**HEA Healthy Campus**  **Case Study**

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| **HEALTHY CAMPUS CASE STUDY** | |
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| **Name of institution/ organisation** | National College of Art and Design - NCAD |
| **Who led the initiative?** | Student Experience team |
| **Date and timeframe of the initiative** | Academic year 2023-2024 and ongoing |
| **What was the reach of the initiative?** | All incoming new undergraduate students in September 2023 (first year and Erasmus) – around 320 students.  A small group of 14 students for a follow-up initiative in February 2024.  (students who are members of/interact with the Bread Garden society – not sure of numbers but they have 154 followers on Instagram) |
| **Initiative title** | Food and Care |
| **Aims / objectives** | The aim of the Food and Care workshops was to provide incoming students to NCAD with an opportunity during their induction to meet other students on a social level, to discuss and think about food as a means of providing and receiving care, to reflect on how their traditions relating to food are part of who they are and to consider the links between food and their own practice as artists.  An objective of the workshops was to create space for students to talk to us, and for the College to express extra care and interest in them at this period of transition. The students were encouraged to consider forming a food society as an outcome of their workshop. |
| **The rationale for the action, including any identified health needs** | The idea for this workshop arose from feedback during a regular College Community Welfare Committee that students in first year were regularly coming to class without having eaten, or having eaten very little: both as a consequence of the high cost-of-living and due to a growing culture of restrictive eating. In addition, due to space constraints on campus, this was something we wished to address at the outset of the academic year: to create a space for students to talk about food and eat together, to consider how their traditions around food shape who they are, to consider the relationship between food and their own art practice, and to remind students that an art practice is a physical practice and that their physical needs must be attended to. Given the feedback received about first years (and other students) not eating/eating very little, we felt that it was important that we provided messaging around the importance of feeding yourself and taking care of yourself, rather than messaging that focused on eating ‘healthily’.  Another motivating factor for this workshop was the ongoing feedback received from the counselling service and academic staff that students feel isolated and that it can be difficult for them to make and maintain social bonds. Even though teaching and learning has returned to being mostly in-person, students were regularly reporting feelings of loneliness in counselling sessions. An aim of this workshop was to create a social space early on to allow students to meet and get to know their classmates. |
| **Identify all frameworks, policies, or strategies this initiative aligns to**  **(internal, local or national)** | The workshops aligned with our Mental Health and Wellbeing Policy, which will be in effect from September 2024 and the College Community Charter. We do not yet have a Healthy Campus policy in place, but we are piloting initiatives as part of the process of developing our framework approach. |
| **Summary** | Please provide a summary of your case study.  Max 400 words.  All new incoming undergraduate students in the 2023-2024 academic year attend a one-day induction in September. This is a very full and information-heavy day, which in the past has had little time for the new students to socialise. In planning for induction, we wanted to allow time for students to begin to form social bonds with their new classmates, recognising that even now students are often finding it difficult to know how to make friends and form social connections.  Working with Jennie Moran (Luncheonette) and a group of current and former students, we devised an interactive 30-minute workshop to be delivered to students in groups of 20. The workshop’s theme was ‘Food and Care’. They took place in our cafeteria, around one long table. The students were offered refreshments and in pairs and small groups, using a prompt of a set of food-related questions, they spent time sharing stories about themselves through talking about their food memories. The students illustrated their stories and used their drawings to make badges, which they exchanged with one another. At the end of the session, they were invited to consider forming/participating in a food society, allowing them to continue meeting to share social time through eating together, cooking for one another or thinking about how food connects to their art practice.  A food society was subsequently formed – the Bread Garden Society – which met regularly over the course of the 2023-2024 academic year to cook together (e.g. making pizza using a pizza oven in the field, making bannock / stewed fruit, and making microwave mug cakes in the Students’ Union). The members have been collaborating on a collective cookbook which will be self-published with permanent copies made available in the library and the Students’ Union).  To provide a follow-up, all first-year students were invited in February to an evening collective cooking workshop hosted in the kitchen of the NCAD cafeteria. Space constraints meant that attendance was limited to 14. This workshop was designed and facilitated by Jennie Moran and one of the student members of the Bread Garden Society. Participants were invited to suggest an ingredient for a soup recipe and a song for a playlist. Using the list of ingredients provided, the students spent the evening making soup and dumplings together, setting the table and eating together, and cleaning up afterwards. The workshop was a pilot to determine if there would be interest in participating in similar workshops in the future, as well as working out the practicalities of using the kitchen space (very kindly loaned to us by the campus cafeteria) |
| **Did you collaborate with internal and/or external stakeholders to deliver?** | The Goodies (NCAD’s cafeteria) who provided use of the space.  Current students.  Former students.  Jennie Moran (Luncheonette). |
| **How was the initiative organised?** | Please include elements such as action planning, piloting, approval for the initiative, committee meetings, timeframes, etc.  The initial planning was done within the Student Experience team and in consultation with members of the College Community Welfare committee. From there we approached Jennie Moran to develop the idea, forming a working group with the students (current and former) who would develop and facilitate the workshop.  Initial planning began in June/July 2023 with the working group meeting several times over the summer and working into a shared google drive (to share resources and plans) with final planning (numbers of students, timetabling) happening in conjunction with the admissions office and the access office.  Planning for the second phase was conducted by the same working group and began in late 2023 for the workshop to take place in early 2024. |
| **What resources did you need?** | Including financial, staffing and others.  Financial – the initiative was funded through the seed funding for Healthy Campus, supplemented by college resources.  Staffing (Finola, Roisin, Jennie, and students)  Space (use of cafeteria)  Materials (art materials, food) |
| **Has it been evaluated? How successful has it been?** | While we did not conduct a formal evaluation, informal feedback has been positive and there is a lot of enthusiasm and support for continuing this initiative. Some of this feedback included comments from the facilitator Jennie Moran, who reflected on the fact that the students came into the room individually but left in groups as friends at the conclusion. The success of the Bread Garden society, many of whose members are first year students who met at the induction session, also reflects the impact of the workshops. |
| **Any future plans, including the sustainability of the initiative?** | The food and care workshops will be repeated for the incoming students in the 2024 induction in September. This is still in the planning stages so it is unclear if they will run along exactly the same lines, but the aim will be similar to that of 2023.  We are looking at ways of supporting the ongoing work of the Bread Garden society, potentially through funding the purchase of equipment for cooking (a durable and good quality set of utensils) and providing financial and administrative support to the production of the collaborative cookbook.  Planning is underway for us to run more of the collective cooking workshops, potentially rolling them out also to staff. |
| **Key Learning Points** | We understood from feedback from the College Community Welfare Committee and from other sources that students experienced loneliness and found it difficult to make friends. This project was an opportunity before college started to facilitate conversation and to encourage students to start making friends in a creative and safe environment. We have learned that this was a very needed intervention, and we were able to witness first-hand the opportunity the workshops gave students, and we want to embed this within our induction process.  We listened to what students were saying to us at various points and it was clear from the uptake and enthusiasm that the workshops were much needed and appreciated.  When information was shared with staff, we also received informal feedback that similar sessions would be desirable for staff also, so we hope to be able to run this.  We will collect formal feedback after the induction sessions in September 2024. |

**Healthy Campus Framework Categories (please tick all that apply)**

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| **Healthy Campus Process** | **Whole Campus Approach** | **Topic** | **Population Group** |
| Commit | Leadership, Strategy & Governance | Alcohol | Students |
| Coordinate | Campus Environment (Facilities & Services) | Substance Misuse | Staff |
| Consult | Campus Culture & Communications | Healthy Eating / Food | Wider community |
| Create | Personal & Professional Development | Mental Health & Wellbeing | Other |
| Celebrate & Continue |  | Sexual Health & Wellbeing |  |
|  |  | Tobacco Free Campus |  |
|  |  | Physical Activity / Active Transport |  |
|  |  | Wellbeing on the Curriculum (can also fall under ‘Personal & Professional Development) |  |
|  |  | Health & Sustainability |  |
|  |  | Other |  |

**Contact Details**

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