</td>
<td>AIESEC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
<td>An Cumann Gaelach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Badminton</td>
<td>Archaeology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Board Sailing</td>
<td>Biomedical Science</td>
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<tr>
<td>Canoeing</td>
<td>Business</td>
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<td>Cycling</td>
<td>Chemistry Union</td>
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<td>Dramatic Exercise</td>
<td>Computer</td>
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<td>Drama</td>
<td>Enterprise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental</td>
<td>Gay and Lesbian</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Human Nutrition</td>
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<td>Environmental Studies</td>
<td>K.A.T.S (Drama Society)</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Mathematics</td>
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<td>Niamh's Society</td>
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<td>Environmental Studies</td>
<td>Optics</td>
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<td>Environmental Studies</td>
<td>Science Fiction</td>
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<td>Environmental Studies</td>
<td>Science and Technology</td>
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<td>Environmental Studies</td>
<td>Traditional Society</td>
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<td>Environmental Studies</td>
<td>Women's Group</td>
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**DIT Mountjoy Square**

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>Amnesty International</td>
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<td>An Cumann Gaelach</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Art</td>
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<td>Clan Bizarro (Roleplaying)</td>
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<td>Badminton</td>
<td>Debate</td>
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<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Design</td>
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<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Drama</td>
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<td>Basketball</td>
<td>European</td>
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<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Expanding Head (video)</td>
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<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Fashion</td>
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<td>Basketball</td>
<td>Film</td>
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**DIT Bolton Street**

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<tr>
<td>Basketball</td>
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<td>Basketball</td>
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<td>Caving Club</td>
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<td>Hockey</td>
<td>Men's and Women's Rugby</td>
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<td>Mountaineering</td>
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<td>Orienteering</td>
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<td>Hockey</td>
<td>Taekwondo</td>
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<td>Hockey</td>
<td>Volleyball</td>
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<td>Hockey</td>
<td>Yoga</td>
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**DIT Aungier Street**

Because of the move from Rathmines to Aungier Street, and the logistical and organisational Hell this engenders, there are no certainties as to the clubs and societies for the coming year. As soon as the union is settled, the currently frazzled team will no doubt get things going. Enjoy!

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*Hanging around with Bolton St mountaineering club*
Forrest Gump looks set to enter the American consciousness in a way that very few box office hits ever do; ET is the last film I can think of that had such an overwhelming effect on people but that wasn't a peculiarly American film; Gump and its eponymous hero seems to represent a readily identifiable stereotype, the young innocent who plays college football, is sent to fight in the Vietnam war, and history, it generally lacks the wisdom and love of his mother. It is the thoughtless retention of this innocence, I the Hype

stuff in the film, Gump acting as a catalyst for a whole variety of famous people - Lennon, Nixon, - without ever changing himself. By placing the character in a number of recent central events in history and with some of its most important people the film has a chance to say that historical events might not have happened the way we believe they did and that arbitrariness plays a much bigger part in life than we would like to think.

As an adult, Gump is played by Tom Hanks, who has already displayed his ability to play the innocent child-serial in Big. He is perfectly cast, making his character simple without being undignified and never less than as wholesome as an oven full of apple pies. He is also one of the few actors who can bring both men and women with him in a film.

men like him because he is ordinary and yet gets to do extraordinary things while women at the very least think he is adorable. Cute. He is a threat to no-one.

Gump dresses and has his hair cut in the fashion of a fifties American teenager, at a time when everything seemed possible for Americans. Forty years on, he is exactly the same, seemingly unaffected by the war, the anti-war movement, the wider availability of drugs and a changing moral climate. Others he comes into contact with such as his heroic and gung-ho platoon leader Lieutenant Dan (Gary Sinise) and the love of his life, Jenny (Robin Wright) are deeply affected and simply do not cope with the changes. There is a sinister message to be drawn from this if you are like arch conservative Republican Pat Buchanan, it says that if you follow the simple path and do what you are told, you will flourish; any deviation from this and you will suffer. It could be seen as a particularly conservative message to a whole generation and that is partially its own fault because it inflicts satirical flesh wounds where it could easily have gone for the jugular.

Winston Groom's book on which this film is based was a fun, bawdy satire but the film will ensure that historical events might not have gone for the jugular. It is the thoughtless retention of this innocence, I the Hype

Also Showing....

Speed

Unexpected box office smash pits Keanu Reeves against mad bomber Dennis Hopper (couldn't they have found someone else to play a mad bomber? anyone else?) and a bus that will explode if its speed drops below a very crucial 50 miles per hour. That's the main section anyway; there's a gripping prelude in an elevator shaft and an unnecessary climax to the climax on a subway train.

First time director Jan de Bent makes a good showing. Lean, highly entertaining prelude in an elevator shaft and an unnecessary climax to the climax on a subway train.

Also Showing....

Clear and Prese Danger

Third adaptation (so far) of a Tom Clancy thriller is the best to date, spending a little less time being strung by technology and more on the duplicitous political shenanigans and the running and jumping stuff (including one brilliantly handled ambush sequence in a Colombian back street), is Harrison Ford, trusted by filmgoers and film makers in equal measure, is back as Jack Ryan, CIA analyst, now acting Deputy Director of that august body of men and women. He becomes embroiled in a covert action against South American drug lords but gradually realises that his own masters are something of a letdown in the trust and honesty department. More exciting than The Hunt for Red October and less ridiculous than Patriot Games, this also manages to hint that there are areas coloured grey and that Washington is far from being the permanent home of the good guys. Not new, but rare to see.

The Last Seduction

John Dahl follows the impressive Red Rock West with this funny, dark and shamelessly nasty film noir that pits heartless New York femme fatale Linda Fiorentino against just about everyone. It's no contest.

Having organised a one off drug deal with her husband (Bill Pullman) she runs out on him and hides out in a hick town where she hooks up with the hapless Peter Berg, messing with his head so remorselessly that you almost feel sorry for him. Meanwhile hubby has sent a private detective to hunt down this thoroughly amoral woman. Great dialogue (almost all of it from delivered by Fiorentino), surprising twists and a bunch of characters that you hope only exist on the screen. Go see.
He will need to be able to do this as wants to make it clear that his allegiances lie not with the Workers' Party or whatever. That was going to be his old position.

Workers' Party or whatever. That was going to be his old position. This is my job, my whole face has changed, a lot of the time, a situation when I should be campaigning after students, we organise and we look after but that situation is not going to arise any more. Students' Unions are I don't because of my party political allegiances, then it's time to get rid of me, I'm not doing my job; there is one huge giveaway. He admits that he likes interviews.

He goes on to say that at national level this may not be the situation but believes that students' unions have changed with the needs of the students, that whereas years ago there would have been students' unions demonstrating on a large scale for grants or improved grants, the situation now is that "we're inside our college looking for space, more facilities, longer library hours, proper heating. It's internal. We can't go to the Government and say we want another computer."

"Massive demonstrations are too there any more because people have become political with a small 'p'. Students are less politicalised themselves. I would like them to become more politicised and then maybe each college could become a big 'p'." He is keen then to politicise students but wants to make it clear that his allegiances lie with the union first and Fianna Fáil second. His party politics and my job do not conflict with each other. I'm asked to do a job and my party politics do not come into that. When something comes up, like picking Fianna Fáil headquarters, I can't say 'Sorry, I can't do that,' I'd be there as well.

He recalls the support he received at the hustings in Mountjoy Square and says that even if he had lost he would always remember that feeling. "They were fair to the other candidate; they raised the roof when I finished speaking and it gave me a great feeling." A people person, you see. He likes to be liked but at the same time seems prepared to voice the unpopular opinion and he will need to be able to do this as President for he will be the one to make the final decisions and it is inevitable that these will not always meet with the approval of the conveners in the constituent colleges. If they always did, it would be time to worry.

Students' Unions have been kick off points for politicians as the past but more often than not, they have viewed the world from a perspective somewhere left of centre. Colman Byrne is a member of Fianna Fáil. He does not see any problem reconciling his party political allegiances with his position as President of a Students' Union.

"The vast majority of people who have been in students' unions were political but and look out for them. They're the things we do. People say we're a trade union but in essence we're not; we're concerned with our students."

Colman Byrne - Overall president of DITSU

He is keen then to politicise students but wants to make it clear that his allegiances lie with the union first and Fianna Fáil second. His party politics and my job do not conflict with each other. I'm asked to do a job and my party politics do not come into that. When something comes up, like picking Fianna Fáil headquarters, I can't say 'Sorry, I can't do that,' I'd be there as well.

It is clear that he has had to deal with this sort of questioning before, if only in his own mind, knowing that it would be asked at some point, and he is able to outline his position in a steady stream of words.

"I think that being in the organisation can have plusses rather than minuses, that as long as I stick to my guns, that I was elected because there is nothing that I would not support. I don't believe in blind allegiance."

And yet there is something strange, is there not, about the President of a students' union being a member of a party which is behind, for example, the not very popular Summer Work scheme which means that third level students do not automatically qualify for the dole during the summer months.

Mr Byrne has a problem with the scheme as it is run at the moment but he is also prepared to risk opprobrium for his overall stance on the issue.

"If it was worked properly, I think it could actually be good because it improves every locality." He accepts that this may not be the most popular utterance he has ever made and could be interpreted as an expression of support stemming from party allegiances.

"It has nothing to do with the party who brought it in. If everyone could still get their dole on condition that they do a couple of hours of community service every week, just a couple, then I do think that there was a really good idea. It benefits everyone.

In such a situation he points out that it would be community type work, work that otherwise would not get done.

The idea of extending the scheme to the whole country is not one he wishes to get into as there are so many complications attached but it is not an idea he rejects outright. "I wouldn't say no definitely."

Colman Byrne has the determination, some would say bullheadedness, to push hard for what he wants; he also has an abundance of readily apparent self-confidence, which no Students' Union President can really afford to be without. He describes himself as an organiser and he will need to be over the coming year for the DIT and, accordingly, DITSU are entering a new phase which will affect everyone connected to the institution. He will need to have a very clear vision of what he wants to lead the students' union if its profile is to be raised. But no matter how the year turns out, he intends to take his political life a little further.

"I'd like to represent the view of the students and try to work at that. I think I'd be good at it, representing my own people."

This is no surprise, not from the way he talks and what he says. More Mr Smith Goes to Washington behind Closed Doors cynicism. But even if he had remained coy about his political ambitions, there is one huge giveaway. He admits that he likes interviews.

A People President

Colman Byrne (in President in Wait Mode) with his predecessor, Deirdre Ó Bróin

they were political to the left, Labour or the Workers' Party or whatever. That was going back years ago. Their (students' unions) whole face has changed, a lot of the time, political education, left or right, doesn't come into it any more. Students' Unions are less political on an outside basis. We're a union in name but we're a club that looks after students, we organise and we look after...
One morning during the summer, when Myles Dungan was presenting his radio show in Gay Byrne's hallowed slot, a voice familiar to everyone connected with the DIT Students' Union came quietly and confidently over the airwaves. Theresa Sheridan, former manager of the Students' Union shop in DIT Kevin Street, had, after eight years working in the shop, decided to leave for sunnier climes and she was on the show with her husband, explaining to the masses why they had decided to make a totally new start in their lives at a time when most people would be thoroughly settled. It was not a decision that had been taken lightly.

“We’ve been deliberating for almost a year now, wondering whether it was a good or a bad move,” she told the DIT Examiner. The move took place in September, courtesy of those much coveted Green Cards. So that’s it there: no more students pouring out of lectures and crowding into the shop, no more frenzied demands for photocopying cards as exams approach, no more stocking and restocking the shelves. Goodbye to all that. And more.

Theresa freely admitted that she was very sad to be leaving.

“It is a big break, I’ve given it a lot, felt my input was good. My consideration in a retail outlet was never always profits, but what do the students think, what are they looking for. If you give a service, profit is the natural result of that service. I always tried to consider each student as an individual.”

With so much daily contact with students over the years, she could not have failed to notice general changes in attitude, outlook, manner, even dress sense among the ever changing student population.

“One of the things I noticed most was that when I came here students were radical, not all of them, but there was a radical element, getting into scrapes every other week. There was always something going on. Nowadays, there’s nothing like that at all, they are more conservative, very much into ‘do what you have to do, do what’s right’. They’re studying from September on whereas before, they wouldn’t even consider it. In first year, you wouldn’t get any young people out of anyone.”

She believes that if they are lacking energy these days, it is because all their energy is going into study. This is a pity “because student life is a golden opportunity to do lots of different things.”

The memories of her time with the students’ union she has taken to America will be good ones, beginning with the moment she found out she had the job.

“At my age to have been chosen to be a shop manageress for students, I really never thought it was the most wonderful thing, at a time when a lot of people were saying that people couldn’t get work over the age of 35, young people had chosen me which was fantastic.”

After that, it was easy.

“I’ve enjoyed it immensely. I never ever felt that going to work was the pits. I got up in the morning and I was delighted to go to work, I love what I do. A day went by in 10 minutes it seemed.”

She described the move to America as the beginning of a new phase of life, an opportunity she and her husband feel they have to take. But it won’t be easy. Such upheavals never are, even in the context of the job one leaves behind.

“Over the years I have made a lot of friends and now the loyalty has come to the fore. People have been saying they’re going to miss me. I’m upset too. But there is no growth without pain, that’s the price I pay for the move.”

It is hard to believe that the vastness and newness of America will be sufficiently daunting to make Theresa regret her decision. As she informed Myles Dungan, she already had a job lined up, as had her husband. The self-belief, organisation and confidence is typical of the woman.

The DIT Examiner and all in the students’ union wish her the very best for the future.

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One morning during the summer, when Myles Dungan was presenting his radio show in Gay Byrne’s hallowed slot, a voice familiar to everyone connected with the DIT Students' Union came quietly and confidently over the airwaves. Theresa Sheridan, former manager of the Students' Union shop in DIT Kevin Street, had, after eight years working in the shop, decided to leave for sunnier climes and she was on the show with her husband, explaining to the masses why they had decided to make a totally new start in their lives at a time when most people would be thoroughly settled. It was not a decision that had been taken lightly.

“We’ve been deliberating for almost a year now, wondering whether it was a good or a bad move,” she told the DIT Examiner. The move took place in September, courtesy of those much coveted Green Cards. So that’s it there: no more students pouring out of lectures and crowding into the shop, no more frenzied demands for photocopying cards as exams approach, no more stocking and restocking the shelves. Goodbye to all that. And more.

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Beginners Luck

How well do I remember my first days in college? Let me count the ways: actually, better not. Frankly it depends on how much wry smiling. I wish to engage in at any given time. for there are few things to cause one to smile wryly and remember fondly as readily as the recollection of those first few baby steps taken in a third level institute.

It's a strange, fumbling time, when you take to walking the corridors of your new home with the most endearing tentativeness, unreasonably suspicious of what lurks around every corner (quick, bird-like peek before you take a step) and behind every door (rush of blood to the face, prickly feeling on the scalp as you realise that you have in fact ducked your shiny new person's head into the wrong room: by the way, the correct response on this occasion is 'so shagging what?).

Even signs pointing the way aren't trusted: you'll find yourself starting at them, seeking out the non-existent small print, looking away and suddenly flicking your eyes back, just to make sure that they haven't changed and are planning to lead you very much astray.

Every day a pair of shiny docs and the attendant expression of excruciating pain on the face of the wearer. But even if substantial amounts of cotton wool and a cortisone injection have been employed to remove the agonised visage, the sheer scorching shininess of this part of the student ensemble is enough of a pointer. You might as well simply carry a big sign and damn the rest of your group with you.

If you manage to escape recognition in the college, the place where you are next most likely to affix upon yourself the label 'freshie' is the pub, whatever the local hospitality happens to be. There the drinkers will be as many and varied as the products on offer, but often the fledgling first year does one of two things: either the pint (my, what a lot of liquid) is ordered with hearty and wholehearted approval, or the ever obvious less than confident quaffing is done in a whispered tone or a snide, cheap ranting of someone who is only trying to avoid something.

If all of the above sounds like the sort of unrivalled trauma as the super confident, swaggering teenage veneer is consciously bravado easily overwhelmed by the ever obvious less than confident gait. If you're on your own for these first few days, even weeks, this can be a period of unrivalled trauma as the super confident, swaggering teenage veneer is consciously bravado easily overwhelmed by the ever obvious less than confident gait.
Mixed reaction to governing body gender quota move

New legislation introduced recently by the Minister for Education, Niamh Breathnach, will amend the DIT Act to ensure that at least seven women are elected to the Governing Body of the DIT.

The Dublin Institute of Technology (Amendment) Bill which is expected to become law by Christmas will oblige the nominating bodies to comply with Government's gender balance policy. Failure to implement the gender balance provisions or directives will ultimately result in the Minister “appointing any body of persons as she sees fit”. It will be the responsibility of the VEC to ensure that at least seven female nominations are forwarded to the minister.

The new legislation will be in place in time for the appointment of the new Governing Body next year - the current one will sit only until March of next year. The legislation affects students' unions in that one female and one male must be elected in specific elections to take place later this month.

Or Brendan Goldsmith, President of the DITSU, said that the new legislation was no surprise. “It’s just what we’d been told would happen. I haven’t had a chance to study it from a fine legal point. The secretary will be looking at that and advising me as to what it contains. My only worry in relation to the content is that if we start amending legislation we may end up creating more problems. Hopefully it’s been done in a coherent way and there won’t be problems.”

Because of the long running gender balancing row between Ms Breathnach and the VEC, a Governing Body was only appointed in March for the DIT and then only for a year. The Governing Body was originally due to be appointed for five years. Dr Goldsmith is fatalistic about this less than satisfactory situation.

“Dr Goldsmith is fatalistic about this less than satisfactory situation. The fact that it’ll be our third governing body in as many years is obviously not so desirable. Governing bodies do take time to settle down and gel but we’ve been reasonably fortunate, in my view anyway, that governing bodies have been pulling together reasonably well. It is a pity to see it happening, starting again, but that’s the way life is.”

Colin Byrne, President of the DIT Students’ Union, was less enthusiastic about the new legislation. “What if an appointing body is told to appoint a female and there are no females who are interested, why should they have to ask a token gesture appoint someone, and the same goes for another body which is told to appoint a male and they say ‘actually there is a female who is very interested’ and then they are told that they have to appoint a male and then gesture is token as well. I don’t think that the people should be forced to appoint a person of a certain gender onto a committee just because the Minister has decided it should be so.”

Mr Joe Castle, chairman of the VEC, welcomed the legislation. “It’s to be welcomed in the sense that there was a problem when the VEC selected other bodies, it had no control over their nominations.” He said that prior to the introduction of the legislation, the VECs were “in the invidious position of being expected to deliver on the principle of gender balance without having the means to do so.”

The new legislation allows the VEC to reject or accept such nominations, thus ensuring the gender balance.
**Students’ Union Election Season Gets an Early Start**

Elections to executive positions in DITSU will take place on Wednesday, November 16th for the following positions:

- **DIT Mountjoy Square:**
  - Women's Rights Officer
  - Anti-Discrimination Officer

- **DIT Bolton Street:**
  - Women's Rights' Officer
  - Entertainment's Officer
  - Public Relations Officer
  - Clubs and Societies Officer
  - Apprentice Officer
  - Anti-Discrimination Officer

- **DIT Cathal Brugha Street:**
  - Employments Officer
  - Women's Rights Officer
  - Public Relations Officer

- **DIT Kevin Street:**
  - Anti-Discrimination Officer

- **DIT Aungier Street:**
  - Women's Rights Officer
  - Anti-Discrimination Officer

Nominations will open on November 2nd and will close at 5.00pm sharp on November 9th. Also on November 16th, there will be a constitutional referendum, proposing substantial constitutional changes to the DITSU Constitution. Details of the exact text were not available at time of going to press.

**Mountjoy Square Has Designs On Awards**

In this year's Graduate Designer Awards, three of the six category winners were from the Dublin Institute of Technology, and specifically from DIT Mountjoy Square.

There were six categories and altogether over 300 participants in this year's competition. The DIT winners were:

- Gail Wall Morris, in the Exhibition and Interior Design Category (19 participants). The judges were particularly impressed with the planning and perspective of her hotel scheme, which featured a novel bedroom arrangement.
- Niamh Sharkey in the Graphic Design Category (87 participants). Niamh's illustration work was highly praised by the judges, who said that it was "beautifully crafted" and had a "fresh and innovative approach" and
- Leo Scarff in the Product Design Category (58 participants). Leo's range of well-made furniture and lighting of contemporary design, with strong attention to detail, impressed the judges.

Grainne McGarty and Lisa O'Farrell were commended in the Exhibition and Interior Design Category as was Michael McGaine in the Theatre, Film and TV Design Category. All are from DIT Mountjoy Square.

The presentation of Certificates to the category winners and the announcement of the Graduate Designer of the Year will be made by the Patron of the Society of Designers of Ireland, President Mary Robinson, at a reception on Tuesday, 25 October, in DesignYard in Temple Bar.

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**McPeake’s**

**Freshly Made Sandwiches & Rolls**

*Exclusive suppliers to all DIT Student Union Shops*
November 17th

What's it mean?
Semesterisation, a system unfamiliar to most DIT students and a word most commonly associated with American television programmes set in high schools suffused with teenage trauma, is to be widened within the DIT in the coming years.

But a sweeping expansion is unlikely according to Dr Brendan Goldsmith, President of the DIT.

"I'm not saying that I'd like to see a majority of courses semesterised in the near future. Something has to be worked out in due course but there could be very good reasons not to semesterise a course. There's been a lot of debate about that and it has not been resolved yet."

The system, which entails a set of exams for students soon after they return to college from Christmas holidays and then another set at the end of the year, is still relatively new to the DIT and Dr Goldsmith admits that the institute is feeling its way along to a certain extent.

"It's a new thing and we need to try it and refine it." He points out that it was not a system that could be evaluated in the abstract. It operates in the traditional universities but as both students in those institutions and DIT students will tell you, the two are not the same.

Colman Byrne, President of DITSU, is very wary of the system as it exists. "I know everyone is saying that it's going to come in and that it's going to be an easy transition, but I don't think that it is. A lot of teachers' organisations are going to fight against it, we're definitely going to fight against it as it is; the counsellors are not in favour of it; the chaplaincy, the people concerned with student life, aren't in favour of it. The way it is at the moment, it's not working, it's making life more stressful."

Another source of concern for students unions is that the system will radically alter student life result in less contact between students and the unions. Specifically, there is some concern that all activities will have to be crammed into a three week period in February. As present the system is such that students have a three week break after their January exams.

Dr Goldsmith accepts that there will most likely be changes in this regard but points out that the system is as it is for a reason.

"Semesterisation that has been introduced at the moment has been done within the constraints of the existing academic year and that may not make the best sense. If we had a completely free hand we probably wouldn't choose semesterisation to coincide with dates as they are. But the reality is that the academic year has to wrap up by June 20th. I personally this is nonsensical but it has to be done." He added that if the DIT was free from this constraint a bigger semesterisation, a system unfamiliar to most DIT students and a word most commonly associated with American television programmes set in high schools suffused with teenage trauma, is to be widened within the DIT in the coming years.

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