

## **IFUT expresses concerns on NUIG gender equality task force**

*January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2015*

The Irish Federation of University Teachers (IFUT) has acknowledged the decision of the Board of NUI Galway to establish a Task Force to deal with issues of gender discrimination in the college, but expressed serious concern that the process is being dealt with secretly and without consultation with staff

Joan Donegan, Deputy General Secretary of IFUT, said that Task Force membership should be agreed jointly with staff unions and that it must engage directly with staff, to ensure full confidence in, and maximum effectiveness of the process.

“The announcement today of a Chairperson of the Task Force is welcome in principle, but the process of selection has clearly taken some time and was undertaken without reference whatever to staff in the college or their representatives.

“Given that the Task Force is meant to address the issue of exclusion it is amazing that the college is now seeking to address it in a clearly exclusionary manner from the beginning.

“It is vital that the college correct this error and follow a consultative approach in selecting the remaining members of the Task Force,” Joan Donegan said.

She said it is also regrettable that while in its statement the NUIG Board “fully acknowledge the issues here for NUI Galway and are committed to addressing them,” that it then devotes considerable effort to undermine a recent decision of the Equality Authority on NUIG.

“It disregards the Authority’s comment that ‘perhaps the most significant frailty to the respondent’s (NUIG) rebuttal is the statistical evidence. Men are in the minority in the College Lecturer grade (40%) but, significantly, that statistic is almost inverted when it comes to the next promotional grade - 61% of Senior Lecturers are men.’”

The Board of NUIG also appears to have set no timeframe for the work of the Task Force.

“Today’s announcement shows a continued lack of transparency by NUIG on women’s participation in the university. In this regards, the Minister and Department of Education have a clear obligation to ensure that gender equality issues in higher education are addressed transparently and with due consultation with staff and their unions,” Ms Donegan said.

ENDS

**For further information on this media release please contact:**

*John Gallagher. John Gallagher Consulting. Tel. 087 9369888*

*Joan Donegan, Deputy Gen Sec, IFUT. Tel. 087 1315960.*