

Student President Manifesto

Representation is not just about holding a position, but to honor the depth of ideas and opinions of every individual, and to make sure there is some form of action being carried out on it. I am **Pratyush Jhunjunwala**, and I plan to turn that into reality at UL.

Who am I?

As mentioned earlier I am **Pratyush Jhunjunwala** and I am running to be your next **Student President**. So let me tell you a bit about myself, I am an international postgraduate student in Finance, and in the little time I have been at UL, I secured the position of **Accounting and Finance Representative** as well as the **Kemmy Business School Faculty Representative**, and at present I am part of the Executive council as your **UL Experience Chairperson** and have worked closely with the other chairs and student officers on quite a few projects and policies to improve your student experience at the university. As one can see I have been quite proactive in my time at council, working on all aspects and suggestions that I have been receiving and this has empowered me to put myself forward and try to secure the opportunity to serve and represent the student body as the **Student President**.

What I aim to do:

- **Food Access:** I aim to continue the work of the previous student president in bringing more access to food to all the students. Access to food has been a big issue and continues to be one at the university, one might find some snacks at one of the various vending machines around the university but that is not always a viable option, as some buildings are locked up around 8pm. On the other hand, the nearest grocery stores are around 2 kilometers from the campus and the distance varies for students residing in the various villages. The Lidl bus has been a great initiative which has been making it possible for students without a car to make the journey, that usually takes 25 mins of walking one way, which one can imagine becomes difficult when you might have groceries or due to the ever-changing weather of Ireland. Another point that I want to continue building on would be the food pantry idea that has been put into motion by the former president. This initiative makes free or subsidized food

available to students, in the meantime I plan to have more vending machines installed around the campus which will make food and drinks a bit more readily available and have more microwaves installed around the campus as not every student can afford to purchase food on campus every single day and there are just not enough microwaves for students to heat up the food they might be bringing from home.

- **Student Safety:** Over the years the number of students attending the university has increased dramatically and with that comes the concern of safety of those students. As an international student, I am aware of the hardships of moving to another country and being in a strange land with hardly anyone to turn to, thus I aim to ensure that anyone who chooses to come to UL can do it with the confidence that they will be in safe hands. There have been quite a few instances of racist, homophobic, and sexual attacks, and in the light of such events I have been taking proactive steps to ensure we can eradicate such events one day and I plan to work on it further as the president, as I will be able to push it on a higher level myself. Moreover, drug culture is very much present in our campus, and college fosters a curiosity of such products and for that reason I want to provide information that is accurate and useful to reduce the harms that might be caused. The aim is to bring down the use of such substances in the long run but for the time being providing enough information so that the students are aware of what to do in such events does take priority.
- **Improved North Campus Integration:** An issue that has become prominent in the past years is the involvement of the north campus. The north campus which is across the living bridge, and houses the School of Medicine, Irish World Academy and the Health Sciences building has become a bit excluded since a major portion of the university campus falls on the other shore and with the addition of the new student life building most of the activities have fallen to the southern part of the campus. Moreover, the north campus only has The Pavilion and the café in the Irish world academy as the locations where students can buy food, with the café only staying open till 3pm which is too early for students. My aim is to integrate the north campus more during my term with events and activities, and I plan to have a few vending machines installed in the meantime for students. The north campus also lacks accessibility for students with disabilities which I hope to address again as there were better accommodations for students a few years back.

- **Accommodation:** Accommodation has been one of the most prominent problems for students over the past years. Not only is it hard to find accommodation, the prices for the same keep skyrocketing. Being an international student I have faced similar situations regarding accommodation, the rent is expensive for most, even with all the amenities included, on top of that students fail to even get basic accommodations in the campus and the city, and may fall victim to scams that take advantage of them since they hardly have enough knowledge of the local rate of rent or locations. I want the on-campus accommodations to be reasonably priced and regulated by the university. For those who choose to live off-campus, there are systems in place but they still lack in many fronts and I wish to come up with a more efficient and effective system so that we can provide accommodations with better conditions to students, with the hopes of housing more students or at least being of help to them wherever possible.
- **Commuter accessibility:** Commuter students make up a considerable portion of the students attending UL every year, with some having to travel for at least 2 hours one way, I intend to work closely with the university in all aspects so that such students can make the most of their days when they must come in. I also intend to improve the commuter hub for commuter students and get more funding so that we can provide for the rising number of students. Another thing on my agenda is to provide more spaces for students to relax in between classes, even with addition of new spaces for students there just is not enough space, while the ones we have are not being properly utilized which I aim to bring up to the university and have something carried out on that front.
- **Medical Services:** Everything is getting increasingly expensive but that does not mean the doctor should be too. A visit to the GP at UL costs around €30 whereas the same service at the other colleges such as MIC cost only €10. The nurse consultation has become free for most of the stuff which is a big win but the cost of the GP visit remains. I intend to get the cost of the visit brought down to match at least the other colleges and if possible, around the clock medical assistance. The counselling services in the campus are also always under strain which keeps increasing every year. I also plan to push for more investment and staff to be hired in this division so the service is rolled efficiently and students can access it whenever it is required.

- **Improved Student Representation:** Having been part of the student council, I have observed areas of shortcoming in the student voice reaching up to the level of being actionable and I plan to improve and bridge those gaps to get more action taken on all concerns being raised to the council. Working as the Experience chair has given me quite the insight on how the views of students can be taken into consideration and solutions, if possible, can be rolled out more efficiently. Having been part of the council, I have observed students are still not aware of the role of the student council, thus I plan to be even more proactive in my approach so that the students will be aware of what each of the members of council can do for them.

In the end, I hope you can trust me to manage all your needs as the president. I just want to let you know if I am elected, my door will always be open for everyone, with no issue being too big or too small, and I will always be there to support you no matter the circumstance. Thanks for taking the time to read through my manifesto and feel free to reach out to me if you want any further information on Instagram @pratyushforpresident.