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DIT: Students Union

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DIT loses arts academy to DCU

By Malachy Clerkin

A PROPOSED Academy for the Performing Arts is to be based in DCU, despite the fact DIT is widely regarded as more appropriate, given its international credibility in this field.

The decision to award the academy to DCU was taken by the Minister for Arts, Culture, Heritage, Gaeltacht and The Islands, Ms Síle de Valera TD. Her decision was based on a report compiled by Dr Peter Rehmshaw of The London Guildhall School of Music. The report suggested the academy should be housed in three separate locations, one of which should be Dublin-based.

Dr Ellen Hazelkorn, Director of the Faculty of Applied Arts, believes the decision not to award the academy to DIT flies in the face of common sense.

"DIT is the largest institute in the country that caters for the performing arts. It has the highest number of students and the widest selection of courses."

According to Dr Hazelkorn, efforts to secure the award have been ongoing since 1998. "We submitted a very formal application two years ago. We are disappointed with the Minister's decision but we are looking to the future."

With this in mind, Dr Hazelkorn points out that "since music and drama are such diverse industries, DIT is providing the most exciting range of courses in the country. We have just set up a BMus course in music which will consist of four strands - performance, composition, teaching and traditional music.

Indeed, this is the only course in the country which gives traditional music such a high profile".

DIT's Head of Drama, Mr Victor Merriman, shares Dr Hazelkorn's disappointment, pointing out that DIT was not the only institute to be overlooked.

"DIT and Trinity College are both major providors in this area, with long track records and international credibility in the field and yet both institutions are excluded from the proposed Academy."

Mr Merriman suggests that the fact that DIT was overlooked may be something of a back-handed compliment. "This may not be a bad thing in itself, as it may simply amount to endorsement by omission of the specific qualities of both institutions. In the case of DIT, the location of performers within the Faculty of Applied Arts underpins the institute's commitment to understanding and positioning cultural workers across arts, humanities, social and human sciences in relation to each other."

Continued on page 8

£17m for new campus

By Lisa Deeney

DIT has received £17 million from the Government to purchase a 65-acre site in Grangegorman. Sport facilities and on-campus accommodation will be provided for in the new campus. This is the initial phase of the £150 million development plan for the DIT which is expected to be completed in 8-9 years.

DIT aims to provide sports facilities, to build on-campus accommodation, to move DIT buildings out of rented accommodation and to restructure and centralise the Faculty system.

The Government announced the funding of the Grangegorman site in late December. The Tánaiste, Mr Bertie Ahern is a graduate of the College of Commerce in Rathmines and is known to favour the move to Grangegorman.

Overall DITSSU President Sarah McGovern expressed delight at the news, while also noting it has taken a long time. 'We have been campaigning for a couple of years for better facilities for the students of DIT,' she said. According to

Sports facilities and on-campus accommodation to be provided

McGovern, the sky is the limit where facilities for students are concerned. A bar, a creche, a laundrette and a hairdressing salon are all reportedly on the agenda. Individual developments for Grangegorman have not yet been decided, however, and will involve consultation with the DIT, the Department of Education and DITSSU.

It is hoped the sports facilities will be in operation from March and that construction will begin on the on-campus accommodation during the summer. The first students to transfer to the new campus will be the apprentices. According to DIT Independent sources, the apprentices could move as early as Easter.

At the moment, DIT has 14,500 full-time students, which makes it the most over-crowded of all third level institutions in the country. DIT has, on average, less than half the space available to students in other colleges. The Grangegorman plan hopes to help combat this problem. At present DIT has virtually no sport facilities and no on-campus accommodation compared to UCD and other third level colleges.

The development plan is at an early stage and details about on-campus accommodation have not been finalised. 'We have no student accommodation. This is bad when you compare it to UCD, a college of approximately the same size, which has 1,400 beds,' McGovern said.

It is believed, however, that funding for on-campus accommodation will come from private sources.

DIT is hoping that the number of students accommodated for will reach 800. There is a definite desire to move out of rented accommodation as soon as possible. The Management Square site and DIT's administration office on Upper Pembroke Street are both housed in rented accommodation.

Continued on page 8
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Terms and conditions apply
Report on central authority for grants

By Lisa Deeney and Eve Irvine

THE Department of Education and Science will publish a report regarding the proposal for a Central Grants Authority this year in conjunction with the Department of Social Community and Family Affairs, according to Ian Russell of the Union of Students in Ireland (USI).

The Central Grants Authority would operate as a central agency administering Third Level grants, similar to the Central Applications Office (CAO). Currently, for the Central Applications Office (CAO). Currently, for the 1997 DITSU surveys, 55 per cent of students in DIT were grant-holders and 65 per cent found the grant systems inaccessible. In 1996, president of DITSU, Sara McGovern, suggests the idea of a Central Grants Authority.

"I believe it would benefit students in that it would be a much fairer system, everyone would be treated the same. It would also mean less bureaucracy and no late payment," she said.

The President of USI, Philip Madden, believes that such an authority would benefit students across the country, as 'specification payments of grants' would be the result. The largest single costs for students occurs at the start of term (e.g. books, deposit for flat) and therefore students need to receive the grants as early as possible into the term," he said.

Michelle McAuley, SU President of Cathal Brugha Street, feels that many grant-holders in DIT are frustrated at the current system. "Students need to be clear about when, where and how they are going to get their grants."

At the minute, people are worrying because their friend has got their grant but theirs from Clongowes hasn't come through yet."

The idea of a Central Grants Authority was first proposed back in 1993 with the publication of the de Butler report. The report declared the grant system in 1993, which is the same today, to be an "unacceptable low". It also said that the means test is "defective" as it ignores the accumulated wealth of individuals.

In 1995 the government mentioned the concept of a central grants processing agency, in the form of the "95 White Paper Charting our Education Future." The job of a sabbatical student responsible for pool tables robbery

By Shane Mc Dermott

IN December, the DIT Independent reported how two pool tables in the Students' Union in Aungier Street were badly damaged and robbed. Since those robberies the situation in Aungier pool room has not improved.

According to the site president, "In Jordan, pool tables are missed in two ways: Firstly the cash is being robbed, from time to time, and more frequently old newspapers are being stuffed down the table pockets. This effectively means students get free games.

Those responsible have turned out to be first year students, most noticeably from the Transport Management and Business Information classes, though Jordan is quick to stress that he in no way blame every member of those classes.

"There is a core group responsible," he said, "I've caught them in the act on many occasions."

On one such occasion one student was brought into the president's office. "I warned him not to do it again and his excuse was, 'Well everyone's doing it'." Jordan was not being in third level he could come up with something better.

To deal with the robberies, the DITSU has two options. They can buy lock boxes for the tables and pay for repairs, or they can buy totally new tables. Those in use at the moment were originally in Bolton Street and were moved when that DIT got new tables.

They are in constant need of repair and as a result it would probably be cheaper to get in new tables and hope that students would want more respect for these tables. Regarding the issue of blocked pockets, there is nothing the DITSU can do except keep an eye on the pool room. The persistence of students makes this a difficult task however, paper being jammed in the tables every week or so.

Jordan is not yet willing to bring the incidents to the attention of the gardaí. "I'd prefer to keep it in the college, but I know that there are others in the Union who would have had the same feelings," he said.

Though the student responsible has so far received only warnings, the next time something serious happens Jordan believes that there would be no hesitation in pressing charges of criminal damage.

The pool tables in Aungier Street are too important to the successful running of the Union to be allowed to be used in a bad way. They are the Union branch's main source of income because the slot machines never became as profitable as pool games.

Jordan is not yet willing to bring the incidents to the attention of the gardaí. "I'd prefer to keep it in the college," he said, "but I know that there are others in the Union who would have had the same feelings," he said.

Michael Martin, the then Minister for Education in 1997, supported the idea of such an authority but no further action took place. Nicky Lawlor, EU Deputy President in Kevin Street describes this lack of action as "a blatant lack of interest on behalf of the Government in 3rd level education".

Philippa Madden, USI President believes that there is no authority in place at present because "taking responsibility from 66 authorities is not a simple task". For the Government, IMPACT, the trade union for the 66 authorities, said that the current deficiencies in the grant system was not the fault of the staff of the authorities but by the delays of the Department of Education.

"Having one agency may be an improvement. More is often better. And how will a Central Grants Authority deal directly with peoples' concern," said Al Butler the National Secretary for Local Authorities.

Some County Councils are not in favour of a Central Grants Authority. Meath Cllr, Jimmy Fortune said it "might have the effect of making the allocation of grants to under servicing people easier."

If Local authorities and Vocational Education Committees are allocating the grants, there is a greater chance of them knowing or finding out who is committing the fraudulence.

It is believed the new Minister for Education and Science, Michael Woods will announce in either way about a Central Grants Authority.

USI welcomes appointment

By Malschy Clerkin

The University of Student in Ireland (USI) welcomed the appointment of Dr Michael Woods as Minister for Education and Science and has called for him to meet with USI representatives as soon as possible.

Speaking to The DIT Independent in relation to the USI President, Philip Madden warned the Woods that he can expect a tough beginning to his reign. "When he took over from the now Minister well in his new department, we will not be giving him any honeymoon. We will be seeking an appointment with him so that we can explain our priorities for the future."

Madden said that commitments will be sought from the new Minister in certain areas that he feels have been neglected.

Chief among these is the inadequate level of maintenance grants and the erosion of the principle of free fees. Madden added that representations will be made regarding the "continuing shortage of purpose-built housing."

Madden also said tribute to the outgoing Minister, Michael Martin, who is to move to the Department of Health and Children. "Minister Martin has made a significant contribution to Irish education."

"As a former member of the Royal College of UCY, he was keenly aware of the issues facing third level education and we have always found him to be courteous and professional," he said. 
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Canteen flicks to help students mix?

By Brian Healy

AUNGIER Street site presi­dent Colm Jordan is propos­ing the instal­ment of a cinema in the non-smoking sec­tion of the campus canteen. The college has a film library of over 1,000 films and Jordan would like to see a large projection unit, similar to the one used in the canteen. The installation would also be bene­ficial to the film and broadcast­ing students who could use it to watch films that are relevant to their course.

Although Aungier St has a film society and it is effective due to the lack of space in the college, Jordan feels it is too small and doesn’t have a projection unit set up similar to that in UCD where films are shown on a regular basis. Therefore it could create a good atmosphere for students to meet and watch a movie. It could also be especially beneficial for first year students who may be finding it difficult to make friends.

"There are only 1,456 students in Aungier St, so it's a close knit community and a cinema would create a better buzz in the college."

With an estimated cost of €10,000, however, Jordan feels it difficult to raise the money to finance the project. "The students union doesn’t have much money but I’m trying to get funds from societies, from different faculties and indeed from the Radio and Broadcasting Department."

The project also includes the instal­ment of a jukebox in the smoking section of the canteen. This two pronged approach is rather ambitious but Jordan agrees the cinema and the jukebox would be valuable assets to the college.

He feels that it is not enough to set it up, but that he should make sure that future presidents maintain the cinema and jukebox so that they become permanent fixtures in the college.

"I feel that it is not effective due to the lack of space in the college. Jordan feels it is too small and doesn’t have a projection unit set up similar to that in UCD where films are shown on a regular basis. Therefore it could create a good atmosphere for students to meet and watch a movie. It could also be especially beneficial for first year students who may be finding it difficult to make friends.

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"I feel that it is not enough to just get it in but that I have to create a histor­y of it. For example, two years ago, the students union president started a Wednesday night out.

"Since there all the presi­dents have organised these nights out, including myself. So I want other presidents to continue this project."
focus on ... students and politics

**Opposition, lack of funding to blame for political deficit**

Shane Doran on the lack of political parties operating in the various DIT colleges

The Kevin St Young Fine Gael Cumann are the only active political party in DIT. On 22 October, newly appointed Chairperson, David Jenkins, formally set up DIT Young Fine Gael (YFG). Jenkins claims to “encounter a lot of anti-political sentiment in DIT”, and had considerable difficulty in gaining recognition for DIT YFG. This recognition was conditional on an agreement not to receive funds for a year, and according to Jenkins, “I got the impression they would prefer we weren’t here, or else set up another society with nothing to do with politics, which is really quite a sad thing. The Student Union would like to be the only voice for the students.”

Despite this, Labour Youth Student Officer, John Walsh, has said that the party are “absolutely committed” to expanding their base of operations to include the DIT Colleges, as part of Labour’s overall national recruitment drive.

Walsh stresses the importance of working and cooperating with the various Student Union’s within DIT, and looks forward to meeting DIT students in the near future.

However, according to overall SU President, Sarah McGovern, “it is not written anywhere that political parties cannot come in to DIT. It depends on the President of the time.” McGovern agreed that there was a need for cross campus co-ordination of Union policy on the issue of political parties in DIT, and promised that she would “sit down with our [DIT] Union Managers and Sabbatical Officers and get a policy together very soon.”

The DIT Student Union was democratically chosen to represent the wishes of the students who elected them in the first place.

It is not unreasonable to expect SU representatives to behave in the manner in which they were elected.

If members of this college want to set up a student, you will have to go to Bolton St. SU President, Graham O’Sullivan, “the way it works is, any student who wants to set up a society is more than welcome to, but for political parties it has to be a student in the college that asks them to set up.”

Additionally, reporting is possible if a student branch of the party is formed in the college.

At present, the Young Fine Gael Cumann in Kevin St is the only active branch of any political party in DIT.
As student union elections draw closer, Thomas Felle looks at the possible candidates for overall DITSU President.

Kevin Stute Site President Vincent Dooley said he would love to be Overall President.

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STUDENT Union elections have always been a time when the rule book is taken out and people on the election supervisory committee flout their knowledge of it as if they worked for the Vatican and had Pints in Cannon law.

It is a time when the corridors of cantare get decorated in a monochrome plaster of election posters, the most original of which usually attract the most votes, as candidates salute at the prospect of walking the corridors of power.

Or at least that may be the case for the lesser, though not necessarily less important non-sabbatical positions such as anents and clubs and societies.

But for site president and deputy, at least in part it is hoped, some sort of policies are debated as the schreech of microphones rattle on hunting days.

This year will be no different, although due to changes in the constitution last year part time officers are no longer elected until the beginning of the academic year in which they will serve, a move which was much criticised at the time by part time officers, but which was backed by most of the then executive, arguing the need for stable government, pointing out that as much as 50 per cent of elected part time officers in the past failed to fill positions due to failure or lack of interest in their position once Autumn came.

Most notably at the time, present Bolton Street Student Union President, Graham O’Sullivan, then a part time officer, spoke against that motion at a DITSU council meeting in early February 1999. Sources in the now executive have suggested may be interested in the overall position this year, however when the option was put to him he would not comment on the issue, saying “most of us are keeping our heads down at the moment”.

However one Site President has made no secret of his interest in the job. Kevin Stute Site President Vincent Dooley has said he would love to be Overall President, adding he had a lot to offer the students, however he too said he would not confirm he would be running until after the close of nominations in March.

Site President Colm Jordan said he will not be running for the Overall job, as has Mountjoy Square’s Keith Leenham, saying that it was “not a job [he] was interested in.”

Cathal Brugha’s Michelle McCauley also ruled out the role, as well as did Sarah McGeown and current Overall President Sarah McGovern is ineligible due to the three year rule in the constitution.

Michelle McCauley ruled out but she would be running.

But what are the real issues facing any would be candidate this year? The burning issue is accommodation. Any candidate that can answer the tough question with original yet highly practical solutions and alternative to over priced and overcrowded city centre student accommodation will do well. Of course that sounds a lot easier than it actually will be in practice.

More realistic vote grabbing soundbites will include moves to take the quality assessment of lecturers one step further and admit that there are bad lecturers in DIT.

A move to harmonise the faculties’ nights out instead of college nights out may also bring in votes, as would real commitments on sports facilities, including deadlines for completion of moves to Grangegorman within the lifetime of the office.

When UCD first moved to their now infamous campus in the late 60s, the students in the Senate went on as to the why a campus that was student proof should be designed.

After the riots in Paris in the late 60s, and the student liberation movement here in the early 70s, when conservation was still illegal and USI was first finding its feet, it was felt that a campus where no student body of any mass could congregate would be most beneficial.

No such requests are being made in Grangegorman.

Quite simply, there is no need for such a request, as DITSU students wouldn’t even bother turning up a meeting such important minds.

Political parties have never thrived in the Institute. Far from the student political epicentre of the worlds that is UCD, a few badly attended meetings of a Ogra Fianna Fail and young Fine Gael once a year are all that any one ever seems to manage to do.

To be fair, the FFers have in the past managed a little more than badly attended meetings, however this year they haven’t even managed that.

There is no radical socialist party, there is no radical right wing party, there is no Monster Raving Looney party, quite simply there is no thriving student democracy.

Student elections are not fought on policies or a political basis, rather they are fought on personalities, and resemble popularity contests more than political debates.

Electing to national student government (not the one unwarrantingly), while it is large, is another world, a world that dissimilarly, if anything, their method of electing national representatives is even more flawed, with college representatives voting en mass for candidates. Such officers are never directly elected and have no popular support or mandate from the students they represent.

Radical changes are needed in student political parties and amongst the mindset of ordinary students if democracy is once again to flourish amongst third level academics.

Student representatives should not be afraid to stand on platforms to hustings and represent a political party when they speak.

They should be actively involved in student political party branches and have a direct role in election policies for that party.

When people like Pat Rabbitte and Ruairi Quinn were in college, things were different. They all entered politics in their early 20s, and represented their parties or their political beliefs while in student government.

But for many of Students in Britain and in Northern Ireland (to a lesser degree) have got it right. There, officers are elected on political platforms, and no one person is expected to have all the answers.

A group of students, for example, will run together on a Labour mandate to fill senatorial positions in a University. It elected, they will then be in Government, and will have the power to fight against elections from elected members of the opposition at student councils or senates.

The System in DIT, while at the outset it may look quite democratic, is fundamentally flawed.

Our council is a complete joke. While students are given the opportunity to talk and representatives ask questions of the senior officers, the politics of self interest, consensual and personal rivalry are more commonly the only cards played.

While consensus is part of democracy, it is not the only part: Statesman like Soliloquies of “flawed pedagogy” will never be heard echo around the corridors of DIT student power.

There is another element, which has perhaps inadvertently led to less and less interest in student politics. Student Unions do not represent political parties outside of Social and Cultural budgets.

The measure was initially introduced to ensure that no political party could take advantage of the student vote; together with the fact that some students at the time were not happy that their money was helping fund political parties that they may not subscribe to.

However, they may have indirectly led to the slow demise of political interest amongst students in the Institute. Student political parties, and other political organisations cannot exist in a vacuum and do not function even if it is just to pay for expenses involved in running the branch.

Without this support from central budgets, they cannot survive. Without them, students have been deprived a vital cog in the wheel of third level education: the political debate.

A change in this rule may be commendable, but it needs to happen. If DIT is ever to attain its much longer for University status, student democracy must thrive, it can only do that through politics.
I am delighted to launch this book of linkage suitable country were asked to formulate a of a crane and harp to symbolise recommended entries from fellow Environment competition.

Nation Building award goes to Mountjoy student

By Samantha Rowntree

Mairead Donnelly, a third year graphic design student at DIT Mountjoy Square made a clean sweep in the Nation Building Designs On Your Environment competition.

Design students around the country work in series Nation Building a design based on any of the many themes to be explored in the new television series Nation Building.

Mairead used the creative design of a crane and harp to symbolise the current Irish construction boom.

Her design, along with highly commended entries from fellow DIT students Shona Patterson and Des Herry, is currently available in pubs, clubs and restaurants around the country on free postcards.

By Philip Madden, President USI

"How much will college cost next year?" is a question many students are asking to ask.

The free fee's initiative came about in 1995 for first-time undergraduate courses in public funded institutions.

However, the pleasure / pain theory kicked in with the introduction of a non-tuition charge.

Since then, we have all watched the non-tuition charge increase from €150 to over €278.

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) and the Department of Education remain adamant that it is the universities through the Conference of Heads of the Irish University are studying this at increasing the charge on an annual basis (in 1996 they wanted it to increase to €400).

They throw up arguments of pay increases and inflationary costs and hope that you, the student, will swallow it.

Well, an increase of 8.5% over a 4 year period just is not justifiable and cannot be tolerated in an era of supossed free education, 6000 students were as much at a demonstration in Dublin last October.

Postcards, placards, ministerial meetings, TD briefings, parliamentary questions and continued pressure - we are hoping that by using these and other campaigning measures - we can to CHIU, the HEA and the Department of Education, that when you remove tuition fees, one cannot simply just introduce and increase a non-tuition charge.

To give one hand and take with the other is blatant hypocrisy.

The charge has increased by 85% in five years.

If you apply that to what the universities wanted the charge to be in 1996, in order to get a look at what they might propose for 2001, you get the preposterous figure of €740.

It doesn’t take a genius to work out that the universities and the Department of Education are rapidly eroding the whole concept of free education.

This must stop and USI intend to keep fighting the battle at a national level.

However, this is one obvious area where local pressure can help win the war.

Your college governing body can actually stop any increase in the Non-tuition charge and the time is fast approaching when they must take their decision.

Students have two seats on all college governing authorities, so make sure that you are applying pressure to stop any further increases.

Back up your representatives with letters and other means of support and make sure that you are not being charged more for your free education.

£17m for new campus

From page 1:

It has not been officially decided where they will relocate but the move is expected within the next three years.

The recommendations of the DIT development plan are that Kevin Street will become home to the Faculty of Science, Angler Fishing, the Faculty of Business, Cathal Brugha Street, Property of Tourism and Food Science and that Bolton Street will be the home of Engineering.

There have been rumour that the site for Mountjoy Square at Chatham Row may also be considered.

However, when contacted by The Independent, Robert Regan, Secretary of DIT, said that "there are no plans to dispose of any DIT property at this point". Also, according to DIT, the Dublin City Council and the DIT student union have been consulted on the matter.

"Mountjoy Square will move to the Announcement regarding the next number of years".

It is hoped that the Grandgeorge centre will house the Faculty of Built Environment and the Faculty of Applied Arts and Culture.

The site will allow for a 30 per cent increase in student enrolment at apprenticeship, diploma, degree and post graduate level.

This is good news for the DIT as we are already both Irish and international colleges is much more suitable than the model proposed for the new academy.

"It is much more in line with the best contemporary thought and practice than the nineteen century conservative model, even if it is elaborated across three sites."

The main concern regarding the proposal, according to Mr Marrian, is "the secrecy surrounding its progress over some two years, and the favour that the highest bidders, in spite of their having little or no track record in the field."

Indeed, the position of DIT and TCD in this regard could be useful compared to that of the FAI and the GAA in relation to the proposed national stadium."
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With DIT's Rag Week fast approaching, The Independent gives you the low-down on all the madness and mayhem. All proceeds will go to Sight Savers International and the National Council for the Blind

**Aungier Street**

**Monday, February 21st**

11.00am: Indoor Football Tournament in the YMCA on Aungier Street.

1.00pm: Canteen Madness including live music and a Tequila and Taco competition.

3.00pm: 'Who wants to be a drunken Bastard' in Mono Lounge. Similar in style and content to Chris Tarrent's popular quiz show but this way you get drunk for free and you don't get to be a millionaire.

8.00pm: Celebrations kick off in the Garda Club on Harrington Street with free pint extravaganza sponsored by Guinness.

9.00pm: Table quiz with top prizes including a TV.

10.00pm: Hypnotist show which offers you the opportunity to humiliate yourself.

11.00pm: Thank God 4 Guinness Ball in the Garda club.

**Tuesday, February 22nd**

Chill out in the common area all day with all the coolest video releases. Refreshments provided. Pool and Table soccer competitions.

9.00pm: Crazy Nite in Mono Club including the infamous 'Sticky Bum' contest followed by the Romeo and Juliet Ball. All pints £2.00, all shots £2.00 and Aftershock £1.50 plus nightly promotions.

**Wednesday, February 23rd**

Rag Trip to exotic far-flung destination. Bus times to be confirmed.

**Thursday, February 24th**

Rag Ball - the Point Theatre-Cross campus fertilisation project.

**Bolton Street**

**Monday**

11.00am: Live DJ in the common room

Launch of Rag Mag/Iron stomach competition in the social area

1.00pm: Juniper live in the social area

2.00pm: Three-legged pub crawl starting in Bodkins on Dorset St

5.00pm: Drinks promotions in Bodkins and Four Seasons

8.00pm: Traffic Light Ball in Frazers

**Tuesday**

10.00am: Pre Rag Trip drinks in Bodkins

11.00am: Buses leave for Scooby Doo Rag Trip which will be taking in 3 night clubs. For those who aren't brave enough for the Rag Trip there will be a Live DJ in the common room

Live band in the Social area.

1.00pm: Comedian in the social area

5.00pm: Drinks promotions in Bodkins

**Wednesday**

10.00am: Breakfast drinks promotion for Rag Trip survivors

11.00am: Live DJ in common room

Live Jazz band in common area

1.00pm: Guinness Pulsation in Common Room

8.00pm: Missing In Action in Temple Theatre. Admission free with Bolton Street Student card

**Thursday**

11.00am: Live DJ in common room

Slave Auction of Staff and Lecturers in social area. Also head shaving and waxing

1.00pm: Hypnotist in Social Area.

3.00pm: Pre-Ball promotions in Bodkins and The Four Seasons pub.

7.30pm: Buses leave from Frazers on O'Connell St for The Point

**Friday**

11.00am: Videos in Common area

2.00pm: Beer promotions in the Goalpost
Kevin Street

Monday
1.00pm: Live DJ in the Snackery
3.00pm: Videos in the Snackery
6.00pm: Planet Murphy’s night with Guinness promotions and party games.
8.00pm: Karaoke with 1 TV and a stereo to give-away
10.00pm: Woodsie
12.00pm: DJ

Tuesday
11.00am: Rag Trip
1.00pm: DJ - the Snackery

Wednesday
12.00pm: Live band - Rising in the Snackery
1.30pm: Comedians
6.00pm: Poker Classic in The Palace
10.00pm: The Pod with Al Gibbs

Thursday
1.00pm: Live DJ in the Snackery.
2.00pm: Gunge Tank
3.00pm: Finals of Pool Competition
4.30pm: Zak Powers,

Hypnotist, in The Palace
7.30pm: Buses to the Point

Cathal Brugha St

Monday
12.00pm: Rag week launch in common room with live DJ, games and Who wants to be a Millionaire?
3.00pm: Kegs and Comedians in the Sidewalk.
8.00pm: Romeo and Juliet Ball in the Sidewalk with Guinness promotion

Tuesday
10.00am: Alan Gogarty in the Sidewalk.
1.00pm: Scooby Doo Mystery Tour

Wednesday
12.00pm: Austin Powers video - the Common room
2.00pm: Ice Skating in Phibsborough £2.50
8.00pm: Planet Murphys

Thursday
12.00pm: Fuusball Tournament - common room
2.00pm: £1 a pint in Brannigans
6.00pm: Pre-ball Promotions in the Sidewalk.
8.00pm: The Rag Ball in The Point

Friday
Videos in the common room all day

Mountjoy Sq

Monday
12.00pm: Pulsation in the canteen (Guinness promo)
2.00pm: DJ Djonny Boyle
5.00pm: Mystery Keg (Guinness promo)
8.00pm: Crazy night in The Big Tree (free kegs of Guinness)
Evening: Traffic Light ball in Frazers - free (Guinness promo)

Tuesday
Rag Trip

Wednesday
12.00pm: Djonny Boyle
2.00pm: Sink the Black Pool Competition
5.00pm: College DJs local pub
8.00pm: Planet Murphy’s night with Guinness promotions and party games.

Thursday
12.00pm: Seamus Fogarty
2.00pm: Playstation Challenge in Shakespeare (Pints & Bottle of Guinness - £2)
5.00pm: Pre-ball madness in Shakespeare
8.00pm: The Rag Ball

By Malachy Clerkin

*People don’t go blind by the million. Each of them, as a human being, goes blind as a personal tragedy.* Sir John Wilson, Founder of Sight Savers International, who was blinded as a child

Sight Savers International is the UK’s leading charity working to prevent and cure blindness in developing countries and bring hope to people who will never see again.

Founded in 1950, Sight Savers has restored sight to four million people and treated 45 million others for potentially blinding conditions. Sight Savers currently operates in over 20 developing countries in Africa, Asia and the Caribbean.

Sight Savers’ programmes are developed in collaboration with local partners with the aim of establishing sustainable services, targeting the poorest and most vulnerable communities.

It has helped to pioneer many innovations such as:

* The introduction of integrated education in the developing world, allowing blind children to flourish in mainstream schools;
* The comprehensive eye care model, providing entire districts with a complete range of eye care services, including eye tests, diagnosis, treatment and education and training for the incurably blind;
* Setting up the developing world’s first production line for low-cost stitches and lenses used in cataract surgery, bringing down the global price of cataract surgery.

Sight Savers have also built their reputation on cost-effectiveness. For just 50p, Sight Savers can prevent a person from going blind from River Blindness in West Africa and £15 will pay for a cataract operation to restore someone’s sight.
AIB on Campus

For all your financial needs, please contact your local student officers.

Julie Martin - DIT Kevin Street and Aungier Street

Ciara Toomey - DIT Mountjoy Square, Cathal Brugha Street and Bolton Street

Opening Hours

DIT Kevin Street: 10am - 12.30am daily
DIT Aungier Street: 1.30pm - 3.30pm daily
DIT Mountjoy Square: 3.00pm - 4.00pm (Monday)
10.30am - 11.30 am (Tuesday)

DIT Cathal Brugha Street: 2.15pm - 3.30pm (Thursday)

DIT Bolton Street: 9.30am - 11.45am and 1-2pm (Monday, Wednesday and Friday)
10.30am - 11.30am and 1-1.30 (Tuesday)
9.30am - 12.45pm (Tuesday)

AIB Bank
WEIRD AND WONDERFUL WEBSITES

By Rachel Collins

THE internet has become an integral part of our everyday lives. From work and study to leisure and entertainment, the internet has endless possibilities - if you know what you're looking for.

Here at the DIT Independent, we know how frustrating it can be, looking for that perfect website to while away the hours, so we've found a few of the weirder and more wonderful websites to keep you amused during those boring computer classes!

Firstly, there's the wonderfully weird (and powerfully profane) Portaolegal at http://www.toroadollies.com

A Wacky Web World Winner, this site is totally devoted to the weirdness of the toilet. The site contains more information than you would imagine possible to have about toilets. There are books about toilets which are available for you to buy and enjoy in the comfort of your own bathroom, no doubt! They have movies about toilets, creative uses for toilets, games and contests, a notice board for your thoughts on toilets and lots more! The site is bright, accessible, and pretty user friendly (including the survey on whether the toilet seat should be left up or down!) Worth a look if you have a spare half hour of internet access!

Next is the completely absurd "The page that turns you into a cabbage" at http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Plains/2144.html

This is the type of website that makes you worry about the sanity of a lot of internet surfers! This site offers you the unique opportunity to have yourself turned into a cabbage at the push of a button or a brussel sprout, or a cauliflower at that. Of course, the pictures of cabbages for you with a soft spot for our leafy green friends, there are poems about cabbages and also links to spoof newspapers such as The Cabbage Times and The Giant Slug Brigade.

This site is a little slow to download but if you have the patience to wait a little longer than usual, you'll get a laugh from it.

CELEBRITY HATE SITES

Celebrity hate sites are ten a penny on the internet. One of the better ones is the Assassin website on http://www.newgrounds.com/assassin.html

Categories such as "Accidentallyスマッシュ Britney Spears" (and who wouldn't want to?) and "Splatter the Spice Girls" give you the opportunity to do some serious damage to celebrities with acid, mortar attacks and the odd car crash & giant flats! Your personal favourite is the "Microwave Furb" link where you get to watch the animatronic bastard version of Furb and one of the chickens from The Muppets fry and explode at the touch of your mouse button.

For those of you who find these sites too juvenile, there is the ultra-classy "Crap-A-Grant" site on http://www.fartfarm.com/crapa­grant.html

This gives you the pleasure of selecting a crap-a-gram for a loved one and sending it to them by email. Choices include the perennial Crappily Birthday, the seasonal Crappy Christmas and of course, the essential Crappy Times and The Giant Slug Brigade.

By Ciara O'Brien

WE'VE all considered jetting off to the States on a Work and Travel Programme. New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Dallas - pick. As long as you have the money to make these dreams a reality, which travel company is going to offer their basic insurance for £80, while Usit charge £99. But the major difference is that Ust will pay you considerably more than Sayit.

Naturally, flights are separate. A return flight to Boston or New York with Sayit will cost £320 plus £42 flight tax, bringing the total cost of the programme to £659. For a flight to New York with Usit, the cheapest published prices would work out at £285 for the flight and £26 tax, so Usit are about £80 cheaper, which is a great saving.

Sayit's programme fee is cheaper at £356 than Usit's charge of £199. The US Embassy fee doesn't differ between the two, although Usit do have some rules for applicants, Usit have yet to adopt this system, as they have made the introduction of an insurance system optional.

Like all things in life, there are some rules for applicants. Usit requires that you are eighteen before June 1 of this year, and Sayit will not take applications from those who are under the age of 28.

Both companies state that applicants must be in studying a full-time course in a college, university or third level institution for a minimum of two years. In other words, part-time students are not accepted.

But if you meet the criteria, and you feel like a change for the summer, in the words of the great Nike giants, "Just Do It!"

Before you travel you have to decide which company is going to have the pleasure of your business - Ust or Sayit?

SATI has over its rival's in the ways in which the visas can be booked. Finally, student travel companies offer some special deals in order to take advantage of the abundance of technology that the 20th century gave us. Sayit now offer an online booking form, useful if you really don't like queuing for hours in the cold. Unfortunately, Usit have yet to adopt this system, as students may have already discovered.

But a major improvement Usit have made, is the introduction of telephone registration for second time applicants.

At least those who spent a night sleeping outside Usit offices to get their first visa will now be able to register from the comfort of their home. This has been implemented because of the huge demand for second visas.

Calls will be taken from February until all the places have been filled. After this, a short waiting list will be taken in case of cancellations. Successful applicants will get their registration form through the post, which must be filled out and returned to Usit.

One small point: only one registration will be taken per call, so there's no point in five people cramming themselves into a phone box to register on the one call.

Sayit also offers second J1 visas to those who have previously travelled on their J1 Visa programme. Anyone else is considered a first-time applicant, and may have already held a Visa with Usit.

Like all things in life, there are some rules for applicants. Sayit requires that you are sixteen before June 1 of this year, and Sayit will not take applications from those who are under the age of 28.

Both companies state that applicants must be in studying a full-time course in a college, university or third level institution for a minimum of two years. In other words, part-time students are not accepted. Usit also stipulates that the programme is only open to those studying for a higher degree, or Royal Honours diploma in an academic field.

But if you meet the criteria, and you feel like a change for the summer, in the words of the great Nike giants, "Just Do It!"

FEATURES
January 1999

VOODOO DOLL

Voodoo Doll at http://www.virtual­design.com/to­din/demand/voodo­doll/vood­oo.htm gives you the opportunity of creating a voodoo doll, mutilating it with pins, a blade and a candle and then emailing to one of your less favourite people. When the person opens the email, the doll appears on screen and is subjected to a reenactment of your torture. We did a test run at the DIT Independent and were a bit shocked at how creepy the end result is.

On a lighter note, the ridiculous offering from "The Really Big Button that doesn't do anything" is sure to cheer you up at http://www.gizelscapes.com/just קט­ton.htm This is a site devoted to a big red button that does absolutely nothing when you push it - confused? Me too, though obviously not thousands of other internet users who leave messages about this button on the site. Originally launched as a "Mystery Site", it has now become a novelty address and contains hundreds of reviews, a variety of buttons and other pointless, useless stuff. Voted one of the top 5% of all websites by point.com (why, I don't know) it's worth a look, if only to prove to yourself that there are sad people on the planet.

For those of you who prefer nothing more than a day spent slacking off, there is "I Should be Working" at http://www.ishould­beworking.com

Created for those who have a dozen better things to be doing with their time, this site has heaps of useless information, games, jokes and links, but its star feature is the Picnic Button. This button is located on the top of every page and once pressed, quickly transports you to a news website, should you feel like reading or lecturer make a surprise appearance - genius!

One of the funniest sites on the internet has to be Joe Cartoon at http://www.jjocau­reat.com This is a disgustingly hilarious animated site offering you the chance to put a frog in a blender, then watch the results as you turn up the power. The Fish in a Bowl is another classic, as you freeze it, electrocute it, pour acid on it, all the while listening to it shouting abuse at you. You can send lemmings plummeting over cliff tops, then give them marks out of ten for their triple backflip or somersault. The sight has loads of great cartoons that you can save as screen-savers and also a few brilliant animated emails to give your friends a giggle too.

Finally, we couldn't end a list of weird websites without including rotten dot com at http://www.rotten.com This site is pretty self explanatory and should probably be avoided for at least an hour after eating. It describes itself as an archive of disturbing illustration and it isn't lying. It includes a link to the Celebrity Morgue which contains photos (generally from autopsies and police reports) of dead celebrities. Marilyn Monroe, Kurt Cobain, Che Guevara and John F.Kennedy are all included (Watch out for the J.F.K. photos, they're especially gruesome). There are links to rotten columns, one of the main ones being This day in rotten history. A feature which changes daily, giving an account of rotten things occurring on the particular date throughout history. Definitely only for the bloody minded among you.
**Not just for kids**

**Jamie Hannigan looks at the latest film releases**

**AMERICAN BEAUTY**
Lester Burnham (Kevin Spacey) is a 42-year old suburban loser. He hates his job and his wife and daughter despise him - not that Lester likes himself all that much.

When introduced at a party to a man he’s already known, he says - without a trace of irony - “It’s okay. I wouldn’t remember me either.” But as we find out in the opening minutes, “It’s never too late to change.”

*Fresh from nabbing the top three awards at the Golden Globes (Best Screenplay, Best Director and Best Film), American Beauty arrives on this side of the Atlantic amidst a wave of critical accolades. But you know all this. You probably heard the same thing about The Blair Witch Project or The Sixth Sense and was probably a little disappointed at what you got.*

Don’t think you’ve seen this before: the white-collar American Joe realising what he’s become in time to win back the love of his family. Little in American Beauty is conventional.

It’s like a bizarre hybrid of Fight Club and Blue Velvet (not as flashy as the first or as surreal as the second) which manages to balance a fine line between darkly humorous satire and moving drama.

American Beauty isn’t as good as they say, it’s fractionally better.

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**TOY STORY 2**

It seems bizarre to think that Toy Story 2 was originally destined to be a straight-to-video release, the same as every other Disney sequel.

Apart from the fact that this is (The Iron Giant aside) probably the best children’s film of this year, but it’s in the running for the best film of the year, period.

Ignore comparisons to the original - this is better. It’s funnier, darker and more spectacular.

While I really like the recent Star Wars film, I can’t help but feel that Lucas could have taken a leaf out of Pixar’s book - as it is, Toy Story 2 has more thrills, spills and that than The Phantom Menace ever had.

The story has toy cowboy Woody (voiced by Tom Hanks) stolen away from the sanctuary of Andy’s house by an obsessive toy collector.

Woody, it transpires, is a valuable antique toy, and is worth a lot of money to a museum in Japan.

A team of the other toys, headed by Buzz Lightyear (Tim Allen) form a rescue mission which takes them out of the suburbs and into the big city.

Trie as it may sound, this is a “family” movie that can actually be watched by the whole family.

Don’t be put off by the fact that Disney also marketed Inspector Gadget for the same audience - Toy Story 2 more than makes up for it.

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**HOUSE ON HAUNTED HILL**

There’s something about truly, truly dumb movies that appeal to everyone.

The sort of movie where a person will wander off by themselves to explore the basement of a haunted house.

The sort of movie where the haunted house in question was a former mental institute...

where the patients went crazy and murdered the staff.

The sort of movie where five people are offered one million dollars if they can spend one night... ALIVE.

You know, that kind of thing. House on Haunted Hill (and last year’s PG-friendly horror, *The Haunting*) are based on the same 1958 William Castle movie.

Castle used electricity buzzers under the seats and had ushers waving skeletons and eventhrow liberally from Jacob's Ladder, Hellraiser and even Event Horizon, but there aren’t quite enough of them to pad out characters that would have cardboard cutouts going: “Jesus, they’re thin.”

But House on Haunted Hill, for all its faults, is pretty good fun and saunt past anodye crap like Double Jeopardy or The World Is Not Enough. And if you do go, stick around until after the end credits to get a tiny extra scene.

**11/2**

**Video releases by Jenni Duggan**

**Cruel Intentions**

Cruel Intentions stars Ryan Phillippe and Sarah Michelle Geller ( Buffy The Vampire Slayer) as Sebastian and Kathryn, evil-minded stepbrother and sister in this tale of seduction and betrayal.

Sebastian is a callous and calculating rich kid who passes his time seducing unsuspecting girls. Bored of preying on what he describes as “insipid Manhattan debutantes”, he wants a challenge.

His equally malicious stepsister has just the challenge, dedicated virgin and general goody two shoes, Annette (Reese Witherspoon), the headmaster’s daughter.

The pair embark on a diabolical sexual wager, if Sebastian fails in this conquest, Kathryn gets his Jaguar Roadster and if he succeeds he gets Kathryn.

The film sets out to shock the audience with its innuendos and erotic dialogue.

However while doing this, at times it tries too hard almost forgetting the plot.

At times this film is slightly tedious but is on the whole enjoyable.

***1/2**
A YEAR and a half into my course in Aungier St and by now I know the route to college so well that I think I could get there safely blindfolded. I travel to college in more or less the same way as everyone else. The only difference is that instead of hopping on the bus or the train, I hop on my wheelchair.

It takes me approximately twenty minutes to get to college and although I may be exposed to the elements, at least I don’t have to contend with the dreaded traffic jam. My journey is usually unproblematic.

The paths around Dublin city have got a lot better over the past few years, and travelling as it is, it is getting harder and harder to complain about them.

The only problem I do face sometimes is construction work on the roads and paths, but I never have much difficulty finding alternative routes.

It wasn’t always like that, however. My old wheelchair used to shiver with fear when faced with a curb, and travelling long distances was out of the question considering it moved as fast as an obese slug.

Fortunately I acquired a new wheelchair, the Storm XS (they always give them fancy names), two years ago. It travels longer and faster than most wheelchairs, and has an ingenious device called the curb climber, which helps tackle high paths. This wheelchair has enabled me to travel freely throughout the city and has undoubtedly made my life a lot easier.

That’s not to say that my path is always obstacle-free, of course. Although the streets and lanes of the city are fairly easily negotiated, I still have buildings to contend with.

Most old buildings are inaccessible, but what is even more frustrating is seeing new buildings being built without adequate facilities to cater for the disabled despite it being required by law.

The doors throughout the building are not too narrow, so I can’t use that excuse when I crash into them and every floor is accessible with the use of the elevator.

The lift can only be operated with a key, which is only given to people who need it and lecturers who are allergic to climbing stairs.

Therefore I find myself sharing the lift with different lecturers everyday, and they all ask the same set of questions.

How fast does that wheelchair go? Do you have to recharge the battery often? And, how long does it take the battery to recharge? I’m seriously considering printing out the answers and blue-tacking them to the door of the lift.

I do consider myself lucky to attend a college where the facilities are of a high standard. Considering that Aungier St is the only DIT college with almost complete access for disabled students, it came as no surprise to me that the DIT’s disability policy was launched there.

But it is easy to be cynical. Any step to make disabled students’ lives a bit easier is of course welcomed, and it should be remembered that not every disability involves the use of a wheelchair.

It was encouraging to see that all disabilities from visual to mental, to the often more hidden disabilities such as dyslexia and epilepsy, were included in this belated policy.
Cork cruise to victory in the second round of the Sigerson Cup

UCC footballers proved too strong for the DIT as they eventually cruised to a 0-12 to 0-6 victory in the second round of the Sigerson Cup in Belfield on Wednesday 9th February.

However things mightn’t have been so easy for the Lee side as the DIT managed to convert one of their many goal opportunities.

Both Ollie Murphy and Finbar Kelly could have left the game with a goal a piece for the DIT while a few goal mouth scrambles would have resulted in a DIT goal on another day.

But that said, it was clear that UCC were going to be a daunting task right from the off.

They played like a team who know each other well and found men with comparative ease throughout the match.

Clearly their fantastic victories in the Cork and Munster Club Championships have stood to them, and will do throughout the Sigerson Cup competition.

The news of the fall of their near neighbours and reigning Sigerson champions, Tralee IT, will have widened their victory smiles.

But they will have to up their game for the Final weekend in Galway if they are to progress beyond the quarter or semi-final.

While they played some crisp, and direct attacking football, and took some great scores, they were exposed at the fullback line on a number of occasions and were fortunate not to concede a few goals.

On the other hand with players of the calibre of Liam Murphy and Keith Morin in their forward line they will be in with a fighting chance.

From the throw-in Murphy led the way and scored four of his teams six points in the first half showing great accuracy from distance with either foot.

Despite playing with the wind DIT found themselves a point down at half time, 0-6 to 0-5, but were by no means out of the game.

Ronan Fitzsimmons kept DIT in the game with a virtuoso display.

Ollie Murphy (No 13) in action at the Sigerson Cup

He put himself about the field getting in vital hits and kicked three of the points of the game for the DIT.

The second half saw the DIT put some extended periods of pressure on UCC but their lesser experience and understanding of each other as a team let them down.

Had they taken their points instead of going for goals at such an early stage they may well have pegged back UCC.

But UCC played the game perfectly, absorbing the pressure and hitting DIT on the break, kicking some fine points in the process.

In the end the score may have been somewhat flattering but UCC undoubtedly deserved their place in the quarterfinals.

DIT - J O'Hara; R Brady, D Cahill, I Kearney; J Rafter, P Giles, N Cleere; J Cullinane, J Mooney; E Crennan (0-1), A O'Brien, R Fitzsimmons (0-3), O Murphy (0-1, free), F Kiely, S Canning (0-1, free), Subs: J Brogan for Brady, G Kilmurray for Crennan, Paul Kelly for Cullinane.

UCC - P Morris; P Hanley, D Wiseman, S Mac An tSaoi; P Galvin, A Lynch, D Reidy; E Havran, M O'Shea, K Moran (0-4), B Sheehan, B O'Sullivan, M Cahill, L Murphy (0-5, 2 frees), I Twiss (0-2).
The final round of the DIT Karting Championship took place on 15 December. At the end of round one, there were 50 drivers (ten from each college) within three seconds of each other, all looking for their place on the DIT team. The chairman of the consecutive colleges were also laying side bets on their college to take the coveted DIT Constructors Trophy. The Bolton St committee were extremely confident after winning the Inter-varsity championship earlier in the year. There were four quarter final races with twelve drivers in each and the top 6 drivers advanced to the semi-finals. It was at this stage the spectators saw the biggest crash of the day, with Karl Bonner on the outside of three karts going into the second corner getting it all wrong and spinning. With eight karts right behind at 45 mph a pile up ensued. Karl limped away from the accident with extensive bruising, the main blow coming to his ego.

The semi-finals were just as invigorating. Race leader, Gerald Walsh made the team on the fastest lap. There is no Bolton St driver on the team because they are Inter-varsity champions and are obliged to enter their own team. The Inter-varsities are on the 12th of March, and the DIT Independent will bring you the results along with analysis of them in our March issue.

The Bolton St. finale was over 18 kilometres and saw Simon Clarke winning well. He also came close to recording the City’s fastest lap ever, failing by just 0.09 seconds. The drivers that made the DIT Team are Simon Clarke, Peter Kiely, Paul Taylor, Ray Nangle (all Aungier ST) Mark Muckantier and Gerald Walsh (both Cathal Brugha ST). Gerald Walsh made the team on the fastest lap rule. There is no Bolton St driver on the team because they are Inter-varsity champions and are obliged to enter their own team.

The Inter-varsities are on the 12th of March, and the DIT Independent will bring you the results along with analysis of them in our March issue.

Karting championship a great spectacle

By Malachy Clerkin

The Kart company is one of the longest running clubs in the DIT. It has been run by numerous instructors over the years and one of the strongest and most popular clubs in the college.

Down through the years, it has attracted large numbers of students and continues to do so. Last year it were voted Club of the Year and are “currently trying to build from that platform”, according to club chairman, Owen O’Connor. The current instructors are Kevin Hannigan (4th degree black belt) and Cormac Laelien (2nd degree black belt). Cormac is actually a past student who started his training in Kevin St. Kevin St are running an inter-varsity competition on Saturday February 17. Entrants will include students from UCD, Trinity, Cork IT, Dundalk IT and Carlow IT. It is expected that the number of participants will be just over sixty.

The competition will consist of three parts:
1. Patterns: This is where the student performs set movements against imaginary opponents.
2. Sparring: As the name suggests, this is where competitors get to put their training into practice and enter into a ring against a fellow competitor. This part of the competition is broken down into weight divisions and groups of belt colours (i.e. to avoid a yellow belt vs a black belt etc.).
3. Destruction: The final part of the tournament consists of competitors using a combination of strength and technique to break wood. The thickness of the wood is increased until only one individual remains who can break it.

Athletes take gold

By Malachy Clerkin

DIT stars run a-muck in Athlone

The DIT men’s athletics team recently took gold in the National HESF cross-country championships, which were held on the grounds of Athlone IT.

On a windswept, rain-soaked afternoon in Westmeath, conditions were atrocious. The ankle-high muck combined with a series of steep hills to make the tough task of beating quality opposition tougher still.

In the main race, DIT Eugene O’Neill kept himself at the head of the field in order to avoid the worst of the underfoot muck.

With two laps left in the race, he shared the lead with Colin Coyne on Waterford IT. It was left to these two to battle it out for glory.

Coyne was wary of Eugene’s finishing speed and attempted to make a break for home with one lap remaining. Eugene reacted quickly and overtook the Waterford man to take his first title of the season.

The DIT easily captured the team prize by finishing first, fourth, fifth and eighth. Paul Campbell, Brian Byrne and Aidan Doyle were the valiant heroes who filled those places.

Kevin St student is Sports star of the month

Kevin St student is Sports star of the month

Kevin St student is Sports star of the month

TaeKwon-Do attracts large numbers

By Malachy Clerkin

The TaeKwon-Do club in Kevin St is one of the longest running clubs in the DIT. It has been run by numerous instructors over the years and one of the strongest and most popular clubs in the college.

Down through the years, it has attracted large numbers of students and continues to do so. Last year it were voted Club of the Year and are “currently trying to build from that platform”, according to club chairman, Owen O’Connor. The current instructors are Kevin Hannigan (4th degree black belt) and Cormac Laelien (2nd degree black belt). Cormac is actually a past student who started his training in Kevin St. Kevin St are running an inter-varsity competition on Saturday February 17. Entrants will include students from UCD, Trinity, Cork IT, Dundalk IT and Carlow IT. It is expected that the number of participants will be just over sixty.

The competition will consist of three parts:
1. Patterns: This is where the student performs set movements against imaginary opponents.
2. Sparring: As the name suggests, this is where competitors get to put their training into practice and enter into a ring against a fellow competitor. This part of the competition is broken down into weight divisions and groups of belt colours (i.e. to avoid a yellow belt vs a black belt etc.).
3. Destruction: The final part of the tournament consists of competitors using a combination of strength and technique to break wood. The thickness of the wood is increased until only one individual remains who can break it.
All right, go if you must, but don't come back here pissed.

The one with the atmosphere
By Jennifer Duggan

One in three engineering students in the institute fail sessional exams.

According to a confidential report, students face high failure rates at the end of their exams each year, with the highest rate among students in the second year. The report reveals that the overall pass rate for the entire faculty of Engineering for the 1998/99 college year was 68.73 per cent, which is almost 15 per cent lower than the average for all faculties.

Overall pass rates for the past academic year are between 85 and 90 per cent. In part-time engineering, the figures were even lower, with only 34 per cent of students passing exams.

While the high failure rate should not affect every course within the Engineering faculty, there are a number of both diploma and degree courses which have above average failure rates. Among the degree courses, the highest failure rates are in the Mechanical Engineering degree, with only 56.25 per cent of second year students passing their exams last year. Also in line is the Mechanical Engineering Degree, with only 28.57 per cent of second year students passing their exams last year and only half of students in their final year of the course passing.

The Building Services Engineering Degree also has a high failure rate with only 58.33 per cent of third year students passing and it also has the highest rate of failure among final year students with only 9.19 per cent passing last year.

There are also high failure rates within some of the Engineering Diploma courses. The Technician Certificate/Diploma in Civil Engineering course has only a 48.15 per cent pass rate in last year's first year exams. The Certificate/Diploma in Building Services Engineering also had a low pass rate with less than half of first year students passing their exams last year and only half of the first year students studying the Certificate/Diploma in Transport Engineering/Motor Industry Management passed their exams last year.

However, Don Byrne, the acting Head of the Department of Engineering, denies that these figures are accurate and says that they had not yet been checked by the individual departments.

He believes that the pass rate for Engineering "could not be that low, they look very wrong and their validity must be questioned". A spokesperson for DIT also added the results were not binding and as they were not final, and could be "easily taken out of context" added the spokesperson.

Other courses to suffer badly from high failure rates are the languages and business studies courses in Kevin Street, where last year only 37 per cent of second year students passed sessional exams.

In an article in this weeks Campus Times in The Irish Times, a spokesperson for DIT was quoted as saying that the report was a work in progress. A spokesperson for DIT said the results were not drastically different to those of other courses. "The regulations are student friendly, there are reasonable explanations for each of the cases," added the spokesperson.

College and SU may face action over funding rule

Exclusive - By Thomas Felle

The Students' Union and DIT could face legal action if they fail to change their 'no funding' policy of political parties' societies' stance.

A motion by the DIT Young Fine Gael Society at the party's young Annual Party has condemned the "anti-political, anti-exam structure created and maintained by the communist Qnengen style students' unions throughout DIT!" The motion also called on its national executive to seek legal advice regarding the status and funding of branches and if a case is viable, pursue the matter through the courts.

David Jenkins, Vice Chairperson of DIT Young Fine Gael, the branch that proposed the motion, said he was appalled at the treatment he has received from the Students' Union in trying to set up a political society.

"The union want to be the only voice to represent students. They are trying to discourage people to participate in politics, which is in direct conflict with the right to free speech. He made the point that he could set up a coffee and biscuits society and happily be funded, however, should they talk about politics the money would be withdrawn.

"This attitude is discriminatory, it is completely unjustified. We want all political parties to be funded appropriately," added the spokesperson.

Joanne Harmon is National Youth Officer with the party. She says it is not just a problem with DIT, it is a problem amongst all ITs.

"Institutes of Technology have a very poor record of freedom of speech, yet their student representatives expect to be accommodated when they want to meet to discuss policies with TDs and Ministers.

"Students Unions like DIT must allow students to have freedom of speech," she added.

"The Youth Officer said that she has tried to help students set up societies when requested, but found a real problem coming into DIT to set up stands on clubs and societies."

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Results of survey on SU satisfaction: page 13
All right, go if you must, but don't come back here pissed.