

UCC eNewsletter

April 2020



NAVIGATE STORIES

Note from the New Head of Student Recruitment

Where Do Our Graduates Go?

UCC Awarded 'Best Student Experience' in Ireland

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Sport Scholarship Programmes Application

One-to-One Digital Session

New Open Online Course for Senior Cycle Students

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Dear colleagues and friends,

I hope that our newsletter finds you all well in these unprecedented times. Little did I imagine, when starting in the exciting new role of Head of Student Recruitment last December, that a lot of the recruitment activities that usually happen in the Spring and early Summer would be coordinated from my makeshift home office.

Similar to how you now most likely interact with your students, our regular modus operandi of face-to-face engagement has shifted to online fora. New ways of communicating and reaching our current and prospective students has had to be found and deployed quickly, with Microsoft Teams, Zoom, Skype, FaceTime, WhatsApp and other online platforms becoming our best friends overnight. It is amazing to see how fast most of us have adapted and many of our newfound skills will be beneficial to us even when things return to their more usual tracks.

There is no doubt that the current pandemic has caused much uncertainty for young people around the world. I would like to reassure you that University College Cork, after 170 years of rising to the challenges of the day, will continue to welcome, to inspire, and to champion our students for many years to come.

Following the recent announcement by the Minister of Education, Joe McHugh, regarding the postponement of the Leaving Certificate state examination until late July/early August, we are examining the potential impact on the incoming first year students. We have much to consider and we don't have all the answers yet. We understand the pressure Leaving Certificate students are under, given the uncertainty of the current situation, and we appreciate how this may impact them. I would like to assure you that student health and welfare will remain core to our decision-making at all times.

We have created a short [video](#), *Everyday Matters*, with practical tips on how to focus on the here and now. Hopefully you and your students will find it useful.

We also have an FAQ section online, which outlines our preparations for all prospective and incoming students, and this is updated very regularly. Please keep an eye out for updates on our [UCC Applicant Portal](#) and UCC's dedicated webpage for [COVID-19](#).

Lenka Forrest



Please do not hesitate to email me should you have any questions or comments:
Lenka.Forrest@ucc.ie

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At the end of February, we held a short workshop for Guidance Counsellors. The session was in the Dr Dora Allman room, in the recently opened **Hub**, which offers spectacular panoramic views of the city and campus. Thanks to all that attended. At this workshop, we discussed the UCC Undergraduate Prospectus, our UCC course web pages and what information is key for our prospective students, their parents/guardians and you to have at your fingertips. Defined career opportunities for each course was an area that was strongly highlighted, and we are proud that UCC Graduates are highly sought-after by employers. **93% of our graduates are in employment or further studies within nine months of graduating.** We attribute this success to our approach and commitment to being employability-focussed.

On our UCC website, we publish up-to-date information each year showing where our graduates go. The information is collected via a nationally coordinated survey called the **Graduate Outcomes Survey**. It is an annual survey about the activities and perspectives of graduates 6 to 9 months after they finish their studies. All graduates who complete a course are asked to take part in the survey, in order to help current and future students gain an insight into career destinations and development. These responses also help the university to evaluate and promote our courses. You will see that it is a very rich and useful source of data. This is an example of the details for the **BSc (Hons) in Business Information Systems (CK203)**. All our Graduate Outcomes surveys results for the last number of years can be found on the **Career Services** website.



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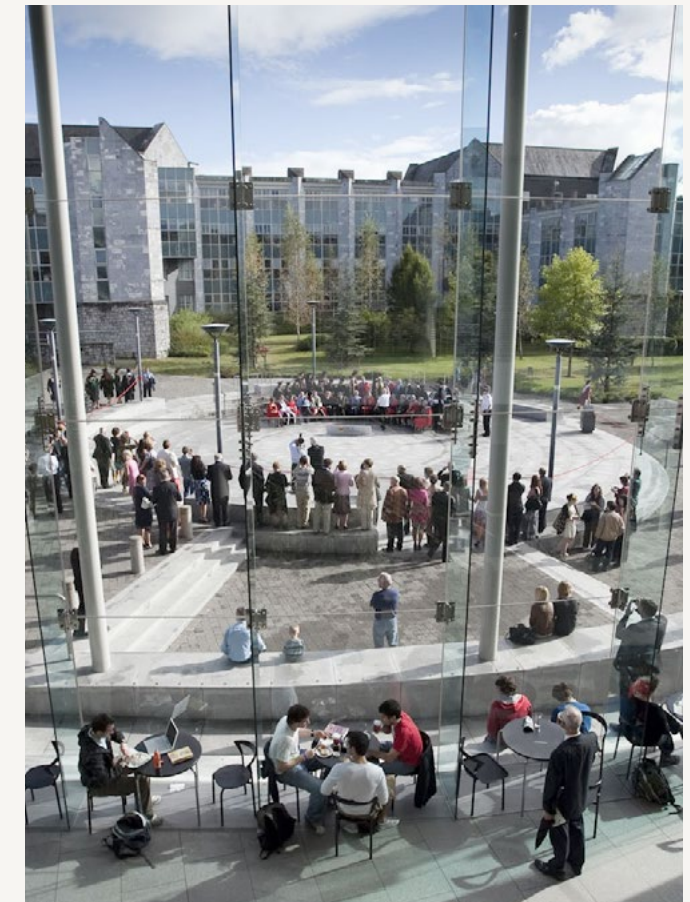
UCC AWARDED 'BEST STUDENT EXPERIENCE' IN IRELAND

One of the highlights of the first quarter of 2020 happened on Thursday, February 20th, in the Ballsbridge Hotel in Dublin at **The Education Awards** where University College Cork was recognised as the Third Level institution offering the **Best Student Experience in Ireland**.

The judges looked for clear information, backed up by facts, that paid attention to these criteria:

- Academic and professional qualification of staff members;
- Curricula development, student/delegate numbers and course accreditations and affiliations.
- Career development within programmes;
- Social initiatives that have been taken to enrich the social lives of the students, including on/off-campus clubs, societies or associations;
- Excellence in education and training where we have gone beyond curricular requirements to facilitate students;
- Industry exposure of students to the wider community, including listings of invited speakers, details of external research, industrial or other relevant institutions nationally and globally.

Our **Connected Curriculum** and **Graduate Attributes Programme (GAP)** are engaging all our 22,000 students in a changing nature of curricula development towards one of co-creation. This approach has emphasised the holistic development of students, combining academic with professional, community-based and inter-professional learning to develop values, skills and aptitudes that promote civic participation, social inclusion, sustainability and impactful, global citizenship in all academic courses.



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SPOTLIGHT

IT Interdisciplinary programmes at UCC

Technology is pervasive, impacting all elements of our lives. This reality has been demonstrated to us more than ever in the last two months.

“Irish people use their phones for more than four and a half hours every day but spend a tiny fraction of the time making or receiving phone calls. Social media by far the most popular thing people use their phones for” – ComReg report, *Irish Times*, September 2019.

Understanding how we interact with computers, and how our interaction with computers influences our behaviour, is becoming increasingly more important and companies need people who understand these concepts. For this reason, the School of Computer Science and Information Technology and the School of Applied Psychology have jointly developed a new undergraduate

degree: the **BA (Hons) Psychology and Computing (CK121)**. This unique degree provides a fundamental understanding of both disciplines bringing synergies which provides UCC students with unique attributes.

Students of the **BA (Hons) Psychology and Computing** will:

- develop expertise in both human behaviour and technology design;
- learn how technology impacts our lives;
- discover new intuitive and more accessible ways to interact with computers;
- explore human-computer interaction, user experience (UX), video game and social media design and
- develop critical, analytical, ethical, responsible design and problem-solving skills.

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"In second year, Psychology and Computing students start preparing for work placement and have undertaken interviews with international companies such as McAfee, Janssen, McKesson, and Spearline. The companies have reported that previous students are outstanding, with excellent technical skills and very professional", noted Amy McMullan, Work Placement Officer at UCC.

According to Morgan McKinley, many tech companies are designing increasingly complex digital products for increasingly demanding tech users resulting in heightened demand for talented UX designers who can shape these products with the end user in mind. Salaries for User Interaction (UI) / User Experience (UX) designers are attractive, averaging between €50,000-€60,000.

Graduates of the BA (Hons) Psychology and Computing who wish to pursue a career in Psychology can do so via our Higher Diploma in Applied Psychology. For more info visit: www.ucc.ie/en/compsci/courses/undergraduate/bapc/



Another course highlighting UCC's interdisciplinary approach and the interconnected nature of our lives with technology is the **BA (Hons) Digital Humanities & Information Technology (CK118)**. Graduates of UCC's **BA (Hons) Digital Humanities & Information Technology** are uniquely balanced across the arts and computing, having studied interdisciplinary modules from Arts, Digital Humanities, and Computer Science. This programme explores how technology can be used to study culture and society. Students develop the practical technical skills necessary to succeed in the digital age, while also seeking to discover what it is to be human in the digital age, and how we might see ourselves and others as humanity becomes ever more connected and shaped by digital technology.

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Sport Scholarship Programmes Application

The UCC Department of Sport and Physical Activity has a long-established Sports Scholarship Scheme in place. The Department has remodelled Sport Scholarships in line with their new **Sports Strategy**. The aim is to be the Go-To University for Sport in Ireland. We are developing a new performance strategy to enhance our support and sharpen our edge.

The UCC Sport Scholarship programme is divided into two main strands:

(1) **UCC Individual Sport Scholarship** – which is divided into three levels: Gold, Silver and Bronze. The Individual Sport Scholarship is open to applicants involved in team sports or individual sports other than the core sports.

(2) **UCC Core Team Sport Scholarships** which covers Hockey, Rugby, Soccer and GAA which incorporates Gaelic Football, Hurling, Ladies Gaelic Football and Camogie.

We are also delighted to have the following **sponsored scholarships**:

- Roy Keane UCC Sport Soccer Scholarship
- M.J. Dowling UCC Sport Hurling Scholarship
- Jason Foley Memorial Scholarship
- Corporate sponsored scholarships – these vary from year to year. These include Bank of Ireland and Greenstar and Mycro.

The Munster Council of the GAA also allocates bursaries to GAA students living in the Munster region. These bursaries are open to players and

administrators. These application forms are available through the Munster Council GAA in October. Please contact them directly.

Application Forms are available at:
<https://uccsport.submit.com/show/36>

The closing date for receipt of completed applications is:
4th September 2020

The Quercus Talented Sports Scholarships Applications for 2020 are now closed.



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One-to-One Digital Session

Are any of your students looking for some assistance? Are they still considering applying for one of our degree programmes? Do they have a burning question or doubt that needs to be addressed? Our staff are available for one-to-one virtual sessions Monday to Friday, 10-11.30am and 2.30-3.30pm to answer questions on our programmes, CAO applications, student life and so on. They can tell us what they may need help with, and we will do our best to point them in the right direction. Booking is easy, go to www.ucc.ie/undergrad/allapplicants and click 'Book a one-to-one Digital Session'.



The BComm Convention is Gone On-line

The BComm Convention was originally scheduled to take place on UCC Campus on Wednesday 22nd April. Although the event had to be cancelled, we want to share some of the key messages from our incredible line-up of speakers, so we have transitioned the event to an on-line webinar. Watch the first episode here <https://youtu.be/nJ-nYkCclxA>. Further episodes will become available over the coming weeks. To register to receive these videos please email Anne Wallace (a.wallace@ucc.ie).



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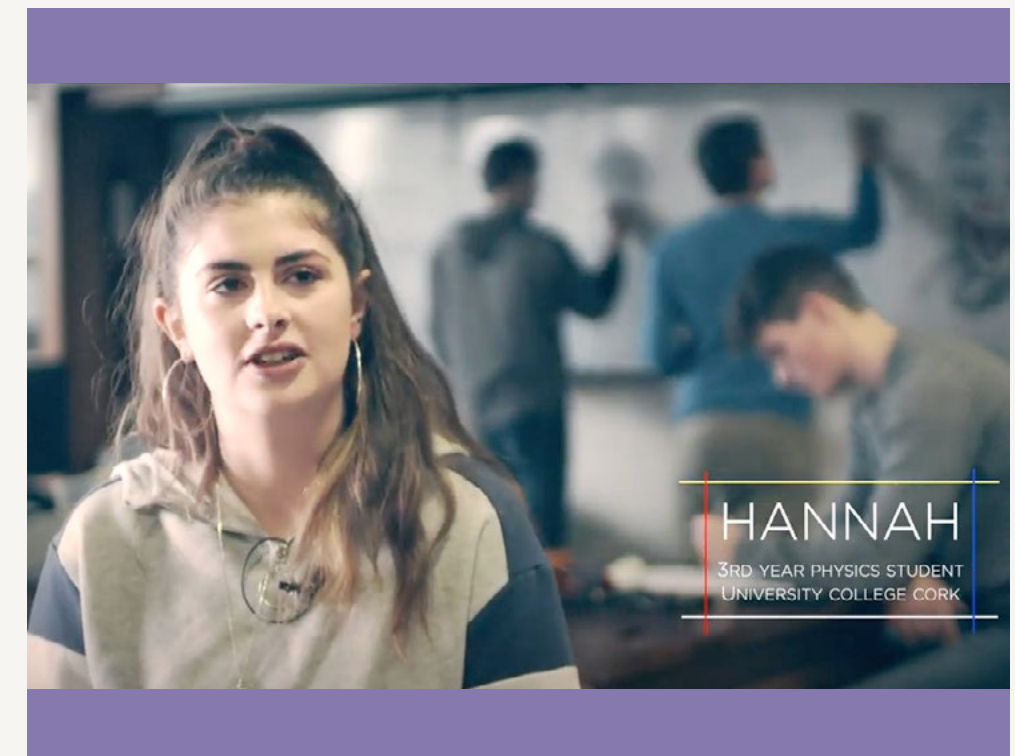
UPCOMING EVENTS

Live Q&A Webinar

We are planning a **Live Q&A Webinar** for Tuesday 12th May @2pm-4pm IST for all CAO Applicants.

During this session, participants will be able to ask questions pertinent to the CAO application process, any timelines known at that point, ask about specific courses, requirements, etc.

Specific details on how to log in on the day or how to access it at a later stage will be shared with all CAO applicants and you in the upcoming days.



NEW VIDEOS

In the recent days, we have uploaded a couple of new course videos, which may be of interest to our prospective students. You will be able to see **Arts (CK101)** and **Physics (CK408) & Industrial Physics (CK409)** in a new fun and informative way. Hopefully your students will enjoy watching them as much as we did.

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New Open Online Course for Senior Cycle Students

UCC is currently finalising a new open, online course for senior cycle students to help with the challenges of the transition to university that they may be facing in the run up to Leaving Certificate.

Thinking about higher-level learning can be a very exciting time in students' lives, but it can also be a daunting change from school. By preparing students for what to expect and having a resource that is open, online and easy to navigate may help you to prepare the students for success over the next several years.

Nurturing Bright Futures has been developed by the Graduate Attributes Programme in UCC with content written by many key staff in the university and will complement the many resources you use in the classroom. It will also provide a space for reflection that the students can do at home with parents and siblings, with friends and classmates at school, or on an individual basis, if they so wish.

This self-reflection toolkit will help the students to anticipate, identify and navigate situations before entering higher education so that they are

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better prepared. In addition to encouraging them to reflect on courses and careers, it will contain information on the realities of university life, such as information on budgeting, paying bills, good study skills, developing healthy relationships, goal setting, building resilience and developing good physical and mental fitness. The course will also introduce prospective students to graduate attributes and values that UCC are instilling in the students from first year as they transition through their programme of study and beyond, to enable them to become world and work ready.

The online course is being developed as a modularised model, which should take about six hours in total. It will be totally adaptable, so it can be used one hour per week over a period of six weeks, or whatever the user wishes. Content will be engaging - Infographics allow for visual presentation of information and facts organised together with graphics, charts, text and diagrams which will help grab the attention of the audience and add to the power of engagement. Downloadable PDFs will be provided for the students to self-reflect and self-assess at various stages throughout.

Nurturing Bright Futures will be launched later in the year. Opposite is a sample of what the visuals will look and feel like.



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During these times, we hear more than ever that we need to look out for and after each other but we also need to look after ourselves. Here are some links to some resources that you may find helpful in this regard. They have been recommended by our colleagues in UCC's HR Staff Wellbeing team and focus on techniques and strategies to alleviate work-related stress and anxiety.

- For Work Stress and Anxiety Relief, try this 15-minute virtual mind vacation.
www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZHLOU9cpk8
- Visit **Headspace** for free guided meditation and information on the practice.
www.headspace.com/science

And here you are at the end of our April newsletter! Thank you for your ongoing support and collaboration. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at DiscoverUCC@ucc.ie

Stay well. Stay safe. Stay in touch.

