Ollscoil na Gaillimhe
University of Galway

Governing Authority Election 2025: Candidate Profile – Other academic staff

Aodh Ó Coileáin
Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge

Candidate Biographical Details / Sonraí Beathaisnéise an Iarrthóra

Leachtóir leis na na meáin, Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge agus Disciplín na hIriseoireachta agus na Meán. Iar-eagarthóir nuachta i TG4 agus RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta. Gradaim idirnáisiúnta bainte amach le haghaidh scannáin faisnéise. Cathaoirleach ar Thearmann Dúlra Loch Gréine a cheannaíonn talamh i gCo. an Chláir le haghaidh bithéagsúlachta. Iar-chathaoirleach ar an Taibhdhearc, amharclann Ghaeilge náisiúnta. Ón Daingean, Co. Chiarraí ó dhúchas, le clos go minic ar na meáin faoi nithe a bhaineann le cultúr agus leis na meáin. Cónaíonn i nGaillimh le Miriam agus beirt mhac sna déaga.

Lecturer in Media, Acadamh na hOllscolaíochta Gaeilge and Discipline of Journalism and Media. Former news editor in TG4 and RTÉ Raidió na Gaeltachta. Winner of international awards for documentary film. Chairperson of Lough Grainey Nature Sanctuary, acquiring land in east Co. Clare for biodiversity. Former chairperson of an Taibhdhearc, national Irish language theatre. Originally from Dingle, regularly comment and contribute to media discussions on cultural and media related matters. Lives in Galway with partner, Miriam and two teenage sons who play under age rugby for Connacht!

Candidate Statement / Ráiteas an Iarrthóra

With a strong background in education, media, journalism, film-making and theatre, I believe that I am well-placed to represent your views on the ultimate decision-making body which will shape University of Galway's future.

As a student in the late 1980s and 90s and as a staff member for the past 15 years, I have experienced the ups and downs from both a student and staff perspective. I'm a good communicator, fluent in Irish and English and do not shy away from public speaking. I have sat on and chaired various boards.

I would love to bring my skills and experience to this forum, to convey ideas and aspirations of staff and students, to act as an agent for change and a better University of Galway.

I have a sense of the changes coming about in a university's role in society, how students access education, the ever increasing need to link university courses with the workplace. I am

convinced that it is through further strategic partnerships that the University will grow and flourish.

There is room to align more closely with the State's strategy for providing more services through the medium of Irish between now and 2030. Stronger links could be forged with the Technological Universities which might augument some of our course offerings as well as cutting down on duplication.

In 2022 I was part of a delegation which represented University of Galway in Denver, Colorado at NAFSA: Association of International Educators. I have an appreciation of the importance in attracting students from other countries to study in Galway and a sense of the potential that is out there.

I would welcome this opportunity to be part of the Governing Body and play a part in making the case for more resources for our University and for a better future.

Tá cúlra láidir agam san oideachas, san iriseoireacht, sna meáin, agus san amharclann; chaitheas beagnach cúig bliana ag plé leis an Taibhdhearc. Creidim go láidir san fhiúntas a bhaineann leis an obair dheonach, faoi láthair táim i mo chathaoirleach ar thógra i gCo. an Chláir a théann i ngleic leis an athrú aeráide. Tá talamh ceannaithe ag Tearmann Dúlra Loch Gréine i ndúthaigh an fhile Brian Merriman chun an bhithéagsúlacht a chur chun cinn agus chun oideachas faoin dúlra a chur ar dhaoine óga agus ar dhaoine fásta araon.

Bhíos i mo mhac léinn in Ollscoil na Gaillimhe agus i mo bhall foirne le cúig bliana déag anuas rud a thugann tuiscint ar leith dom ar na dúshláin a bhaineann leis an earnáil oideachais. Táim líofa sa Ghaeilge agus sa Bhéarla agus níl aon leisce orm labhairt go poiblí agus mo bhó a chur thar abhainn.

Tá tuiscint áirithe agam ar na hathruithe atá ag teacht ar ról ollscoile sa phobal agus an gá atá ann le leasuithe sa chóras oideachais trí chéile. Tá beirt mhac sna déaga agam, oileadh sa lámhscríbhneoireacht iad ach is ar éigean go mbeirfidh ceachtar acu ar pheann go deo arís!

D'fhéadfadh an Ollscoil oibriú taobh le straitéis an Stáit níos mó seirbhísí trí mheán na Gaeilge a sholáthar idir seo agus 2030. B'fhéidir go mbeadh sé chun tairbhe na hearnála in iarthar tíre go mbeadh níos mó oibriú as lámh a chéile leis na hOllscoileanna Teicneolaíochta. Is trína thuilleadh páirtnéireachtaí straitéiseacha a thiocfaidh fás agus forbairt ar an Ollscoil s'againne.

Ghlacas páirt i dtoscaireacht de chuid Ollscoil na Gaillimhe in 2022 go Denver, Colorado chuig NAFSA: Cumann na nOideachasóirí Idirnáisiúnta. Thug an chuairt seo léargas dom ar thábhacht na mac léinn ó thíortha eile don Ollscoil s'againne agus ar an spéis mhór atá amuigh ansin in Éirinn agus i gcúrsaí oideachais anseo.

Ba bhreá liom an deis seo a fháil tionchar a imirt ar fhás agus ar fhorbairt na hOllscoile amach anseo trí bhur smaointe a bhreith chuig Údarás na hOllscoile.

Is éisteoir maith mé agus caithim dúthracht le gach a dheinim. Bheinn mar ghuth foirne ar Údarás na hOllscoile ag malartú smaointe agus ag imirt tionchair ar mhunlú Ollscoil na Gaillimhe do na glúnta atá fós le teacht.

Candidate Outline of Relevant Competencies / Cur síos an Iarrthóra ar Inniúlachtaí Ábhartha

Governance
- Corporate Governance understanding and expertise.
- Board member and chair of an Taibhdhearc theatre (2016 - 2021)
- Board member and chair of Lough Grainey Nature Sanctuary, an organisation with charitable status, 2019 - present

Legal, compliance, regulatory experience
- I hold BA, LL.B and LL.M degrees from this University; I also completed the FE-1 examination for Blackhall Place.

Strategy

Strategic Planning experience:
- As a manager employed in RTÉ (1996 - 2003) & (2015 - 2016)
- Expertise aligned to University's Strategic Priorities
- My work at Lough Grainey Nature Sanctury aligns with the Sustainability goal
- I was nominated for a Teaching Excellence Award in 2023

Management & Organisational Experience
- Role in two boards mentioned above
- Part of management team that set up Nuacht TG4 for RTÉ in 1996, the first television news service outside of Dublin
- Irish language and culture: founding member of Na Fánaithe (1987 -1992) which grew from University of Galway, and represented Ireland at Expo '92 in Seville, contribution to an Taibhdhearc (1916 - 2021).

Financial
- Financial management, including budgets and internal controls
- Experience of managing a budget through managerial role in RTÉ
- Preparing accounts for audit as board member in above mentioned organisations

Sectoral Experience
- Education sector & Cultural and Artistic sector

Teaching and learning
- Leadership of Teaching
- Head of department 2020 - 2023

Desirable Requirements
- Public affairs, Marketing and PR
- Quite a bit of experience in marketing film, theatre and entertainment

Personal Attributes
- I am open, a good team-player as evidenced in other board memberships, film-making, etc.
- I am a good listener and an innovative and reflective thinker as evidenced in guiding an Taibhdhearc through a difficult period the culmination of which was increased funding - almost €6m over a four year period.

- A willingness to devote time and energy to preparing for meetings.
- A number of courses completed on culture within an organisation.