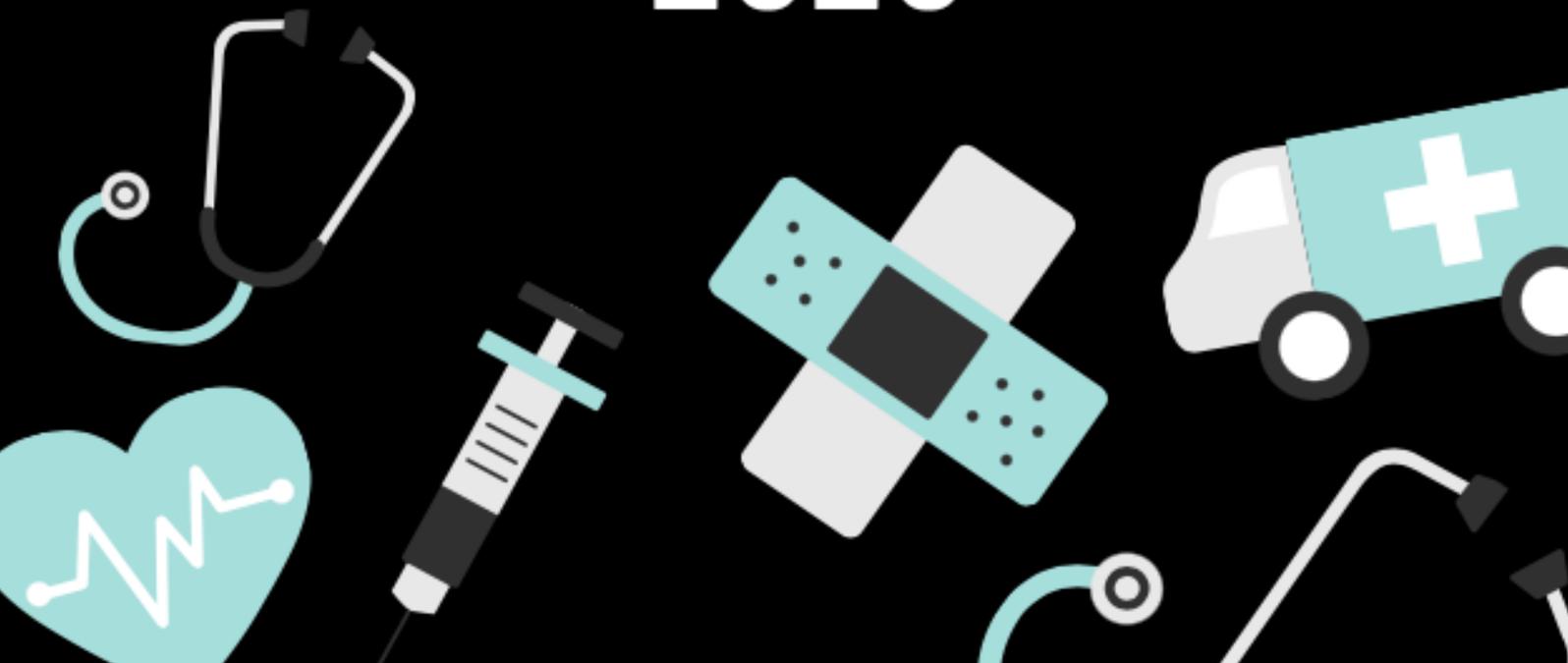




# BIOSOC<sup>146</sup>

## FRESHERS' GUIDE 2020



## Welcome

Hello! On behalf of the DU Biological Association, I would like to congratulate you on making it this far and welcome you to the next crazy, intense, terrifying chapter of your life! I bet you thought the Leaving Cert was the hardest thing you would ever have to (not) do, but let me be one of the first to tell you that soon enough you're gonna wish you could go back to that mundane biology lab and learn about the lymphatic system as if it had no other purpose than to drain all that mystery fluid that leaks out of your blood vessels. Now, before you panic and start to ring up Mr CAO, let me tell you about the exclusive membership you get in return for all your hard work - Biosoc!

## What is Biosoc?

I thought you'd never ask! 'The Dublin University Biological Association' is a student-run society founded in 1874 for students with an interest in Healthcare and Biology. It is now composed of a committee, representatives, and its members. The committee consists of 4th year students and there are 2 reps per year in years 1-3 that act as points of contact between the society and students in their year. The current committee was elected at our AGM last year and have been busy over the summer planning some exciting events for this year, and our first year reps were just elected on Freshers' Week.

## Biosoc's 146th Session

Chairperson: John Drought

Secretary: Ruán Ó Conluain

Treasurer: Olivia Novaes

Public Relations Officer: Alannah Lavelle

Ents Officers: Robbie Kelleher & Catherine Leeson

OCMs: Helena Scanlan, Jennifer Sheerin, Catherine Keenan & Calum Morrow

3rd Year Reps: Aisling Cadden & David Olybiyi

2nd Year Reps: Aoife Gatling-Colleran & Eimear Kyle

1st Year Reps: Maddy Haines & Cliona Nic Giolla Phadraig



## **What do we do?**

Our job is basically to remind you (and ourselves) that there is more to life than the library. So to help you make friends and mistakes a plenty, we organise numerous events throughout the year, such as nights out, book sales, guest speakers and balls.

## **Where to find us?**

If you've gotten your hands on one of these hot-off-the-press guides, then you must have already met some of us, but make sure to tell your friends to join the hottest society in town! Follow us on Facebook (TCD Biosoc) and Instagram (@tcdbiosoc) to stay up to date on all our news and events, check out our website (tcdbiosoc.com) to find out more about the society (sign up for only €3!) and if you have any questions or need to contact us about anything, you can always message the Facebook page or email us at [biosoc@csc.tcd.ie](mailto:biosoc@csc.tcd.ie)

## **Med's Declassified School Survival Guide**

So, you're sitting in your first biochem lecture, the lecturer is explaining the composition of about 20 different proteins and is recommending that you draw them out and learn them by heart, and you're about to go into your first anatomy lecture where the lecturer berates you for not already knowing the four rotator cuff muscles off by heart. And what do you mean you can't tell your squamous epithelium from your stratified columnar epithelium? What are you even doing here?!

OK, relax, deep breaths, let's get that heart rate back down. I would like to say that that was just a scare tactic, but that is the reality of what you're going to face during your first week in college. No one is going to hold your hand or ease you into this course, things are going to come hard and fast from day 1, but believe me, you wouldn't be here if you weren't able for this. At first, it may seem like you have an impossible amount of information to memorise, but soon enough you'll start to sift through the key information and filter out the excess content and you'll figure out what you need to learn in order to pass your exams and do the best you can. Don't wait for things to be handed to you, if there are things you don't understand and you're waiting for a lecturer to explain them, if they haven't explained it by the end of the lecture, it's up to you to go and google it, ask a classmate, or (for fear of being too millennial) look it up in a book, which brings me onto my next topic...

## **Books**

If you're still waiting for your college booklist to arrive in the post along with your acceptance letter to Hogwarts, you're going to be waiting a while. The way college books work is your lecturers give a loose 'book list' at the end of their lectures, which shows the books where they gathered the information in their lectures from, and where you can find more information on the content discussed during the lecture. However, are you going to fork out €100+ on a book referenced in one lecture from a whole module? No. Put the card back in your wallet, the answer was no. There are hundreds of different books for each subject in medicine, and most of them have very similar content, just explained or laid out in different ways or levels of detail, so there's no need to buy most of them. Plus, a lot of them are available to loan from the library or download from the drive\*, for free! That said, it is handy having your own copy of a book to annotate and take with you throughout the years, especially now since most of us are studying from home so the issue of carrying 2 tonnes of textbooks into the library is a thing of the past.

But before you dare go into Hodges Figgis to drop two crisp €50 notes on anything, try and hold off for a week until the Biosoc Book sale where you can grab yourself some key textbooks for prices that will make your sphincters shiver with excitement!

## **Human Form and Function (HFF)**

### **Anatomy**

- **Teaching:** Lectures and practicals in the dissection theatre (DT). These lecturers tend to drop some hints and highlight the key things to know during their lectures so make sure not to miss them. The DT is the best place to really hammer down the info you learn during lectures so make sure to really make the most of the time and teaching during your practicals and see if you can get some friends to go in with you outside practical times to test each other on your anatomy (trust me, you'll be spending plenty of time in there before your vivas!)  
*P.S. Don't just ignore the italics if you're not looking for a 1:1, trust me.*
- **Exams:** Written exams and *viva voce* exams at both Christmas and Summer. Your vivas are held in the DT and consist of 3 written 'spotter' stations with questions related to specific parts of one of the bodies in the DT (so familiarise yourself with them!). The other 2 stations are orals with the examiners. This can be daunting, but the examiners are usually very nice and are trying to help you. If they see you are struggling with questions, they will prompt you and try to make sure you pass the station and give you as many marks as possible!
- **Books:** There's a lot of conflicting opinions on where to source your anatomy info from, especially since different textbooks often have small discrepancies in certain details, so the short answer is there is no go-to book. However, most people like Gray's Anatomy as it is the easiest to

read and has good diagrams, however Last's Anatomy gives more detail and Moore & Dalley has more clinical (needed for a 1:1). Netter's is a great atlas and is where most of the pictures from lectures and exams are taken. Bear in mind, all of these textbooks are available in the library, online and even in the DT, so there is no need to buy them if you'd rather spend the money elsewhere.

- How do I pass this: This subject requires a lot of learning stuff off by heart, and by the end of the year you're going to have so many attachments and innervations to learn that you'll be willing to sacrifice two limbs and a few organs just to curb the workload, but the key thing to remember about this subject is the order of importance. Learn your basics first i.e. be able to identify structures, and then build on that. As long as you structure your learning from the basics up, and spend plenty of time in the DT visualising everything in the body, everything will eventually come together.

## **Physiology**

- Teaching: Lectures and labs.
- Exams: Written exams at Christmas and Summer, plus short, 15 minute tests after each practical where you can pick up easy marks.
- Books: For me, Sherwood's Human Physiology is the only book I would say is essential to have in 1st year. All the lecture slides are taken directly from the book, and the book explains any concepts from the lectures in more detail for whenever you get lost. It may seem like a mammoth book at a glance, but by the end of the year, nearly all the book will be covered, so it is worth the investment.
- How do I pass this: Despite there being a lot of content, most of this subject is quite straightforward and students generally do well in their exams. If you learn your physiology well in 1st year, it will stand to you in later years when you're standing in the operating theatre trying to remember why blood doesn't flow backwards, or why we never stop breathing, so give time to this subject now and you'll thank me later!

## **Evolution and Life**

### **Biochemistry**

- Teaching: Lectures and labs (2nd semester)
- Exams: Exams at Christmas and Summer
- Books: BIOS Instant Notes in Biochemistry is kind of like a Revise Wise for Biochem, giving a brief overview of most topics in the course (but doesn't include all topics covered), but can be a bit scarce in detail so don't rely purely on this book. Lippincott's Biochemistry may suit you better if you like a bit more detail. Stryer's is a whole other ball game and may be recommended by some lecturers, but unless you consider the Krebs cycle a thrill and wouldn't prefer Netflix and chill, this is not the text for you.

- How do I pass this: Oh, wouldn't you love to know! If physiology is the good and anatomy is the bad, then biochem is most definitely the ugly. For most of you coming straight out of school, this subject is going to seem like a foreign language, and if you've even got a small grasp of the subject by the end of first semester, you're doing very well. Lucky for you, passing biochem isn't as much about understanding everything you're taught, but more about understanding how to give that impression in your exams. The majority of the marks in your exam are going for the essays you have to write, and lucky for you, there are a wealth of pre-written essays handed down to you from your predecessors available on the drive\* (I'll explain the drive in more detail later on in the guide)! So don't sweat it if you don't *fully* understand oxidative phosphorylation or enzyme kinetics, all you need to do is be able to write an essay on the topic that shows the lecturer that you've got enough of a grasp on the subject to jot down a page or so of notes on the topic. Passing is a lot more achievable once you don't fall into the trap of trying to research and understand all the terms discussed in every lecture, while understanding certain concepts will help you recall them in the exam, it is not essential to understand everything you're writing about in this subject!

## **Human Development, Behavioural Science and Ethics (HDBSE)**

- Teaching: Lectures, tutorials and baby visits
- Exams: Exams in summer only, plus some continuous assessment (baby visit logbooks, population health report, behavioural science reflective diaries and ethics tutorials participation)
- Books: No books required
- How do I pass this: A better question would be: How do I fail this?

## **Medical Humanities**

This module is unique in that it is basically the only module that you will be able to choose throughout your whole medical degree, so enjoy it! There are some very cool options, including 'Arts and Health', 'Drama and Medicine', 'Advocacy', 'Touch' and 'Death'. This module is a chance for you to embrace your artistic, creative side and escape from all the logic for a few weeks, so have fun with it! The module runs for six weeks and the content and assessment differs greatly between each module, but all students will be required to do a group presentation on a topic related to the module at the end of the year.

## **Problem Based Learning (PBL)**

I remember thinking this sounded kind of cool when they first mentioned it to us, but then I soon discovered it wasn't. Basically, PBL sessions happen twice

a week with groups of roughly ten students, overseen by a tutor. Each week a topic is presented for discussion, learning goals are distributed amongst everyone, everyone leaves to research the topic and comes back to discuss it again at the next session. Some of the topics discussed are interesting, but there are a lot more banal, filler topics interspersed between them, ultimately meaning you never really look forward to Tuesday or Friday mornings.

Regardless, here are some tips to get you by:

- Passing: Your tutor is in charge of marking you, so make sure you don't piss them off, which means showing up on time (they don't care if you were out in DTwo until 3 a.m. that morning, if you're not in for 9 a.m. they won't be happy), having prepared some material to discuss and being able to speak up at the discussion. Each session will have a chairperson who is meant to make sure everyone has a chance to speak, but this doesn't always work and it often turns into a competition of who can spit out their wikipedia article faster, so you need to be ready to jump in during a split second of silence, cause you will get marked down if you don't contribute to the discussion.
- Resources: You'll figure out pretty quickly what websites are and are not worth your time reading through to find good information, but to get you started, Wikipedia (despite what they tell you) generally is good for giving a broad overview of a topic (but everyone will use it so you can't rely solely on this), and the Mayo Clinic website, Medscape and AlmostADoctor are great sites for working through the DEEPSHIT mnemonic. Even if you're sitting in the tutorial and all your points have already been said, you're (usually) allowed to have your laptops out so be able to google on the spot without it looking like you're googling on the spot!
- Preparation: It can be easy to spend a lot of time prepping for PBL, especially if you don't break up the learning goals between each person (as some tutors won't allow), but there's really no point spending much more than half an hour prepping for each session, as there are more important stuff you could be spending your time on!

## **Exams**

College exams are a lot different from Leaving Cert exams (so it's probably for the best that you guys didn't sit them :P), so you need to get ready to change your study and exam tactics big time. It's no longer practical to study almost everything on the syllabus like it was in school, there isn't even a syllabus for medicine, and so it can be very hard to know what to focus on when you're studying or even where to start! However, I've said it before and I'll say it again: if you've made it this far, you are able for this. Here are a few tips to point you in the right direction:

- It's never too early to start: I know the last thing you want to do when you've just finished studying all through school is to start studying again, but unfortunately, this is what you signed up to. But I don't mean locking yourself away for hours everyday from the start of the semester, it just means keeping an eye on the work and trying to do a bit of work each week. Other courses will emphasise staying on top of things - that's not possible with this course, you will never be on top of things or you'd waste the whole year studying constantly. You should be prioritising work based on what is most immediate i.e. if you have an anatomy spotter or a physiology test next week, you should be studying a bit of those each day, and maybe leave biochem for the week. You also need to remember that you'll have a lot more time to study for exams in the week or two before them, so don't worry if you're reaching the end of the semester and feel like you have an impossible amount of work to get through, you'll speed up once you have more time and less distractions.
- Ask for help: You may be used to being the one who gets asked for help in school, but now you're the one who's completely lost and you may be a bit embarrassed about that and afraid to ask for help for fear of looking dumb. Trust me, EVERYONE feels the exact same way at some stage in 1st year, and most of us still feel the same way, we're just used to it! There is nothing to be ashamed of about asking for help from your classmates, most of the time they'll be as lost as you, but things will click with different people at different times and some subjects will come easier to certain people than others, so even if you feel helpless with one thing, you'll probably be able to help people with another thing, so it's important to try and collaborate as much as possible with your classmates.
- If things start going south, don't panic: Your first set of exams are obviously going to be daunting, a lot of you have never sat college exams before and you're not really sure how it's going to go. Even if you open the paper and you haven't studied enough topics to write the required number of essays, or you don't have a clue about most of the MCQs, don't panic! The beauty of 1st year is that all of your modules are spread out over the two semesters, so even if you fail an exam at Christmas, you can still pass overall at Summer, so make sure to answer as much as you can, draw diagrams and don't leave any MCQs blank! (I only managed to answer 3 out of 4 biochem questions in each exam and I still passed overall, so miracles do happen!)
- Emergencies: If something happens during exam time e.g. illness, family emergency etc, make sure to get in contact with your college tutor straight away and also your year coordinator as some tutors can take a while to respond. The college is very accommodating to students with valid excuses who are unable to sit their exams, as long as you let them know before your exams begin.

- Balance: They would have told you all about work-life balance in school and not to get too stressed about exams, but failing was never really an issue back then, whereas now it is, so naturally you are going to be a bit more stressed about these exams, but balance is still as important now as it was back then. Make time for doing the things you enjoy, try to exercise regularly, and if you ever get too worked up or stressed about exams, take a break, grab a coffee, chat to a friend, and come back to it in a little while because you won't get anything done if you let yourself get too stressed out.

## **What do I bring on my first day of school?**

There's not a lot of stuff that are necessarily essential for college, but here's a little list of things you may want to consider if you're feeling lost:

### What To Bring

- White lab coat (Howie style) - **Essential - Don't** buy a V neck style coat, they won't allow them in the DT!
- Laptop - Not technically essential but might come in handy at some stage during your degree. Lots of electrical outlets do back to school sales around August/September where you might be able to get a good deal on a laptop but **don't** do what I did and buy a deal with Microsoft Office software because it turns out Trinity gives free Microsoft Office software to all students!
- Stationery - Again, not essential but can come in handy
- Books - See above, but definitely don't bother lugging them into lectures, you won't need them
- Packed lunch - There are plenty of food places around the TBSI, but unless you want to be broke/eat a Tesco meal deal 5 days a week for a year, it wouldn't hurt to get used to throwing a sandwich and some fruit into your bag before you leave the house

### What Not To Bring

- Surgical sets for dissection - Everything is provided in the DT
- Ophthalmoscope/otoscope - Unless you are 100% going to be an ENT/Ophthalmologist, you will never need these
- Crocs for surgery - You just borrow someone else's crocs in the changing room (oh the glamour)!

**Lockers:** If you're worried about lugging around a filthy lab coat, a load of heavy books or a gym bag, you can get a locker in TBSI to save you the hassle. They've changed the booking system since our day so now you don't even have to queue up outside the TBSI before 9 a.m. to get one, you can just do it online! Try to find out when they're going online though (sometimes they go live at midnight even when they say 9am), because you don't want to end up having to do the pilgrimage to -3 every time you want to grab something...

## **Getting Around**

If you've just moved to Dublin, you might find this sprawling metropolis a bit confusing at first. It doesn't help that no other Trinity students seem to know where any of the places you need to go are. You've probably found the TBSI by now, so fair play. The treasure hunt doesn't end there unfortunately. Med students are based largely in three main sites: Trinity Biomedical Sciences Institute (TBSI), St James' Hospital (SJH) and Tallaght University Hospital (TUH). They're quite spread out, and you'll need to travel to even more sites for other projects such as your baby visits, so it is well worth investing in a Leap Card as soon as you get to Dublin. If you're still under 19, you can avail of the wicked cheap Child Leap Card, otherwise you'll have to get a Student Leap Card, which you can get in the office in House 6 once you've gotten your student card. Leap cards can then be used on Dublin Bus, Luas and DART services, as well as some commuter trains. Walking and cycling are also good, cheap, eco-friendly options if you live around town (especially in Trinity Hall), so look into that!

### **Directions:**

#### **St James' Hospital**

- Bus: 123, 13 and 40 all go to James'. The 123 goes through James and the other two stop on the street outside. You can hop on each at Dame Street (opposite the front gate to Trinity).
- Luas: Red line stops at James'. George's dock is the closest stop to TBSI, Abbey Street is the closest stop to Front Gate of Trinity.
- Bike/walking: From Front Gate, head up Dame Street, go around Christchurch Cathedral and stay going straight onto Thomas Street and continue onto James' Street. The entrance to the hospital is to the left, just as you cross over the Luas tracks. Approx 30 min walk/10 min cycle from Trinity.

#### **Tallaght Hospital**

- Bus: 27, 54a, 66 and 77a all pass by the hospital and go through Dame Street.
- Luas: Probably quicker than the bus, the red line stops outside the main hospital (make sure to take the luas to TALLAGHT not SAGGART) and the Trinity Centre where teaching happens is a 5 minute walk through the main hospital taking the corridor to the left when you enter the main hospital concourse.
- Bike/walking: Cycling is possible, though not encouraged unless you are closer to the hospital than town.
- Car: Parking is free in a housing estate in Cookstown (Maplewood Road) but spaces fill up fast so you'll need to get there well before 9 a.m. You can also park in the Aldi car park once you get your Tallaght ID badge to scan in.

## **Support Systems**

If at any stage during your degree you find yourself struggling with something that you don't feel you or your friends can sort out, there are plenty of other great resources available to you, whether you are struggling academically, personally or financially.

**College Tutor** - Your tutor is a member of the academic staff who has signed up to be available to students to help with their welfare and academic problems. Your tutor is assigned to you before you start college, so try to set up a meeting with them during Freshers Week so you can introduce yourself. You can check who your assigned tutor is on the mytcd.ie portal.

**The Student's Union** - The 5 SU officers are employed to look after the students' welfare and needs and are all very friendly and approachable. If you have any issues you would like to have addressed, you can look up their office hours on the SU website and arrange a meeting with one of them.

**Student2Student (S2S)** - S2S is a very important support service to med students in particular, as all your S2S mentors will be med students and so will be very familiar with the year you are about to start. Don't be afraid to ask them any questions you have, you won't look stupid for asking things and they can be a lot easier to talk to than some of the senior staff if you have any issues or are unsure about something. They should be able to help you out with any questions you have, from studying and exams, to student life, clubs and societies and going out!

**Student Counselling Service** - This is a wonderful support available to all students. They offer confidential counselling from really superb counsellors. This is a totally free service so if you're curious about attending, or if it's the right thing for you, it's definitely worth giving it a go. Due to COVID they've currently stopped face-to-face appointments (although I hear they plan to start them again soon), so they are currently operating via video and phone appointments. You can email to make an appointment at [student-counselling@tcd.ie](mailto:student-counselling@tcd.ie), or ring 01 896 1407. Student Counselling also do daily emergency appointments, so if you ever feel like you really need to speak to someone, you can ring them. They also provide free online workshops, on topics such as mindfulness or anxiety.

**Niteline** - NiteLine is an out-of-hours peer support service for third level students. They offer a listening and information service run by and for third level students every night of the week during term-time. They provide a service that is anonymous, confidential, non-judgemental and non-directive. They can be contacted on 1800793793 or through their website [www.niteline.ie](http://www.niteline.ie)

## **Biosoc Calendar**

Yes, Biosoc is here to help you get settled into Medicine, however our true calling is to get you socialised and seduced. This year is definitely up in the air, and so keep an eye on our socials for updates on events we have in store for you. We are optimistic that we will find a way to have fun in true Biosoc style by any means necessary.

### **September**

**1st Year Bingo** - Usually we have a pub crawl to welcome everyone back to college, but this year we thought we'd start slower. You guys may find it harder to meet other 1st years outside of your pods, so allow us to facilitate wholesome bonding. We promise to leave the ice breakers at the Zoom Waiting Room.

**Booksale** - This event has been described as medicine's own Hunger Games, so you're lucky that we've made it online for this year. We'll be pairing up buyers with sellers and letting you do the trade in order to minimise contact. Keep an eye on the Facebook event for more details.

### **October**

**Med Cup** - A reminder to all that we're not just smart and good-looking, we also dabble in a bit of sport. This is a fun annual tradition that sees each year face off in a soccer tournament to find the champion year of Trinity Med. All are encouraged to come along and show off your fast footwork or support your year, with all proceeds going to the fabulous Med Day! Fingers crossed this goes ahead when we head back to Level 2, but no promises :(.

**Surf Trip** - A recent addition to the Biosoc calendar, the Biosoc surf trip is less about surfing and more about the fact that one trip away wasn't enough for us. We'll do our best to make this happen in some form, but once again, we are slaves to the restrictions.

**Lecture Series** - Due to their easy conversion to Zoom, our lecture series will be a staple of the Biosoc diet, covering topical issues throughout the year. Topics include Medicine & Racism, COVID-19, Medicine & Inclusion Health and Women in Medicine.

### **November**

**Junior Careers Night** - This may feel a bit premature, but this event reminds us of why we're here in the first place. We invite speakers from different specialities to compete over which career path is best.

### **December**

**Exams** - An unfortunate necessity, but well-rewarded by what awaits you after...

**Biosoc Panto** - Much like a fine wine, the Biosoc Panto ages well as older years tend to be rewarded with actually understanding more of the med jokes, until you get to our year, when we actually have to put on the panto ourselves.

So please, come along and enjoy watching us put our superiority complexes and massive egos to good use by providing you with an unforgettable evening of humour and humility!

**Christmas Trip** - This is unfortunately a no-go this year, however it's worth knowing about it so that you can start dreaming about Christmas Trip 2021. A 3 day bender in a UK/European city followed by a court issued warrant to never return to said city. The rumours you've heard are probably true, and we've no doubt next year's trip will be 2 trips in 1.

### January

**Medicine Through The Arts** - A recent addition to the Biosoc calendar, growing in strength and popularity each year, thanks to its fantastic entries and incredible prizes, this is your chance to bring back out your easel/instrument/camera/whatever you enjoyed doing before all your time became consumed with learning what phosphorylates what, and show your peers that art doesn't just belong in the Arts Building (where you'd be pushed to find some anyway). Do consider entering, if I can't convince you, the prize list sure can!

**Med Ball** - This event needs no introduction, one of the most glamorous events of the college calendar that guarantees to sell out. All I'll say is, make sure you have your card details at the ready and a speedy WiFi connection when tickets go on sale, because you won't want to miss this.



### February

**Med Day** - You're going to hear a lot about Med Day before this fateful Friday in February. Some will say it becomes your new Christmas day, while others say the warmth you feel in your heart means you don't even notice the sub 0 temperatures you're standing outside in, and they're absolutely right. Med Day begins long before the sun has even risen, with you carting yourself into TBSI and up to the KEA to get some free breakfast before descending onto the innocent pedestrians of this fair city, where you will scream and shout until

your vocal nodules pop out, gathering all the money you can for Med Day's fantastic charities. Then in the afternoon you drop your full buckets back to TBSI to be counted while you regroup with your pals at the Pav and share your tales of money-snatching success over some free ice cream, before going for a bounce on the bouncy castle! Epic. Then you're free to head home for a nap before coming back into college for the charity auction, where the most charitable amongst you put themselves to the test to see how far they are willing to go for Med Day! Then it's time to move on over to the biggest lecture hall in Trinity for the biggest show of the year: The Med Day Talent Show. This is better than any X-Factor audition compilation you've ever seen, the raw talent hidden amongst your peers is breathtaking, and let me tell you, there is nothing more powerful than 600 meds on their feet screaming 'All I want for Christmas' in the Ed Burke. Nothing. Finally, we bid Med Day farewell for another year as we make our way to the club to finish off another magical Christm - I mean Med Day!

**Inaugural Ball** - The only time you will see 'Ball' and 'free' used in the same sentence. That's right, once a year you get to don your glad rags and come out to support all the smarty pants of med as they collect their prizes for their academic achievements in the previous year. This is preceded by a highly anticipated guest lecture from the president of Biosoc's 146th session. You'd be crazy to miss this one.

## **Other Societies and Student-Run Organisations**

**Med Day** - If you haven't read my glowing review of Med Day, go back up and do that to see what this magical committee can achieve by the start of November. A heartwarming committee full of charity and congeniality, if you're the person that came to do med because you have a passion for helping others and bringing joy to the lives of those you meet, then this is the society for you, so make sure to run for election when we come and pick the Biosoc and Med Day class reps!

**MOVE** - Trinity's voluntary overseas elective charity run by 3rd years. Support their fundraising campaigns for hospitals in the developing world by coming to their events throughout the year, including the very popular MOVE ball, one of the first and most affordable balls of the year, a great chance to get done up and get to know your year while looking your best!

**Subspecialty Societies** - Between Obs/Gynae (TOGGS), Paediatrics, Surgery, GP, Medical Students for Choice etc., there really is a society for everyone. Don't worry if you don't join these though- they're more aimed at the surgeon-since-birth type who want to learn more about the speciality.

**Medical Protection Service (MPS)** whilst not a student run society, this organization is free to join and will provide you with all the support you need through your medical careers from college to the workplace. It is essential you get familiar with them before final year so it's a good idea to sign up now. The sign up takes less than 5 minutes and can be accessed [here](#).

## **10 Things I Wish I Knew Starting 1st Year**

- 1. Medicine doesn't start with medicine** - Unfortunately, throughout 1st year the only thing that really seems related to medicine is anatomy (which you probably hate), so it can be tough justifying going in to college and studying what effectively feels like general science, but that's the reality of 1st and 2nd year which are the 'pre-clinical' years. As you progress into 2nd year and start to study pharmacology and infection and immunology, things will start to feel a bit more mediciney, and by the time you get to 3rd year, you'll have so many pathologies to learn that you'll be gasping for some fatty acid metabolism pathways. So don't worry if you start to feel like this isn't the course for you, because in reality 1st year has very little to do with what you'll be studying for the rest of the course. But for the love of God, please learn your anatomy and physiology somewhat well, or else some ortho consultant will break your wrist if you can't remember the 8 bones it's made of.
- 2. Imposter Syndrome is very real** - Someone will probably come and speak to you about this at some stage, but Imposter Syndrome is basically the feeling of not belonging when you enter a new group or environment. It happens to most people when they start studying medicine because the content is so challenging and you feel like you must be the only person who is struggling so much. But only in the future when your year is more comfortable with each other will you laugh about how awful you thought everything was in 1st year, and it will turn out everyone was on the same page as you, but everyone was too afraid to admit it! So on your darkest days when you're convinced that this is way too difficult and you don't belong here, just remember everyone is in the same boat as you, so don't get too stressed about it!
- 3. The soft-click symphony** - It took me quite a while to figure out what I should be doing during lectures. I tried printing out notes to bring with me, but decided that highlighting a few lines on each page wasn't worth destroying the rainforests. I tried just sitting there and absorbing what the lecturer was saying, needless to say that was an utter waste of time. I tried writing the lecture notes out during the lecture, but gave up after a few minutes when I was already 10 slides behind the lecturer. Ultimately, I settled on joining the frantic typers creating the soft-click symphony, as this seemed to be the most efficient way of catching what the lecturer was saying. A very useful app I use for Windows is Drawboard PDF which lets you annotate the lecture slides (provided the lecturer actually gives them to you) and has a variety of other features like highlighting text, drawing shapes etc. For all you Mac users, I presume you have some fancy software built in, so you can find that yourselves (I have been informed that notability is the app for you). Basically, it can take a while to figure out what works for you, and that's OK!

4. **Study techniques** - This one I'm still trying to figure out, and I think that's the key message here. I have tried so many different study techniques since starting college, from writing out notes, to typing notes, to drawing diagrams, to highlighting books, to scrunching my notes up into a ball, sprinkling a bit of salt and eating them. In other words, don't sweat trying to find your ideal study method before your first set of exams, just keep trying new things until you eventually come across something that works well for you.
5. **\*WTF is the 'Drive'** - The sooner you figure out this mystery the better. If, like me, you'd never heard of google drive before coming to college, it's basically a file sharing platform that we use to share notes between students in our year and students in the years above and below. Your S2S mentors should set you up with the drives from their year, if not just remind them to at the start of the semester! If you find a drive/folder/file that is particularly useful, you can click 'Add to My Drive' to keep a copy yourself. Try to keep your drive relatively clean, because the drive is basically all you use in the run up to exams so you don't want to be wasting time trying to find something (but if you are looking for something particular, you can also use the search bar at the top). If you click into the drives from the years above you, you'll find dozens of past MCQs (which the college won't share with you), sample answers to essay questions and immaculate lecture notes all typed up!
6. **Clubs and societies** - 1st year is all about signing up to as many clubs and societies as you have cash with you at the Freshers fair, and pushing yourself to try to go to at least one event held by each. Try not to worry about falling behind with study by going and trying out different societies, you need to be able to enjoy yourself in college without being consumed by the fear of failing, and after 2nd year you'll be totally based in the hospitals so it can be harder to get involved with societies at that stage, so 1st year really is your best time to go and try things and see what you enjoy. If you enjoy something in 1st year, you can run for a committee position the next, so it's always good to start early. If you come out the other end of 1st year having done little other than study 24/7, you're gonna be kicking yourself.
7. **Biosoc events** - I really wish someone had told me to go to more Biosoc events in 1st year, because I missed the pub crawl, the Christmas trip and Inaugural ball, all because I decided to go to other events. Don't get me wrong, it's important to go and mix with other college students (or God knows what kind of complex you'll develop), just try and not let it clash with Biosoc events #spon. In 1st year when you've got 180 fresh faces to try and get to know, it's pretty tough introducing yourself 180 times in a lecture hall, only to realise it's the same 5 people each time, and that's what the Biosoc events are for. They're a great opportunity to meet a load of people in your year at once and help you find who you get on best with, so do try and prioritise

them (that's what our handy calendar above is for, so keep an eye on the Facebook page for exact dates!!)

8. **Community is key** - Never underestimate the power of a good friend group, for splitting up the workload, for always being there for the 5th coffee of the day, and for having the ability to make you laugh when all you want to do is cry. It's important to have some good friends in your course, because they really understand what you're going through at any given time, and it's crazy how close you get with your year as time goes on. Don't sweat it if you're halfway through the year and still feel like you haven't found your tribe, 1st year is all about getting to know everyone in the year and then finding out who you gel with best, I would *discourage* you from getting too comfortable with one group straight away! Whatever you do, don't start to isolate yourself if you're getting too stressed with work or can't seem to find like-minded people, just keep saying hi to everyone and you will find your people!
9. **You have more time than you think, so use it wisely** - Things are very full on from Day 1, so it's easy to feel like you need to be studying a lot to keep a handle on things, and with any spare time you have you should be going out to different society events (mainly BIOSOC) and making all new friends like I told you. BUT I still have one more instruction to give you (then I'm done I promise). Don't neglect to meet up with your old friends, don't forget to keep exercising or doing what you used to enjoy, try and go home now and again if you're not living at home, because although it may feel like you only have time for college, study and going out, you actually have a lot more time than you think, especially if you use your study time efficiently i.e. look up past papers early (don't wait till the week before exams) and see what topics come up and how much detail you need to know about them, start learning off sample essays (I know that sounds so Junior Cert Irish but bear with me) and don't just sit down and start scrolling through lecture slides or you will end up having no time to do anything else!
10. **It gets better** - Clichéd I know, but still it is nice to hear. 1st year is a great time for going out, trying new things and enjoying what college has to offer, but let's face it, the workload is fairly bleak and most of the time it doesn't feel at all like what you signed up to do, but you get used to the workload and get better at balancing things, and then by the time you get to 3rd year and start your clinical studies, all that basic science BS is finally worth it! Everyone says they start to enjoy studying a lot more once they get to 3rd year, so hang in there, and remember when studying gets dark and dreary, that it all pays off in the end!

Best of luck with the year ahead, you're gonna have a ball so enjoy it! And don't forget to join!