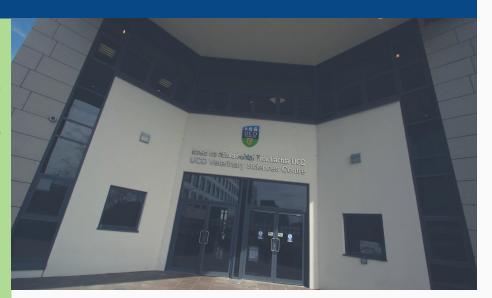# STUDENT NEWSLETTER

Scoil an Leighis Tréidliachta UCD | UCD School of Veterinary Medicine

WELCOME

Welcome to this bumper Issue 6 of our newsletter! This packed issue arrives hot off the press just as we approach the halfway mark of the trimester. This issue has a big focus on opportunities available to students in UCD. We are delighted to have a welcome message from the Dean to start us off. After that, you'll hear from Catherine about her experiences of being a UCD Peer Mentor. We're all about getting involved in college life, so we have a great section on some clubs and socs that may be of interest. Laura writes about her experience of presenting at a conference for the first time; Michelle M talks about what drew her to veterinary nursing; there's a piece on intercalating a year in London by Michelle duT; we have an article on Athena SWAN and the importance of EDI for our community; and a call for student tutees to work on vetPAL. Finally, check out the sections on supports available to you, from the Maths Support Centre to the Writing Centre to Careers. Enjoy!

School News

It's almost halfway through the trimester, and time is flying by. We hope that you are all settled in/settled back and enjoying study as much as you can these days. We know it's a strange time, that workloads are heavy, and that it can feel like you are never on top of an unending list of things to do. You are definitely not alone in feeling like this.

Many of you are approaching midterm exams. Remember to take even a couple of moments every day to do something that resources you, whether it be squirrelling away with a book, going for a run or walk, listening to music, watching a bit of Netflix - whatever floats your boat! Doing the basics is also invaluable - getting decent sleep, exercise and nutrition goes a long way.

Remember that we are all here for support - from faculty to the Programme Office to the Student Adviser. No problem is too big or too small, so reach out for help and support.

Call for Content: Ever felt like doing a bit of writing? Our next issue will come out around the end of November/beginning of December. If you'd like to contribute to that or if you have any questions at all, please don't hesitate to email niamh.nestor@ucd.ie.

Dean's Welcome

Professor Michael Doherty, Dean and Head of School

Dear Students of Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Nursing,

With thanks to Student Adviser, Dr Niamh Nestor, and Communications Manager, Dr Helen Graham, I would like to take the opportunity within this newsletter to welcome you. I sincerely hope that you are all 'settling in' under what are very challenging circumstances - *ba mhaith liom fáilte mhór a chur romhaibh.*

It seems like an age ago (and sometimes only like yesterday) when on Thursday, March 12th, the Taoiseach announced that all schools and universities would close and when we discovered that 'social distancing' would become the societal mantra. Running short of turns of phrase to describe the unprecedented situation that we found and continue to find ourselves in, I want to commend you and your families for the extraordinary resilience that you have shown.

Your health and safety and that of our staff is a primary concern, and the School's 'One Health-One Welfare' motto never seemed so appropriate. I want to take this opportunity to thank all the faculty and support staff in the School and its Veterinary Hospital for the efforts they have made to deliver teaching and clinical service in the most difficult of situations. I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our student volunteers and staff who have made and continue to contribute to national COVID-19 effort in the following ways:

- Bolstering public health efforts by assisting with phone line contact-tracing of COVID 19 cases;
- Training volunteers to make initial contact calls to the public to advise them of public health guidelines and to escalate calls upwards if necessary;
- Helping with laboratory training in COVID-19 diagnostic procedures;
- Actively involved with the national COVID-19 epidemiological modelling advisory group.

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to pose challenges but I want to reassure you that everyone in the UCD School of Veterinary Medicine is committed to providing you with both academic and pastoral support. We will look after one and other and we will get through this. I look forward to the time when I convey these sentiments in person.

Take care and stay safe/*fan slán*.

Michael Doherty, Dean

Why I Became a UCD Peer Mentor

Catherine Hearne, Veterinary Nursing Graduate 2020

Introductory note: *The UCD Peer Mentoring programme is an important element in the orientation and support of incoming students. In the Vet School, we offer several types of peer mentoring programmes: Peer Mentoring for undergraduate veterinary medicine, undergraduate veterinary nursing students and graduate-entry veterinary medicine students; a Big Siblings programme for incoming graduate-entry and international veterinary medicine students; Peer Mentoring for postgraduate students; Peer Mentoring for occasional final-year veterinary medicine students; as well as Mentoring for graduates of the veterinary medicine and veterinary nursing programmes. The School greatly values and recognises the efforts students make to support other students.*

Catherine Hearne, author of the piece below, graduated this past June as a Veterinary Nurse. During her time in UCD, she was a UCD Peer Mentor in 2017/18; she was also actively involved in clubs and societies. Traditionally, there is a Peer Mentor Awards Ceremony every March, where we thank that year's (undergraduate/graduate-entry) Peer Mentors for their support of first-year students and present certificates of achievement. One Peer Mentor is invited to make a speech as part of this ceremony. Catherine was the guest speaker at the ceremony in March 2018. She made a wonderful speech which gave a detailed insight into what Peer Mentoring is, what it means to both the Peer Mentor and mentees, and the benefits of the programme. With Catherine's permission, I've reprinted the speech here.

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"My name is Catherine, a Peer Mentor to first-year veterinary nursing students, and I'm going to talk about why I got involved and why I think everyone should get involved with the Peer Mentor programme here in UCD. When I was in first year and had my own Peer Mentors, it made UCD, which has 32,000 students, feel a lot smaller. Even within the Veterinary Building, it was very daunting as a first year, but when any of the Peer Mentors smiled or said hello, it didn't feel as scary as I always knew I had someone to ask my questions to, no matter how silly they may seem now, because as a first year they were life-stopping stuff.

Vet and Vet Nursing Peer Mentors on a typical (pre-pandemic!) Peer Mentor
training day Room 116 in the Vet Building

Never did I think that I myself would become a Peer Mentor nor have any importance to a first year the following year. The time came to apply to be a Peer Mentor, and I was 'gently' persuaded by my friends to do so, as they were all applying and it was a good chance to get to see each other a week earlier and have a 'chill' week with my own class, and so I sent in my application. [ctnd overleaf]

Initially, I was thinking "Well, at least it will look good on my CV" because it shows you can take the time out to welcome and care for others, you have the confidence and ability to work with your fellow Peer Mentors but also complete strangers, but I think becoming a Peer Mentor had so many more benefits than the superficial benefits of a CV.

Before becoming a Peer Mentor, I would have been so nervous to speak to people whom I didn't know. I would be thinking about it in the days leading up to it and analysing and planning what to say. I would be nearly shaking with nerves, just as bad as the first years, but, throughout the Peer Mentor training and Orientation week, I found myself loosening up, having the 'laughs' and also learning how to get the first years involved and chat with other first years. I felt so proud when I began seeing friendships blossoming because I was reminded that my Peer Mentors and Peer Mentor group had such an impact on myself as someone who only had one or two friends starting in UCD. When I started first, I was afraid that I wouldn't make any friends as I thought maybe I'm too shy or nerdy. During Orientation, though, I made so many friends and was settled in to University life within a week or so in regard to the social and friendship aspects. Being a Peer Mentor really reminded me, that just like me, some of these people might not have any friends, and that it's important to smile and try my hardest to get them to mingle with the others.

I was always told the friends you make in University will be your friends for life, and, of course, I didn't believe that and thought they were such 'Soppy Joes' for saying so, as, until University, I didn't have any true friends. Little did I think that I would have the most wonderful friends from my class but also from UCD's wider community, through societies and clubs. It has given me a chance to learn new skills and also fit in by essentially not having to fit in, as we all have our own different interests and quirks. Everyone, or at least the majority here, seems to accept that.

I think it's nice to get involved with your course through being a Peer Mentor, class rep or through societies or clubs. For me, becoming a Peer Mentor allowed me to speak about Veterinary Nursing and the whole Veterinary School to the first years and try my best to show how really amazing it is and to say "Welcome to the Veterinary Building, your home for the next four or however many years you decide". It gave me the opportunity to boast about my course and how fantastic I think it is. While doing so, it reminded me of how actually fantastic it really is and how we should all feel so much pride walking through our building's door, and if you do you feel proud of your School, course, class and most importantly you, then you know you've made the correct choice. It reminded me how we all worked so hard to get here and how no one can take that away from you.

For me, being a Peer Mentor had so many benefits: CV, building confidence, friendships and leadership skills. So, here we all are, to say well done and congratulations. I look down and see so many people, all Peer Mentors, who had impacts on people's lives, and I feel very proud to be studying in a University with a programme such as the Peer Mentor programme. I want to personally congratulate all of you. While some of you might be thinking that you didn't have much of an impact, just recall your own first few days and how maybe your Peer Mentor was your first friend here or advisor. I see the first years now, and they are all very confident walking around, and we should all feel very proud for even taking what seems a small step in our lives and making someone else's life even a small bit happier or easier because isn't that what life is all about? Imagine if we could add up all the helpful conversations and good doings that we did during Orientation week and the following weeks, but I suppose some things can't really be put into words. That's what we all are here to celebrate all the good impacts you had on other's lives. Thank you very much for listening."

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Get Involved

Want to Get Involved? Look No Further
Here are some Clubs and Societies that you might want to join!

UCDVETSOC

How can I join Vetsoc?
We have set up a google form that people can use to join. This has been posted on the Vetsoc FB page.

Plans for this year?
This year will take some getting used to for all, but as we move into our virtual semester, Vetsoc will be rising to the challenge! From online informative talks to regular competitions, Zoom coffee mornings and support groups, we will be with you every step of the way! We encourage everyone to get involved and join Vetsoc as we all navigate this year together. *Ní neart go cur le chéile* ("There's strength in unity").

Find us on...
f UCD Vetsoc **⦿** ucdvetsoc ✉ conor.wallace@ucdconnect.ie (Auditor)

UCD Veterinary Nursing Soc

Online Resources
- "A day in the life" Student Blog
- RVN Blog
- Website (to be launched)
- Student information
- Social Media

Veterinary Nursing Society UCD

Get involved!! We would love to hear from you!!

Who are we?
Established in 2018, the UCD VN Society was created to provide support and information for all stages UCD BSc VN students. The society hosts a range of talks from a series of professionals from the Veterinary & Scientific communities. Our main aim is to encourage and help all our students grow to become caring and competent Veterinary Nurses.
*Subsidiary of VetSoc
"I feel privileged & elated to study Veterinary Nursing in UCD. I want to ensure all students have the opportunities and experiences I have had" - Eimear Bruton (Auditor)

Online Talks
- Placement
- Nursing Exotics & Reptiles
- Working in practice
- Graduation – what's next?
- First year project
- Anaesthesia
- Literature Review
- Working in Ireland after graduation
- Career options as a RVN
- Working abroad
- VN Internships

And Many More...

How to join?
Joining is easy!

➢ Simply click the link below to fill out the society form (ensure UCD email)
https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSe4H0gT8Fx6s044eJXyRwvgapnYI0dLbxaB3zPUEhFnPmBleA/viewform

OR
➢ Head over to the UCD Veterinary Nursing Facebook page to find the link

Contact
Instagram: UCDVNSOC
Facebook: UCD Veterinary Nursing Society
Email: nursingveterinarysociety@gmail.com
Auditor email: eimear.bruton@ucdconnect.ie

Social Events
- Online table quiz
- Virtual coffee morning
- Online crafts event
- Fun "bake at home"
- Festive themed social events
- Competitions

How can I join FAVS (Farm Animal Veterinary Society)?

Contact Daniel (email below) for information on joining or find us on social media.

Plans for this year?

Our usual in-person events won't be able to go ahead as planned and so, in their place, we have been thinking of interactive ways to get people involved with FAVS. We hope to provide online talks from the well-known farm animal faculty in UCD as well as from vets in practice, quizzes and hopefully even a few giveaways throughout the year!

Find us on...

f UCD FAVS   📷 ucdfavs   ✉ daniel.darragh@ucdconnect.ie (Auditor)

How can I join One Health Soc?

Contact Grace Thornton (Auditor) by email (see below).

Plans for this year?

We are going virtual for 2020/2021! During a normal year, we run cross-disciplinary talks with various One Health professionals, with topics ranging from antimicrobial resistance, comparative anatomy, oncology to zoonotic diseases, and more. Look for online speakers this year, and stay tuned to our instagram and facebook for resource sharing and more!

Find us on...

f UCD One Health Society   📷 onehealthucd   ✉ onehealth.society@ucd.ie

How can I join UCD Purl Jam?

UCD Purl Jam is UCD's craft/creative group run by student advisers Niamh Nestor (Vet) and Catriona Keane (Science). You can contact Niamh/Catriona (see emails below) to be added to our mailing list!

Plans for this year?

We meet every Wednesday, 1pm-2pm, online via Zoom. We welcome staff, students, alumni and retired members of staff. All levels are welcome, from beginner to experienced. While we work mainly on the crafts of knitting and crochet, you are welcome to bring along any craft that you are interested in! Check out our blog for more details.

Find us on...

🐦 @ucdpurljam   📷 ucd.purljam   ✉ niamh.nestor@ucd.ie/catriona.keane@ucd.ie

So many things to see and do, right? So many things to learn, so many new things to try, and so many new people to meet! Above are just a few examples of what Vet students (and staff) are involved in. Have a look here to see what is available in the wider UCD community.

ISAZ Conference Experience

Laura Keogh, Final-year MVB Student

This September, ISAZ (International Society for Anthrozoology) held a virtual conference with the theme of 'One Health, One Welfare: Wellbeing for All in Human-animal Interactions'.
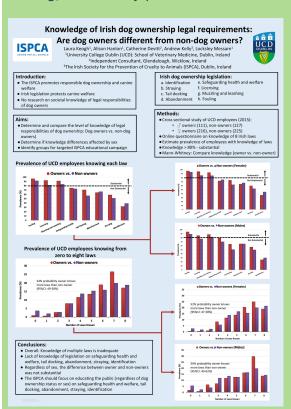
Animal-human interaction, one health and epidemiology are areas that have always interested me so when the opportunity came around to prepare an article, poster and then a presentation for the conference, I was very excited but also a bit anxious. There was two main reasons for this: (1) I was never the biggest fan of English in school and found the idea of now writing a draft and submitting it to a lecturer for comments completely daunting; and (2) Secondly, I have never been good at presenting. All the things you're told not to do in Presentation 101 were characteristic of every presentation I'd ever given…. fidgeting, mumbling, looking at the floor, the list goes on! All this being said, Dr Locksley Messam was very encouraging, and these opportunities don't come around often, so I dove straight into the deep end and I am so glad now that I did.

We analysed data on the knowledge of Irish dog ownership-related laws among owners and non-owners. The purpose of this was to identify groups that have less knowledge of dog ownership laws so that the ISPCA could create a targeted educational programme. The first part of the project for me was to analyse the data. I had done a fair amount of work on excel before, but I this was my first time using SPSS. It took a bit of getting used to, but I found working with SPSS and excel, doing calculations and producing graphs really enjoyable.

One thing I found challenging was getting my head around the structure and phrasing for academic writing. As I mentioned before, writing has never been my strong point, but as time went on, and with practice and a lot of guidance from Dr Messam, I eventually started to come more comfortable with it, although I still have a lot to learn. I found that I actually really enjoyed the writing, and although it took many drafts and a lot of editing, I was really proud of the final article.

Another thing I found challenging was the presentation itself. Due to COVID, the conference was held virtually so I recorded a 3-minute presentation to go with the poster. This was a process in itself, spending a lot of time in my room alone repeating the same few lines but, in the end, the presentation was ready and uploaded to the ISAZ conference website. During the week of the conference, I got the chance to log on and see presentations from people around the world on the work they were doing on One Health and Anthrozoology which was really interesting.

I learned so much from each step of the process and gained a lot of confidence, too. Seeing the poster (image on the left) and presentation that we had prepared up online with the rest of them made all the effort worthwhile.

My advice to anyone who would like to be involved in research or producing a poster is to find the area you are interested in and then approach your lecturer. For me, I loved epidemiology but regardless of what the area is, I have found the lecturers really helpful and encouraging. You've nothing to lose by sending an email, and more often than not, it can be the start of a great experience.

**Note from the editor! Huge congrats to Laura on a wonderful presentation, not least because the theme of One Health is so important these days and is also at the core of the School's vision and mission. If you'd like to watch Laura's pre-recorded ISAZ presentation, you can find it here. In her article, Laura talked about academic writing. See page 11 for details on UCD's Writing Centre. Also on page 11, you'll find details of UCD's Maths Support Centre which can help with any maths-related questions you might have.*

It is no mean feat to put your work out there for others to critically engage with. If this is something you're interested in, I'm with Laura in encouraging you to reach out to your lecturers and ask about possibilities and opportunities. Everyone starts somewhere. Your lecturers were students once, too, and they also had to take this leap of faith. It might seem like a mountain to climb, but it's surprising how amazing the experience can be. Draw on the support of those around you who are already on this well-worn path. You'll learn a lot from it, personally and professionally.

Why I Chose to Do Veterinary Nursing

Michaelle Murray, Stage 3 Veterinary Nursing Student

In 2016, I set up a Traveller Horse Project in Co. Kildare. I'd worked with Travellers for many years, and the passion they have for their horses is contagious. Horses are passed down for generations through family members. The aim of the Traveller Horse Project was to help educate young Traveller men about equine welfare and access equine education courses.

I felt very fortunate to be a part of a small community that revolves around horses. I learned more about myself during that time than any other time in my life. The work I loved most was being a trusted advocate for the community and representing their needs and feelings at local authority meetings. There is quite often negativity associated with the Traveller community and horses. What I have found is that by standing back and giving out or doing nothing, nothing changes. Providing equine welfare education and a positive attitude to work with these families can change everything for the better, both for them and their horses.

Above, a beautiful rescue belonging to Michelle's friend

The laws in Ireland for keeping horses are very strict, as they should be. You must have your horses microchipped, a valid passport and an equine premises number. The microchip can be inserted but to apply for a passport you must have an equine premises number. The majority of Traveller men do not have the number so therefore they are immediately breaking the law. By being a part of a horse project, the project can apply to the Department on their behalf for a number. The horse can then be microchipped and the owner easily identified. This alone improves animal welfare as it makes owners more aware of their responsibility when they can be identified.

I was very fortunate to receive a scholarship for my community work and I made a vow to return to equine education projects when I graduate. My dream is to have a mobile veterinary unit that specialises in equine welfare for Traveller families in Ireland. It is much needed.

Above, Michelle's daughter on her horse

We All Need Some Brené in Our Lives Right Now!

You've probably all well aware by now that, at the Student Newsletter Team Offices (i.e. currently the desks in our front rooms!), we are big fans of both podcasts AND Brené Brown. That means we're in absolute heaven when a Brené Brown podcast drops.

This podcast on "Burnout and How to Complete the Stress Cycle" features Brené together with Drs Emily and Amelia Nagoski who speak about their book by the same name. The speakers talk about what causes burnout, what it does to our bodies, and how we can move through the emotional exhaustion.

As you well know, we're forever harping on about resourcing yourself and making sure you nourish your body in a way that helps you to manage stress. I know, I know, broken records we definitely are! But it's true - doing the basics will go a long way. Sleep, eat, exercise. Simple but very powerful. Have a listen to the podcast here and enjoy!

Intercalating a Year

Dr Michelle Du Toir, Veterinary Medicine Graduate 2020

Up until 3rd year of vet, I had never heard of an intercalated degree before, never mind considering actually doing one. It was when a Professor from the RVC came to talk to us about an intercalated degree in Comparative Pathology that my interest was piqued. It was an opportunity to study at another vet college and earn another degree, as well as an opportunity to go live in London for the year! After the intensity of 3rd year I jumped at the prospect of doing something new and exciting.

I moved over to London in October the following year and stayed on campus accommodation at the Hawkshead site in Potters Bar. The first semester was primarily theory and practical pathology skills with which I gained much more confidence in areas such as post-mortems and histopathology. The second semester we each chose a research topic and spent the following months completing a dissertation. My research project involved growing cardiac-derived stem cells and assessing their capacity for cardiac regeneration; however, there were plenty of other options depending on what you were interested in. I had never been involved in research before and I am really glad that I was able to have that experience.

Aside from the academic aspects, the RVC places a lot of emphasis on students joining sports clubs and societies, with every Wednesday off for everyone so that sports matches and social events can be attended. I joined the Hockey society where I found my love of the sport again, after a couple of years hiatus since starting college in Dublin and made some amazing friends. Joining a club or society meant that your social calendar was always full, and you had an immediate big group of friends.

While being the only non-RVC student intercalating that year, that was a big plus for me! Aside from exploring London and all it had to offer, there were plenty of trips away with the college such as a mystery holiday to Portugal as well as the event of the year - Nottingham AVS (but don't worry, although I may have been dressed as an RVC golfer, my loyalties always remained with the Dublin Prisoners).

Above, Michelle rediscovering her love of hockey with her hockey team in London!

As excited as I was about intercalating, I was still nervous and a bit sad that I was leaving my year in Dublin behind, but the experience was truly worth it. I learned a lot about myself that year. I got a first class honours degree in Comparative Pathology and had a great time with some amazing new friends while I was at it. Studying veterinary medicine is a tough and very intense degree and it is so easy to get trapped into the routine of lectures, library, bed, repeat. Going away for the year allowed me to come back refreshed and focused, but it also made me realise how important it is to take time out and do something for yourself.

I couldn't recommend intercalating enough and there are so many different degrees and universities that you can intercalate in depending on where your interests lie. It was an absolutely fantastic year.

Left, Michelle on her graduation day from the RVC

Irish Times Offer for Students

Thank you to one of our beady-eyed and very thoughtful members of faculty for the tip about the Irish Times offer at the moment for students. As a student, you can subscribe completely free for 12 months. As part of this, you'll get, among other things, unlimited access to The Irish Times + iOS & Android Apps; access to podcasts on politics, culture and sport; access to an impressive 160 years of Irish Times archives; and (to my mind the clincher for this deal) access to The Irish Times Crossword Club. Who could say no?!

Better Together: Athena SWAN and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in the Vet School

Prof. Torres Sweeney, Chair of Vet Athena SWAN Committee and Lecturer in Genetics

In April 2019, the School of Veterinary Medicine was awarded the Athena SWAN Bronze Department Award. For those of you who are new to the School and may not yet be familiar with it, the Athena SWAN Charter is a framework which is used to support and transform gender equality within Higher Education and research. Established in 2005 to encourage and recognise commitment to advancing the careers of women in science, technology, engineering, maths and medicine (STEMM), the Charter is now being used across the globe to address gender equality more broadly, and not just barriers to progression that affect women. It comes under the overall banner of EDI (Equality, Diversity and Inclusion) which is one of the cornerstones of our School's strategic plan.

The School of Veterinary Medicine achieved the Athena SWAN Bronze Department Award following a rigorous review and assessment period conducted by the School's Athena SWAN Self-Assessment Team, incorporating students and staff, beginning in September 2017. The review resulted in an Action Plan containing 64 specific initiatives to further improve and enhance equality, diversity and inclusion in the School and Hospital, which the Vet Athena SWAN Action Team (Vet-ASAT) are progressing. Some of these initiatives include developing mentorship programmes, conducting research, improving existing or creating new policies, formally recognising staff and student contributions to EDI, creation of a Sense of Community working group, and holding talks, workshops and flagship events.

It is incredibly important that all staff and students see each other as equal, embrace diversity, be inclusive and celebrate each other's differences. Everyone should be treated fairly regardless of age, civil status, disability, ethnic origin, family status, gender, membership of the travelling community, race, religion or sexual orientation. As a School, we are doing quite well in these areas, but there is room to improve.

Celebrating Pride in our College, June 2019

The Athena SWAN student survey in 2018 showed that:
- 88% find the School welcoming
- 87% find the School supporting
- 82% find the School inclusive
- 80% feel treated with respect by students of a different gender

Dean's Inclusion Award presented to Dr Shauna Gavin, 2019

It is our goal to move these percentages closer to 100% and to ensure that all staff and students feel a real sense of belonging and inclusion. As per UCD's Dignity and Respect policy, all members of the community have the right to study and/or work in an environment which is free of any form of harassment, intimidation or bullying. If you do experience any of these things, there are several supports available to you including talking to your Student Adviser (Dr Niamh Nestor) or a Dignity & Respect Contact Person; using the anonymous UCD Report and Support tool; or making a formal complaint under the UCD D&R policy.

We hope that you all have a fantastic year and get involved with the many different Vet School EDI initiatives.

If you have any questions or comments about EDI in the School, please contact Professor Torres Sweeney, Chair of the College of Health and Agricultural Sciences EDI Committee, or Dr Niamh Nestor, your Student Adviser.
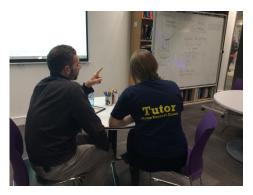
Please follow us on @UCDVetAthSWAN
E: vetathenaswan@ucd.ie

Wearing red for UN International Day of Women and Girls in Science, February 2020

UCD Maths Support Centre

Anthony Cronin, Maths Support Centre Manager and Assistant Professor of Mathematics at UCD

The UCD Maths Support Centre (MSC), located in the James Joyce Library, offers free maths and stats support to any first- or second-year student of UCD. You can simply drop by at any time during our opening hours or you can make a booking for an online appointment where you can avail of one-on-one support with a maths support tutor. With 100 hours of tutor support available each week during the teaching trimester and revision weeks, we hope you will find some time to pop in and say hello to our friendly staff. Whether it is nursing or medicine, a strong knowledge of statistics is an essential skill, so don't let it hold you back and visit the MSC.

You can't miss the MSC banner as you walk past the JJL!

The photo on the left shows a typical tutor-student interaction in the MSC

Want to know more about how the MSC works? YouTube is a mine of information! In this video, you'll hear from students who have used the MSC and from the tutors who work there to support students. This video explains to you how to book an appointment to meet with a tutor and how the whole process works.

UCD Writing Centre

Zeljka Doljanin, Manager of the UCD Writing Centre

Being a student in UCD means being a reader, researcher, and writer. Academic writing has a set of rules of its own: written in a formal style, it should also be highly structured, clear, precise, and analytical. Analysis is especially important because academic writing is argument driven - it makes a claim or takes a position, and supports this claim by critically evaluating evidence. Sounds complicated? Don't worry. You will practise and hone your writing during your time in UCD, and the Writing Centre is here to help.

We're open to all students five days a week during term time. We can support you at any stage of your writing process, from approaching your assignment question and making a plan, to suggesting improvements in your early drafts, or helping you polish a finished paper. We offer workshops on different writing topics, as well as the very popular individual writing sessions. How do they work? You start by making an appointment with the Writing Centre on our website. The writing instructor, with whom you will work closely on a piece of your writing, will talk to you, give you tips and suggestions, and help you to become a more independent and confident writer. Currently, all our sessions are happening online. You can find out more about one-on-one appointments and writing instructors, as well as check out helpful writing handouts and videos, on our website. Questions? Just drop us an email at writing.centre@ucd.ie. We'd love to chat to you!

In the photo above, you can see Scott, one of our tutors, teaching a writing workshop

Check Out These Amazing Opportunities From UCD Careers!

The UCD Careers Ambassador programme is an opportunity for current students to represent their schools/colleges and programmes, and to enhance their skills such as leadership, teamwork and communication while helping to promote and support services and events organised by the Career Network to other UCD students and their peers.

Our Career Network Ambassadors help to:
- Develop creative ways to reach students and raise awareness of the Careers network services.
- Promote and sign up students to Career Network events.
- Attend and support career-related events, programmes and fairs.
- Give feedback on new and current Careers Network programmes and initiatives.
- Contribute to social media, promotions and online activities.
- Liaise with Career and Skills Consultants.

We've lots of opportunities for students to build on their skills through various programmes which are all listed here on our website.

The Advantage Award is a platform that enables students to be recognised for their participation in co-curricular activities under four categories: Personal and Professional Development; Cultural Engagement; Health and Wellbeing; and UCD and the Wider Community. The Advantage Award enables students to reflect on the skills they have gained through participation in co-curricular activity, on and off campus, and be rewarded for their contributions. Sign up via UCD Careers Network.

Supporting Partnerships And Realising Change (SPARC) programme enables UCD staff and students to work together on projects that make UCD and/or the surrounding community a better place to learn, work and live. For students and staff alike, SPARC provides a fantastic opportunity to enhance skills such as project management, problem-solving, communication, planning and organising, leadership and teamwork. Sign up via UCD Careers Network.

The UCD Career Mentoring programme is open to students of a number of Schools/Colleges. It allows current students to be paired with an alumnus (who is a working professional) from the same major to enable one-to-one mentoring on the career prospects related to that major. It is an effective form of guidance to current students who might need some advice regarding career options, as well as some insight in relation to making applications for those jobs. Sign up via UCD Careers Network.

UCD Careers also offers various skills workshops, including "Skills for Working Life" which is an 8-week programme of employer-led, interactive skills-based workshops. It's a great opportunity to hone your employability skills while also networking with some of Ireland's top graduate employers. Participants who attend at least 6 of the 8 workshops receive a certificate of participation. Sign up here.

Skills workshops are also held regularly through both academic trimesters and are delivered by Career Skills Consultants on key skills that are transferrable to all students aspiring for a job, regardless of major/discipline. These skills include interview preparation, CV skills and LinkedIn skills, to name a few. Sign up here.

vetPAL!
Attention MVB Stages 3-5 and VNUR Stages 2-4!

Want to improve some of your clinical skills this semester? Looking for some extra time to practise basic motor skills and pick up some tips and tricks of the trade?

During November, the Clinical Skills Centre (CSC) will be running a fun little project called 'vetPAL' which will hopefully divert you from all things Covid!
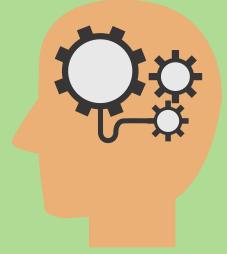
The project is an opportunity for you to focus on some motor skills virtually, a way to practice for OSCEs and MyProgress DOPS and also a way to get to know some of your peers from other years from both the nursing and vet programmes.

So what is vetPAL?
Essentially, vet Peer Assessment Learning, vetPAL, can be defined as 'students teaching other students'. It is an opportunity to focus on some of your motor skills/clinical techniques from the comfort of your own home with the help of some friendly 'Student Tutors' from final year (MVB and VNUR). It will be informal and fun, we hope!

What's in it for you?
- Refresh or renew your own clinical skills, specifically basic suturing, IV catheterisation and physical examination
- Identify your own strengths and weakness for improved rotation success
- Improve communication skills and confidence
- Get to know other students from both the vet and nursing programmes

Time commitment and what you'll need:
- There will be 4 x 1-2 hour weekly sessions online in November. NB: These will be online and in the evenings to facilitate everybody (rotations and world time differences!) as much as possible
- A needle driver and tissue forceps
- Suture material or fishing line (supplied by CSC if needed)
- Banana/tea-towel/torn jeans/raggedy socks/silicon pad!
- Teddy bear or your own pet!

Student Tutees will be chosen on a first come, first served basis.

If you are interested in participating, please email renagh.kelly@ucd.ie and CC mark.mccorry@ucd.ie. The deadline for submissions is 4pm, Friday, 23rd of October.