

Irish Federation of University Teachers

PROCEEDINGS

OF

ANNUAL DELEGATE

CONFERENCE

2013

Cónaidhm Éireannach na Múinteoirí Ollscoile

PROCEEDINGS OF 2013 ADC

1. OPENING

The President Dr. Marie Clarke, UCD, opened the 47th Annual Conference of the Irish Federation of University Teachers at 11:00am on Saturday 27th April 2013 in Buswells Hotel, Molesworth Street, Dublin 2. She welcomed all delegates, observers and guests (see Appendix I).

The General Secretary then welcomed our Fraternal Delegates; Mr. John Devlin, NASUWT, Mr. Gerard Craughwell, Teachers Union of Ireland, Ms. Julie Naughton, Irish Research Staff Association, Dr. Mike Larkin, Universities and Colleges Union, Mr. Lewis Love, Ulster Teachers Union.

The General Secretary then conveyed to the meeting the messages of goodwill and solidarity which had been received from: Mr. Jens Vraa-Jenson, Chairperson, Higher Education and Research Standing Committee, EI Europe and International, Dr. Wayne Peters, President, Canadian Association of University Teachers.

2. STANDING ORDERS REPORT

The report of the Standing Orders Committee was presented to the conference. Its adoption was proposed by Paddy O'Flynn, UCD and John Walsh, TCD and agreed unanimously. It was agreed that any queries for the Standing Orders Committee should be referred to Dr. Rose Malone, NUIM.

3. ELECTION OF TELLERS

Rita Collins, UCD and Russell Higgs, UCD were nominated and agreed.

4. PROCEEDINGS OF 2012 ADC

The proceedings of the previous Annual Delegate Conference were tabled for approval and having being proposed by Gerard Casey, UCD and seconded by David Murphy, UCC were unanimously agreed by the meeting.

5. ANNUAL REPORT 2012/2013

The General Secretary, Mike Jennings then presented the Annual Report for 2012/2013. The text of his speech introducing the Report is at Appendix II.

The President then put the adoption of the Annual Report to the meeting and this was agreed unanimously having been proposed by Breandán Ó Cochláin, NUIG and Joan Byrne, HRB.

6. ADDRESS BY MR PAT RABBITTE, TD, Minister for Communications and Natural Resources

Mr. Pat Rabbitte, Minister for Communications and Natural resources who was substituting for the Minister of Education and Skills, Mr. Ruari Quinn who was unavoidably detained elsewhere, then addressed the meeting.

7. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The Presidential Address was delivered by Dr. Marie Clarke of UCD (see Appendix III). At the conclusion of this address the President was afforded a standing ovation by the conference. The conference then adjourned for lunch.

8. FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial Report was debated in a Private Session. The report was presented by Dr. Hugh Gibbons, Vice President-Finance.

The Financial Report was then put to the conference and agreed (see Appendix IV).

9. ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

The General Secretary announced that Gerard Jennings, NUIG, Colum Ó Cléirigh, SPD and Donal Fitzsimons, UCD had been the only three nominees for the three positions of Trustees and therefore he was pleased to declare the three members elected as trustees for the coming session.

10. MOTIONS ON POLICY

1. Emergency Motion: Croke Park Agreement *Croke Park Agreement*

"Recognising and accepting the clear-cut rejection of "Croke Park 2" (LRC Proposals of 25 February 2013) by IFUT members and by the wider union movement, this ADC adopts the following policy positions.

- 1. IFUT will not support or engage in any process of clarification or modification to the terms of these Proposals. Members will not be rebaloted on any revision or clarification to "Croke Park 2" unless a decision to do so is taken at a special delegate conference.*
- 2. IFUT insists that "Croke Park 1" (the Public Service Agreement 2010-2014) remains in place until its term expires. In the event that the government and/or management abrogates that agreement, IFUT will withdraw immediately all concessions made under that agreement.*
- 3. IFUT will fight with all of the resources at its disposal any attempt by Government and/or our employers to enforce all or any of the terms of "Croke Park 2" or any alternative unagreed measures, including pay-cuts.*
- 4. IFUT will insist that any future negotiations at national level recognise the inappropriateness and unacceptability of conditions of service for members of one union being decided by the aggregate vote of all unions."*

In proposing the Emergency Motion Joe Brady UCD said that in effect he wished to make a modest proposal. This would be a mere statement of where we are actually at. There were four points to be stated.

- "1. The so called Croke Park Extension Deal is dead. It was never fair and never any good and now it is dead. To negotiate implies to enter into discussion, however this was not discussion this was a mugging. Could the deal be clarified to our satisfaction? Could it be tweaked? No! However there is nothing to stop us doing better deals in the future.*
- 2. We keep our side of side of the bargains. We signed up to Croke Park, reluctantly but we did. If you do a deal you stick to it. Everything we gave by way of concessions has been taken.*

3. We are a resourceful union. This is not just a question of money. We will fight any attempt to impose upon us an agreement that we do not accept. The precise tactics and strategy to be used will be for our Executive to decide.

4. There appears to be an idea that the Government only needs to satisfy a few unions and that the rest will be affected and will have no choice other than to fall in line. This is equivalent to saying that might is right.”

Gerald Mills, UCD seconded the motion. He said that many other people believe as we do. It only required three percent of SIPTU members to change their mind for a different result to have come about. He had heard the Minister for Education’s speech by the Minister for Communication. It seemed to be all about first-level and second-level. Higher Education does not seem to matter. This is all “pallaver” as Mr Rabbitte would himself say. IFUT cannot allow ourselves to be bound by an overall vote of the other unions. The agreement which was the product of a “sleep over” in Lansdowne House cannot and must not be imposed upon us. Other unions know nothing about us or what it is that we do. The General Secretary spoke in favour of the motion. He said, what had happened with regard to Croke Park, was a breach of faith. Breaking your word is the worst crime you could commit in industrial relations. If you do not have your integrity you have nothing. Minister Howlin had stated that this was the “last ask for three years”. How could we believe this? The Minister was not only mangling the English language, he was mangling our entire system of free collective bargaining by the imposition of the FENPI Legislation. The clock was being turned back to 1946. The agreement had been described in some quarters as a “pick pocket’s charter”. You must not set up a situation when one union feels their interests are served by taking more money from the pockets of the members of other unions. He urged support for the Emergency Resolution.

The Resolution was put to the floor and was adopted unanimously.

2 GUEST SPEAKER

At this stage the President Dr Marie Clarke introduced our guest speaker Dr Andrew McGettigan. His Address what entitled “English Lessons: Privatisation in Higher Educations”. At the conclusion of the Address thanks were expressed to Dr McGettigan by the General Secretary and by the President.

3 RESUME DEBATE ON POLICY

2 The Tyndall National Institute Pay Claim

“This ADC fully supports our members in the Tyndall National Institute in their campaign to achieve pay parity with their fellow members in UCC for doing similar and equal work. IFUT expresses its anger at veiled, despicable threats from UCC management to discipline our fellow members for their ongoing efforts to highlight their continued inequitable treatment by management in relation to pay. We demand that UCC respects out Tyndall members’ legislative rights to engage in industrial action to highlight their grievances.

ADC calls on UCC, the HEA, the Department of Education and Science and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform to end this unjust treatment of our members without delay.

IFUT expresses its solidarity with our SIPTU Tyndall Colleagues who, similar to our members, are also subject to this pay inequity and we will continue to support our joint campaign to achieve pay parity for all affected workers in the Tyndall National Institute.”

The motion was put forward to the ADC by the UCC Branch. It was proposed by Michael Delargey, UCC. He said that members in Tyndall were experiencing hurt, despair, dejection and anger. There had been demonstrations on the campus, there had been notices from management threatening dire consequences. The members need our explicit

support. Tony O'Farrell, NUIM said that motion needed redrafting and editing. Alistair McKinstry, NUIG wondered if we should delete the reference to industrial action. John Walsh, TCD said that the Tyndall issue gave rise to issues of academic freedom. The motion was seconded by Angela Flynn and adopted unanimously.

3 Equality

.....*"That Conference commits to ensuring that Equality remains a key component of the IFUT industrial relations agenda. In this work IFUT should address the issue of gender inequality in career progression in Academe and attempt to identify the obstacles to such development."*

The motion was proposed by Joan Donegan, Assistant General Secretary and seconded by Rose Malone. It was adopted unanimously. (see a copy of Joan's speech at Appendix IV.)

4 Reconfiguration of IT Provision

'ADC notes the negotiations taking place between the various institutions involved in the reconfiguration of ITE provision. ADC instructs the Executive to invite the Steering Committees overseeing these negotiations involving institutions in which IFUT organises, to meet IFUT to establish formal industrial relations fora.'

5 SPD, CICE, MDIE/Newly Constituted Branch?

"That all SPD and CICE staff who are currently members of the respective IFUT Branches in those institutions (or are currently eligible for membership) will have the right to be represented collectively in a newly constituted IFUT Branch in any future merger between DCU, SPD, CICE and MDI"

6 Initial Teacher Education

"IFUT notes with concern proposals for amalgamation of ITE Departments and demands full consultation on any implementation of those proposals. This ADC instructs the Executive to oppose any worsening of our members' conditions."

The above motions were all taken together. In proposing motion number 6 Rose Malone, NUIM expressed concern at the Sahlburg Report. The recommendation from this report had been expressed in a bizarre and unusual way. The idea of "rationalisation" appears to be a post-modern one and in effects it means "saving money". "Agile provisions" as mentioned by the Minister does not mean running from campus to campus. IFUT is fully committed to supporting all of our members involved in this set of proposals. We will demand representation at national level and at local level in all negotiations concerning its implementation. It is salutary to recall that there were still residual issues unresolved from the misguided and rushed closure of Carysfort College. The motion was seconded by Anthony Harvey, RIA, who said he wished to draw attention to the extreme dangers with regard to amalgamations for instance as had occurred in Wales, where people were made redundant and their previous contracts ended up not being worth the paper they were written on. The motion was carried unanimously. Áine O'Neil, CICE spoke to motion number 4, she emphasised that this matter was very urgent and pressing for the members concerned. CICE seems to be destined to be in a group to be reconfigured with DCU, Saint Patrick's College and Mater Dei and the process is gathering momentum. There is a Joint Steering Committee in place which meets once a month. We must insist on IFUT's involvement earlier rather than later. We have had great support from the General Secretary and we are

delighted with the content of the President's Address today and how much support has been expressed for us. We intend to engage not just on the IR issues but on the professional/career issues also. She finished by saying that she was grateful for the support coming from the Executive. The motion was seconded by Audrey Halpin, CICE and adopted unanimously.

John O'Flynn, SPD proposed motion no. 5. He said that the word "incorporation" has been used most worryingly. He was speaking on behalf of the branch in SPD and CICE. We have been told that IFUT representation is assured but we cannot be complacent and must insist that this be the case in the future. The motion was seconded by Cora Cregan, SPD. Speaking in favour of the motion the General Secretary said that IFUT was absolutely determined to remain as the representative union of all of the members that we currently represent and he was confident that this would be allowed under the rules of the ICTU. The motion was carried unanimously.

7 The Regulation of Doctoral Qualifications

"This ADC objects to the retrograde actions of Higher Education Institutions in which early career Researchers, holding doctorate qualifications, are being re-categorized as "trainees". This ADC calls on IFUT to oppose such measures."

The motion was proposed by Brendan Palmer, UCC. He said that when he first graduated with a Doctorate it was a giddy experience but weight had now been re-imposed. In 2005 Post-Docs were regarded as fulltime employees by the Conference of Irish Universities, however these same people are now saying that were are mere trainees. In meetings with the Vice President and the HR Department in UCC we have constantly sought to have the word "training" replaced by the words "continuous professional development" we have met with a blank no each time. It is important that IFUT as a national union supports this campaign. John Walsh, TCD said he wished to speak as a former Post-Doc. He referred to the so called "career framework" document which was nothing of the kind. It was a mere device to get around the provisions of the 2003 Act and to get researchers out of employment as soon as possible. This is part of the wider ideology of managerial control. We must say there can be no research without researchers. We must reject the idea of "yellow pack" employees. Academics have been accused of living in an ivory tower, but the people who have these new structures cannot even have been reading the newspapers with regard to the economic collapse in Europe. This issue is straight forwardly an industrial relations issue. An injury to one must continue to be the concern of all. It is long past the time for real engagement with the rights of researchers, we must reject completely the idea that we would create a second class category of employees. Cathy Swift, MICL said the word "trainee" is used in Limerick in a Higher Education Institute to which we may be affiliated in the future. The idea seemed to be that if people are designated as trainees not only can they be let go but rather they must be let go. The motion was carried unanimously.

8 Entitlements to Contracts of Indefinite Duration

"This ADC deplores the attempts by employers in the Public Sector to undermine the entitlements secured under the terms of the Protection of Employees (Fixed-Term Work) Act 2003 by refusing to afford to workers who have an entitlement to a Contract of Indefinite Duration the same rights and status as other permanent employees. This abuse is particularly evident in the University Sector where employers refuse to afford the same protection against compulsory redundancy to employees on certain Contracts of Indefinite Duration as enjoyed by other permanent colleagues."

In proposing this motion the General Secretary said: I think it is true to say that IFUT of all unions has exploited the terms of the 2003 Act for fixed term workers more so than any other union to win rights for more employees. It was in the case of the closure of St. Catherine's

College of Education that IFUT had established that fixed term workers have the same entitlement to redundancy payments as permanent staff. Last year we risked a huge financial cost by facing UCC down in their attempt to undermine the act by appealing an IFUT success in the Labour Court to the High Court. I have no doubt that UCC believed that they could intimidate us by a display of financial muscle and willingness to spend taxpayer's money. The silence of the Department of Education, which is normally so quick to rush in and micro manage events, in this case was truly shameful. Let me explain what the current ruse being used by TCD and NUIG is. It is an attempt to undermine the 2003 Act so that is why it is important that we expose it. The Act defines a fixed-term worker as one whose termination of employment is determined by the occurrence of a specific event. So if your employment stands to be terminated by the cessation of specific funding then you are a fixed term worker and entitled to protection of the law. The act also says that there are only two types of worker – fixed-term and permanent so when you are not one you must be the other. Therefore people on CID's must be permanent workers. But the universities say that people on CID's (mainly researchers) can be made redundant if there is a cessation of funding. But the law says that this is to treat them as if they were fixed term which you cannot do after four years of employment. It is bad enough the universities should try out this trick (egged on and supported by the Department of Education). But the real scandal is that in at least one case the Labour Court and one Rights Commissioner has condoned this abuse. We were told that because our members concerned had the title of being on a CID even though they had the reality of being on fixed term employment that they had no locus standi and that their case could not be heard. We need to fight this resolutely. An identical resolution has been proposed for the Biennial Delegate Conference of Congress. We need to pass this resolution here today as a prelude to that. We then need to approach the chairperson of the Labour Court and the Chief Executive of the Labour Relations Commission and the Minister and try to stop this deliberate undermining of the 2003 Act. The motion was put to the floor and adopted unanimously.

9 Scholars at Risk

“That this ADC reaffirms IFUT's commitment to freedom of speech and trade union rights for academics in all jurisdictions and to the defense of academic freedom.”

Addressing the motion Rose Malone, NUIM (who was elected as Incoming President of IFUT on 19 April 2012) stated that a core value of our organisation must be the preservation of academic freedom. In subtle and very unsubtle ways this has been undermined for instance trade unionists defending academic freedom have been imprisoned in Turkey, Bahrain, Palestine and other places. A couple of weeks ago teacher trade unionists were locked out in Belgium. We must support Scholars at risk wherever they are at risk. The motion was seconded by Dr Marie Clarke and carried unanimously.

10 Supportive Environment for Academic Staff

“IFUT notes that the Ministers for Higher Education in the European Higher Education Area have committed themselves to creating a "supportive environment" for Academics.

We support the EI campaign to have this commitment translated into reality by dealing with issues such as pay & conditions, funding & resources, academic freedom, career prospects etc.

We note that the next stage of this campaign will involve conducting a major research project amongst Academics in Europe and we appreciate the amount of work that the President of IFUT has already contributed to this project to date.

This ADC asks the IFUT Executive to continue to play a major role in this campaign.”

Proposing the motion the General Secretary said in March 2010 the Ministers for Education in the European Higher Education area (a child of the Bologna Process) issued the Budapest/Vienna Ministerial Declaration. In this they called for “a more supportive environment” for academic staff as a prerequisite to the enhancement of Higher Education. Whether they intended to or not they thus identified a clear truth. You cannot have a healthy and vibrant Higher Education system if you have a demoralised and impoverished academy. We need to exploit this truth. True, our critics will accuse us of acting out of mere self-interest but if we truly believe that we are a crucial component – perhaps even **the** crucial component – in the HE system then we should have no hesitation or qualms about demanding more support – financial, academic, moral, structural and social. I do not agree with the Wall Street maxim that “greed is good” but appropriately focused self-interest and self-preservation does have validity. The last time any of us were on a plane we were told to put on our own oxygen mask before attending to children or others. The airhostess did not say now don’t be self-centred help everyone else first. Why? Because if a person’s wellbeing is a prerequisite for the wellbeing of others then it simply makes sense to enhance that or at least preserve that person’s wellbeing. EI in which IFUT has always played and continues to play a leading part has focused on this “supportive environment” statement to campaign for more resources, better conditions of employment, the preservation of academic freedom and institutional autonomy and all round greater respect for and treatment of academic staff. EI plans to ratchet up this campaign in the coming year. This will involve scientific research based on an extensive objective surveys. Our President Marie Clarke has played a huge role in this already. This motion seeks to commit the IFUT Executive to keep up this good work as much as we can. They say that “an injury to one is the concern of all” but if we work together internationally and pool and share our strengths and experiences we can turn this around to “progress for one is for the benefit of all”. The motion was seconded by Cathy Swift, MICL and adopted unanimously.

11 Children of Migrant Workers Right to Higher Education

“This ADC asks the Executive of IFUT to make the following policy known to all relevant authorities and agencies:

Young people who have come to Ireland to join their families here and who are resident here for a minimum of three years should enjoy equality of access to Higher Education here.”

The motion was proposed by Hugh Gibbons, TCD, he said there are thousands of immigrants in Ireland, many of them whose children were born outside the country have since joined them in Ireland. In the period 2006 – 2009 over twenty thousand PPS numbers were issued to children whose nationality was outside of the EU. We have the example of a Ukrainian Child whose mother has paid tax in Ireland for ten years but he had to pay six thousand Euro in fees to DCU. Another case in TCD involved he payment of twenty one thousand Euro over four years despite the fact that this student had Irish citizenship. The system is unfair and must be changed. The motion was seconded by Peter Murray, NUIM, Aoife Titley, CICE, thanked the Conference for having this important matter on the agenda. Alistair McKinstry, NUIG said we should even consider expanding the scope of this policy. The motion was put to the conference and adopted unanimously.

Motions on Rules

“1. This ADC amends Rule 6 to include the following wording under 6(a)

Retired Members’ Branch

There shall be a Retired Members' Branch. All retired members of the Federation as defined under Rule 3 (d) will be members of this branch. Such members will cease to be members of their original Academic Staff Associations. The retired members' branch is entitled to representation on Council and the National Executive in the same manner as described in Rules 8 and 12.

Proposer: UCC Branch

2. This ADC amends Rule 11 (a) as follows:

President (a)

There shall be a President of the Federation elected from the Full members of the Federation.

Proposer: UCC Branch”

Michael Delargey, UCC stated that the UCC Branch wished to withdraw both of these motions on the basis that the ICTU Biennial Conference will deal with the role of older people in the trade unions and they would prefer not to pre-empt that debate. The motions were therefore withdrawn.

3 This ADC amends Rule 6 to include the following working under 6C.

“Officers

(iii) the election or appointment of officers including a Chairperson, Honorary Treasurer, Honorary Secretary and Equality Officer and for the manner in which officers can be removed from office.

Proposer: UCC Branch”

Michael Delargey, UCC in proposing this motion said that the Teachers Union of Ireland has since 1978 appointed equality officers in each branch. Equality is still a major issue for our members. There is also the question of discrimination against older people. The motion was seconded by Colum Ó Cléirigh, SPD. Paddy O'Flynn, UCD said he was glad that the earlier rule change motions had been withdrawn as it would not be good if we had introduced discrimination against our retired members. He had often called for education officers to be appointed in each branch. It is a very good idea to have equality officers but it is not necessary to have it in the rules of the union. Maureen Killeavy, UCD said that she was in sympathy with the motion but that it may be overly prescriptive. We try very hard to get people onto our equality committees but we can't fill all the places. Cathy Swift, MICL said she supported the motion. Equality is at the core of everything we do. Joe Brady, UCD said he supported the resolution in principle but would prefer not to impose rules on branches. He would prefer if the matter was dealt with in Council at the first instance. Michael Delargey, UCC replying to debate stated that the UCC branch had wanted to start the debate. They did not wish to take away from the enormous contribution made by retired members. Tony O'Farrell, NUIM stated that we are a federation and members would not take kindly to having rule changes imposed upon them. If there was any suggestion of congress telling us what to do that would be objectionable. It was agreed to refer the matter to the Executive.

4. This ADC amends Rule 10 as follows:

Appointment (b)

“Members of the Equality Committee shall be the Equality Officers of each Branch as defined under rule 6 (c).

Proposer: UCC Branch”

This motion was amended by the Executive as follows. *“The IFUT Executive shall have the power to nominate additional members of the Equality Committee on the basis of their particular interest and/or expertise in the area.”*

Following the debate on the earlier motions it was agreed that this matter should be referred to the IFUT Executive also.

12 CLOSING OF CONFERENCE

The General Secretary presented the former President’s badge to the outgoing President Marie Clarke and congratulated Marie on a very successful term of office and in particular for her magnificent speech today. He also presented a bouquet of flowers to Phyllis Russell, our Secretary/Office Manager. He said that words failed him in summarising the extent of the contribution that Phyllis makes day in and day out to the wellbeing of this union. Suffice to say that her work rate is truly extraordinary and we, all of us as members of this union will be in her debt forever. The outgoing President, Marie Clarke also spoke thanking all delegates for their support, thanking the staff for their work and committing the union to continue to fight to defend the interest to all members. She said it was her honour to declare this very successful ADC to be now closed.

Appendix I

DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS AT 2013 ADC

(As recorded at Conference)

DELEGATES

TCD

Dónall MacDónaill	<i>Ceimicí</i>
Teresa McDonnell	<i>Chemistry</i>
Immaculada Arnedillo-Sánchez	<i>Computer Science</i>
Hugh Gibbons (VP-Fin)	<i>Computer Science</i>
Pat Wall	<i>Education</i>
John Walsh	<i>Education</i>
Liam Dowling	<i>Electron&Elect. Eng.</i>
Cormac Ó Cullleanáin	<i>Italian</i>
Ann Buckley	<i>Language, Literature & Cultural Studies</i>
Seán Hughes	<i>Library</i>
Anne-Marie Malone	<i>Nursing & Midwifery</i>
Eliz. Culleton-Quinn	<i>Physiotherapy</i>
Tony McCashin	<i>Social Studies</i>

UCD

John Dunnion	<i>Computer Science</i>
Marie Clarke (Pres)	<i>Education</i>
Maureen Killeavy	<i>Education</i>
Ciarán Sugrue	<i>Education</i>
Phyllis Gaffney	<i>French</i>
Joe Brady	<i>Geography</i>
Gerald Mills	<i>Geography</i>
Kelly Fitzgerald	<i>Irish, Celtic Studies</i>
Russell Higgs	<i>Mathematical Science</i>
Rita Collins	<i>Nursing & Midwifery</i>

Regina Joye	<i>Nursing & Midwifery</i>
Gerard Casey	<i>Philosophy</i>
Paddy O'Flynn	<i>Student Consultative Forum</i>

UCC

David Murphy	<i>Computer Science</i>
Michael Delargey	<i>Education</i>
Brendan Palmer	<i>Medicine</i>
Tom Andrews	<i>Nursing & Midwifery</i>
Angela Flynn	<i>Nursing & Midwifery</i>
Eoin Sheehan	<i>Tyndall Institute</i>

NUIG

Gerard Jennings	<i>Experimental Physics</i>
Alastair McKinstry	<i>ICHEC</i>
Breandán Ó Cochláin	<i>Physical Chemistry</i>
Antony Wheatley	<i>Physiology/Medicine</i>

NUIM

Rose Malone (Incoming Pres)	<i>Education</i>
Maeve Martin	<i>Education</i>
Brendan Bartley	<i>Geography</i>
Andrew Sliney	<i>Library</i>
Tony O'Farrell	<i>Mathematics</i>
Kylie Jarrett	<i>Media Studies</i>
Jeneen Najji	<i>Media Studies</i>
Jacqueline Hill	<i>Modern History</i>
Dermot Barnes-Holmes	<i>Psychology</i>
Saranne Magennis	<i>Quality Promotion</i>
Peter Murray	<i>Sociology</i>

RCSI

Paul J Murphy	<i>Library</i>
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MICL

Michael Finneran	<i>Education</i>
Aislinn O'Donnell	<i>Education</i>
Deirdre McMahon	<i>History</i>
Cathy Swift	<i>Irish Studies</i>
Gerard Enright	<i>Maths&Computer St.</i>
Marek McGann	<i>Psychology</i>
Patrick Connolly	<i>Theology & Relig.St.</i>

SPD

Cora Cregan	<i>Careers</i>
Carla King	<i>History</i>
Colum Ó Cléirigh	<i>Music</i>
John O'Flynn	<i>Music</i>
Anna Logan	<i>Special Education</i>

CICE

Audrey Halpin	<i>LS/SEN Programmes</i>
Áine O'Neill	<i>Special Education</i>
Aoife Titley	<i>Development and Intercultural Ed.</i>

CB

Anthony Harvey	<i>DMLCS, RIA</i>
Joan Byrne	<i>Microbiology, HRB</i>

OBSERVERS**UCD**

Sylvia McShane	<i>Nursing & Midwifery</i>
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APOLOGIES**TCD**

Gobnait Byrne	<i>Nursing & Midwifery</i>
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UCD

Donal Fitzsimons	<i>Education</i>
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UCC

Aifric Ó Gráda *Applied Social Studies*

Eoin Sheehan *Tyndall Institute*

CICE

Ruby Morrow *Special Education*

CB

Mícheál Collins *Nevin Economic Research Institute*

FRATERNAL

Gerry Breslin, President, Association of Secondary Teachers Ireland

John Devlin, President, *NASUWT, Northern Ireland*

John MacGabhann, President, *Teachers' Union of Ireland*

Mike Larkin, President, *(QUB UCU) University & College Union, Nth Ireland*

Lewis Love, Field Officer & Ex-President, *Ulster Teachers' Union*

Appendix II

IFUT PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

27 APRIL 2013.

Dr Marie Clarke

Introduction

Thank you for your address Minister Rabbitte on behalf of your colleague Minister Quinn, who regrettably, could not be present with us today. However, we were glad to hear that the Minister will meet with the Executive soon so that we can discuss these matters in more depth. Higher education is one part of the education system, which itself reflects, transmits and modifies the values of the whole society. Any analysis must take the national policy making context into account; the policy implementation processes; the agents involved in the process and the identification of needs. All of these are interconnected.

1. Being a public servant?

Public service is a commitment to community and solidarity. The central feature of modern public services is based on the principle of mutual support across communities, founded on shared social objectives. The provision of public services is not defined by economic rules alone, such decisions, which have social consequences involve political choices, which should be mediated through discussion and public debate.

Public service is more than just a job — it is a responsibility and a precious opportunity to make a difference. Irish academics understand that responsibility and opportunity. Among their colleagues in Europe, they have the highest levels of involvement in community organisations along with their colleagues in Norway. They rank third in their involvement in political service, after colleagues in Switzerland and Portugal, and rank third in the extent to which they work with local, national and international social services (Culum *et al.*, 2013).

Our profile of service makes us keenly aware that public servants makes a contract with the people to serve them and we carry it out based on our word. The character trait most commonly associated with this partnership between the public service and the people is integrity. It is based on a promise, and a promise is something that must be kept.

Members of Government and public representatives are also public servants and are expected to adhere to the same code. Indeed, the Programme for Government states under the heading ‘Showing Leadership’, “Politicians should be treated in the same manner as all other public servants” (Programme for Government 2011).

This relationship has been threatened in recent times. A concerted campaign has been mounted in sections of the media, which has vilified and demonised public servants. This campaign has been aided and abetted by some in politics and the bile and venom goes largely unchallenged. The result is that the trust between the state and its employees has been seriously damaged. A further blow, perhaps a death blow, has been dealt by this Government’s attitude to its own promises.

The first Croke Park agreement set out a number of guarantees, which are being breached by this Government. This has fundamentally undermined the trust that was a traditional feature of negotiations between unions and government. We can no longer believe that any current or future guarantees will be honoured by the state.

The original Croke Park deal with the Government was due to expire in 2014. We were working to fulfil our part of the agreement and we expected the Government to honour its guarantees. We did not expect a unilateral reneging, on the existing guarantees nor a forced

“negotiation” on new terms. In fact it seems ridiculous to use the term “negotiations” together with the statement that “you will get the result one way or another”. In fact there were no “negotiations” in any reasonable meaning of that word, threats and bullying more accurately describe the so called negotiations.

Under the original agreement we have sustained up to 25% cuts in our salaries to date and this new Croke Park extension was designed to impose a further cut of up to 8%. Taken together the proposed cuts and reductions over recent years would mean that every single pay increase achieved since the year 2000 had been eroded for all academics below the level of Professor. When adjustments are made for increases in the Consumer Price Index, the deal would have meant that a college lecturer would be earning 3.6% less than in April 2000 (Jennings, 2013; UCC ASA, IFUT Branch, 2013; St. Patrick’s College Drumcondra IFUT Branch, 2013).

As academics we have made our contribution, not only in terms of reduced salaries. Our colleges and universities now operate with fewer staff, more students and far less resources than 5 years ago. However, this is never acknowledged, particularly by politicians. Like our colleagues, we have suffered from the divide and conquer strategy, which resulted in the demonization of public servants generally.

This is unacceptable and we have sent that message to this Government in the clearest terms through our vote. Our situation is in stark contrast to the position in the private sector where according to IBEC almost 40% of Irish employers expect to increase basic pay this year (Wall, *Irish Times*, Dec 2012).

The protected status of our public servant positions is referred to regularly. Almost uniquely in the public sector, significant numbers of staff in the universities and colleges face the threat of compulsory redundancy. IFUT has been forced to fight all such threats on a case by case basis. During the Croke Park Extension talks, the Department of Education and Skills refused to insert any wording into the new proposals, which would give more job security to academics and researchers.

Colleagues we should never be complacent about job security in our sector and we must bear in mind that it is the most junior members of our profession that are most vulnerable in this regard.

We are all aware that progressive taxation on income at central government level is the most efficient for redistribution, because it draws on the widest pool of potential contributors. Further the personnel, expertise and organisation to deal with taxation is in place. Yet, this Government has turned its face against this and is beginning to promise tax cuts as early as 2016. Have we learned nothing?

In common with our European colleagues, Irish academics take our role as public servants very seriously. We are very proud of our contribution and achievements and we make no apology for being paid to do our job on a daily, weekly, monthly and yearly basis.

We are aware of the state's stark financial pressures, which have been reiterated on so many occasions by Minister Quinn. Regrettably the Minister seems reluctant to accept that investment in higher education is essential to economic recovery and future growth. Minister Quinn is not alone in this view, confronted with demands of world economic crises governments are reluctant to increase public funds for long-term investment in higher education (Castagnos & Echevin, 1984).

Trusting educational professionals is a natural consequence of a generally well-functioning civil society. It is evident that this is not the view held by successive Governments with reference to policy direction and development in higher education.

2. The policy narrative in Irish higher education

2.1 Higher education policy in Ireland

Good policy requires a clear explanation of the problem and an equally clear explanation of how the policy solution will solve it (Gash & Roos, 2012). This has not been articulated in any of the policy documents published by the HEA which include the *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* (2011); *Towards a Future Higher Education Landscape* (2012); *Review of Funding Model for Higher Education Institutions: Consultation Document*; *Completing the Landscape Process for Irish Higher Education* (2013).

We are cognisant of the fact that the HEA is sensitive to criticism. On 26th September 1996 during the debate on the introduction of the Universities Act [1997], Ronan Fanning, Emeritus Professor of Modern Irish History at UCD suggested that the HEA’s “appetite for power over the universities is insatiable”. On 29th October 1996, the HEA funded an advertisement in *The Irish Times* suggesting that the public debate around the Universities Bill was ‘marked by a series of erroneous conceptions, even bordering on the bizarre’ (Walshe, 1999, p. 148). It pointed out that the HEA was an important element in maintaining that ‘critical distance’ between the universities and the State and its statutory role was to allocate funds made available by Government to the universities and to ensure that deficits were not incurred (Walshe, 1999, p. 148).

But deficits were incurred, massive deficits in fact and the question still remains, why did the HEA let that happen? Equally, given its past performance, why should anyone be confident that the HEA is capable of either planning or managing the reform agenda that has been set out for higher education?

The HEA does not maintain a critical distance between the universities and the State and this is clear from the various policy documents it has recently commissioned and published.

In the *Review of Funding Model for Higher Education Institutions: Consultation Document*, it is proposed that funding be allocated for a specified number of courses and that core funding, strategic/earmarked funding and performance funding would form the three elements of this model. It was proposed that the performance-funding element would be linked to satisfactory performance in relation to agreed targets. The HEA (2012) stated that “we need to encourage and reward the development of a more cost effective sector. Programme rationalization and greater collaboration between HEIs have been identified as priority areas for action in 2012/13”. In order to achieve this, it

is proposed that each HEI will agree a funding contract with the HEA which will set out the key outputs, outcomes and level of service to be delivered and the resources allocated to achieve these (HEA, 2012).

What we are being asked to believe, colleagues, in the absence of any evidence, is that the centralised and technical approach proposed by the HEA, which distributes educational and research activity amongst institutions, will be better. No rationale has been provided for the kind of centralised system being proposed and no projected cost efficiencies have been outlined. No evidence has been provided that points to inefficiencies in the Irish higher education system and no evidence has been presented that suggests that the existing model is not working.

This Government is committed to a “strong agenda to promote shared services, common procurement and the outsourcing of services where appropriate within the public sector” (Quinn, 2012). We have witnessed first-hand how this has operated so far with reference to the reorganisation of the student grants system. It has proven a very, very expensive financial lesson for the DES. Extra staff had to be appointed to address the deficiencies in this new system and current staff had to be paid extra over-time to deal with the issues that arose. More importantly, in human terms, it has impacted negatively financially and emotionally on students and on their families who have endured such uncertainty due to delays in the processing of their applications and their accurate assessment. This is not a model or an approach that is appropriate for our public services in general nor for our higher education system in particular.

2.2 The policy process in higher education

During the last decade a number of major reviews of the higher education system in Ireland have been published. The *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 – Report of the Strategy Group* (2011) provided projections regarding the future numbers participating in the Irish higher education sector. In the year 2012 following the publication of the Strategy Group the HEA commissioned **another report to be undertaken by the ESRI on future demand for higher education.** Some doubts were cast on the ‘usefulness’ of the Strategy group projections by the ESRI report which stated:

On the basis of current participation rates and demographic projections, the number of potential undergraduate HE entrants is expected to grow from 41,000 in 2010/2011 to 44,000 in 2019/20 (7%) and to just over 51,000 by 2029/2030. The Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI) estimates are broadly in line with recent projections produced by the Department of Education and Skills (DES). These estimates are not considerably impacted when the underlying assumptions relating to migration are altered. Both the ESRI and the DES estimates lie substantially below the projections that were used in the National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030. **Consequently, any policy suggestions centred on the projections contained in this National Strategy document require re-examination** (ESRI, 2012, p. 7).

Questions concerning the existence of a ‘discrepancy’ and the reasons why such a discrepancy is a repeated feature of Irish education policy discourse and planning requires investigation. All too often policy decisions concerning the future of major aspects of our higher education system have been taken in the absence of adequate policy and planning considerations.

2.3 *Teacher Education*

In February 1986 the then-Minister for Education, Ms Gemma Hussey, announced the decision to close the 111-year old Carysfort College. She attributed the decision to “falling pupil numbers, a young teaching force, which was giving rise to few retirements, and the need to contain public expenditure and achieve a better allocation of resources” (Dáil Debates, 1986). Surprisingly, very shortly after the closure the numbers of students were increased significantly for the other colleges. **The need to contain public expenditure may well have been the basis for this decision, however, no analysis of the situation, identification of the processes involved, or the projected savings was ever presented (Clarke & Killeavy, 2012).**

In 2012, two reports were published on this area. *A review of the structure of initial teacher education provision in Ireland: Background paper for the international review team* (Hyland, 2012) and *Report of the International Review Panel on the Structure of Initial Teacher Education Provision in Ireland: Review Conducted on behalf of the Department of Education and Skills* (Sahlberg, et al., 2012). Hyland (2012) focused on the structure of teacher education provision in Ireland and the question of teacher supply. Sahlberg, et al. (2012, p.6) placed initial teacher education firmly at the centre of Ireland’s economic and social structures and asserted that teachers and teacher education are

core to ‘the implementation of national programmes for sustainable economic growth and prosperity’. Like Hyland (2012) the report emphasised the need for the Government and teacher education providers to address the issues of teacher supply. **Further, they recommended that two teacher education providers be closed and that teacher education be reconfigured into six centres across the country as a means of achieving critical mass (Sahlberg, *et al.*, 2012). However, no definition of “critical mass” was offered (Clarke & Killeavy, 2012). Given the lack of clarity concerning teacher supply needs in the system this is not surprising. The increasing presence of private provision in pre-service primary and post primary teacher education makes this situation more problematic, particularly as private bodies are not subject to any quotas on student intake.**

Proposed change in the organisation and delivery of teacher education in Ireland was reported in the *New York Times* on [25 November 2012] which stated that:

St. Patrick’s College, Drumcondra has been training teachers for more than 135 years, for the past two decades as an autonomous college of Dublin City University. But in September, it received a letter saying that it would become a much more integral part of the university.

The author **Christopher Schuetze goes on to note that such proposed mergers between teaching colleges and universities are part of a Government plan to allow the Irish higher education system to educate more people better with less money.** The article quotes Malcolm Byrne of the HEA as saying:

There was need for changes anyway, but obviously now working against a background diminished resources, it brings an urgency.

Further on in the article, the following comments are attributed:

There will be fewer institutions: A lot of the smaller institutions will have been merged and institutions will be encouraged to specialize Mr. Byrne said. “The word in the system is doing more with less”.

The Irish Higher Education Authority is eager to promote the kind of education and training that leads directly to jobs.

Even if our graduates can't get a job in Ireland, it is important that we put our graduates in a position that they can get jobs anywhere in the world Mr. Byrne said.

It is clear that little has changed with reference to the policy process in the intervening period between the closure of Carysfort College and the current situation. The approach adopted is one of restructuring, where the structural reforms are introduced as solution, without any attempt to identify and deal with any actual problems within the system. Once again the narrative suggesting that there will be less inefficiencies in terms of “scale”, or “critical mass”, is put forward as the rationale for the proposed changes. Once again no evidence is provided in terms of the national educational or international research contexts.

In the context of teacher education, the Irish Federation of University Teachers will defend the rights of our members with reference to their terms and conditions of employment, this is our duty as a trade union. We will demand representation in any discussions surrounding amalgamations that would potentially threaten any diminution of their current conditions. Equally, as a professional federation with the single largest range of expertise in teacher education in the country, we will demand representation in any such discussions. It is imperative that the cost cutting rationale, regardless of how it is ‘dressed up’ can no longer be justified as the rationale for system change.

2.4 Competitiveness within higher education: the HEA view

There is a view within the HEA that education is not a public good or service.

During 2012, the HEA indicated that high quality private sector institutions will continue to be a feature of the system, and could have an expanded role where they meet particular economic or other demands (HEA, 2012).

At a meeting of the *Joint Committee on Education and Social Protection* (13 March 2013), the Chair Ms Joanna Tuffy, requested Dr Sean Rowland, founder of Hibernia College to state the profit margins of the company. He replied:

We absolutely do not discuss that. It would not be appropriate. It is policy. We have to report everything under Irish law, which is as it should be.

He went on to say that:

The information would be accessible through freedom of information provisions. That is the way we direct people who are interested in that area.

It seems somewhat strange to refuse this information to such a body on the grounds that it would be of “interest to our competitors”. Presumably these competitors are the colleges of the National University of Ireland, Dublin City University and Trinity College Dublin, the University of Limerick and possibly other private colleges in embryo. Of course, competitors may also apply to providers outside of the state. It is fortunate that, as Dr Rowland did point out that recourse may be made through FOI for this company to disclose the profits.

Mr John Hennessy, Chair of the HEA is a keen supporter of the private sector in education:

As a growing sector, the private sector has the potential to add significantly to the overall capacity of the system (Hennessy, 2012). **Competition is as important in education as it is in industry and commerce - every institution is in a way an ‘economic check on its competitors’.** The ability to react and anticipate the needs of the economy also echoes the ability of the sector to offer ‘an opportunity to periodically reassess the value for money and

effectiveness of public providers; where private providers can offer better value for money” (Hennessy, 2012).

Mr Hennessy takes this position, due perhaps, to his over-optimistic view of how markets work and that private sector is ‘obviously’ more efficient than the public sector.

We reject both his assertion and the basis of this assertion. Empirical evidence and theory suggest that this assumption is wrong. **There is little systematic evaluation of whether competition in itself raises standards (Gash & Roos 2012).** The Finnish economist Johann Willner reviewed empirical evidence from comparative studies in a range of sectors, which showed that public ownership is no less efficient in more than half of the studies he reviewed. We argue that in higher education the universal, mutual-solidarity function of public services must remain the priority – not the market.

Within the policy framework and process there seems to be an over reliance on international experts to tell us what is appropriate for our system.

In 2012, the HEA commissioned inputs from six international experts on the future of Irish higher education. In their report *A Proposed Reconfiguration of the Irish System of Higher Education: Report prepared by an International Expert Panel for the Higher Education Authority of Ireland* (HEA, 2012) they argued:

[That there has] been a growing concern that while the laissez-faire development of the Irish higher education system has achieved successes in some areas – higher participation and research activity - it has also led to mission drift, confusion over the role and mission of institutions, growing institutional homogeneity, unnecessary duplication and fears about the quality and sustainability of the system. **There is a widespread agreement among policy makers and the public that the system should be reformed (HEA, 2012, p. 5).**

No evidence for this statement was provided by the HEA. There was no discussion with the universities or IFUT and “the panel worked solely on the basis of a portfolio of information and statistics about Irish higher education” (HEA, 2012, p. 5). They worked over three days and

one member of that panel did not even come to Dublin but submitted a report (HEA, 2012, p. 6). This panel claimed that their proposals would assist institutional diversity, expand capacity within constrained budgets and ensure less duplication, while also ensuring each institution will be of a sufficient size to sustain a comprehensive range of research programmes and teaching.

Mr Tom Boland (2011) CEO of the HEA in his vision of higher education has referred to the:

era of laissez faire in higher education and its replacement by what might be termed “directed diversity.

Minister Quinn has commented in the past that the “harsh reality is that as a country we can no longer afford to indulge plans that are not based on credible and realistic analysis of likely outcomes” (Quinn, 2012).

I suggest that the harsh reality is that Irish higher education requires a coherent narrative and little that has emerged from HEA policy documents indicates that the narrative is either coherent or indeed based on “credible and realistic analysis of likely outcomes”.

The debate should not be about whether education reforms are needed, but rather about the kind of reforms, and the conditions for success (Ball & Youdell, 2008).

3. Lack of investment in higher education

While investment in higher education in Ireland increased from the mid 1990s onwards, **however per capita expenditure remained modest by international standards throughout the period of growth and this expenditure has significantly decreased since 2009.** The OECD (2004) reported that Ireland’s investment into its education system as a whole was lower than the OECD average. In public expenditure terms it ranked only 25th out of 30 OECD countries and with private expenditure

added to public, 23rd out of 27 countries for which data were available (OECD 2004). In fact public expenditure declined from 4.7% to 4.1% as a proportion of a rapidly growing GDP between 1995 and 2000 (OECD, 2004).

We never had appropriate levels of investment in our higher education system compared to other OECD countries.

Between 2008 and 2012 recurrent grant allocations to universities and colleges fell by 25%. The largest cuts in recurrent grants were at UCD, which experienced a reduction of over 25%. Other universities have taken major cuts, including TCD (- 22%), UCC (-21%), NUI Maynooth (-18%) and NUIG (-16%). The recurrent grant to St Patrick's College, Drumcondra was cut by 25% and Mary Immaculate College in Limerick was down 18% in the four-year period reviewed. The budget introduced in 2013 brought a further 7.4% reduction in general recurrent funding levels for the third level education sector.

The HEA achieved and surpassed the targeted staff reductions set out in the first Employment Control Framework, which expired in December 2010 (HEA, Annual Report, 2011).

There are 10,300 WTE core staff employed in Universities and Colleges, of which 4,701 (45.5%) are academic and 5,599 (54.4%) are non-academic (HEA Key Facts and Figures 2011-2012). We have a higher proportion of non-academic staff than academics employed in our universities. This is a matter of grave concern and highlights the over bureaucratisation of Irish universities at the expense of their core academic teaching and research function.

In order to deal with existing budgetary deficits and resulting cuts in state expenditure, higher education institutions have begun to focus on measures involving staff student ratios, research income metrics, the recruitment of international students and cuts in non-pay budgets. Cuts in expenditure affecting staff student ratios tend to be blunt measures that are taken with the objective of saving money and educational issues are rarely - if ever - considered in justifying these measures. Typically, reductions in full-time staffing take the form of non-replacement of existing staff on their retirement.

This means that areas of course work can no longer be provided for students and their experience deteriorates (Clarke & Killeavy, 2012).

The extensive nature of these cuts highlights the seriousness of the crisis that is now facing Irish universities.

4. Student access to and experiences in higher education

It is important that we retain an expansive view of the university as an engine for social change and economic self-direction. Central to this is equity of access and opportunity and these values are at risk in current budgetary arrangements. Higher education should remain accessible to all who meet entry qualifications, regardless of their personal circumstances.

4.1 Student Grants

The research evidence indicates that the proportions of young people in receipt of student grants varies considerably across different socio-economic groups, particularly across employee and self-employed groups. The value of grant payments has also declined over time (McCoy *et al.*, 2010). **The reduction of 3% in the rates of grants announced in Budget 2012 was implemented for all existing and new student grant holders from January 2012. The decline in grant eligibility by students from lower non-manual backgrounds, such as personal services, sales and clerical workers, is particularly striking (McGuinness *et al.*, 2012).** These groups are also likely to be at the margins of the income thresholds in relation to any fee exemptions.

These issues are all the more pressing in the current climate as families are struggling to provide financial support to their sons and daughters on entering higher education. Young people themselves face difficulties in securing part-time employment to support their studies. A situation is developing where parents are afraid to take on available work, or work hours that might put them in excess of the income thresholds whereby they would lose grant eligibility for children at third level. This is not acceptable in a country that promotes education as a key to economic recovery.

Foreign national students who have been educated at primary and secondary school in this country face serious challenges in securing grants if they have not applied for citizenship in their own right even if their parents have done so. This often occurs because of lack of information. Such students need appropriate support to ensure that they actually know what steps they must take if they are not to be disadvantaged when it comes to securing support for third level education.

The issues in relation to shared services with reference to the student grant system have been debated extensively elsewhere. **It is not possible to easily share information across databases from social welfare, revenue and education. This requires legislation and should be a priority for the ministers involved so that a proper service can be provided for our students who wish to access higher education. Every child in this country has a right to expect to receive a university education and should receive the necessary supports to do so.**

4.2 *Transition from secondary to university*

Greater collaboration between universities and the second level education system with reference to enhanced curricular alignment has been proposed. Curricular change is also influenced by the availability of existing resources, shared vision, and appropriate organizational infrastructure (Cleveland-Innes & Emes, 2005). The NCCA / HEA Conference on *Entry into Higher Education in Ireland in the 21st Century*, (2011) and the recent publication *Supporting a Better Transition from Second Level to Higher Education: Key Directions and Next Steps* (2013) marked a new beginning in this regard. **There are potential pedagogical and logistical challenges arising from these proposals within higher education institutions, including increases in class sizes and difficulties allocating students to different subject areas within programmes** (*Supporting a Better Transition from Second Level to Higher Education: Key Directions and Next Steps*, 2013). **Equally, we must not allow any dilution of the disciplinary areas in our universities.**

Curricular reform at post primary level and in higher education implies more than making changes to curricula. While conferences and reports promote thinking and provide new

directions, what is essential is ongoing and meaningful engagement between schools and universities, and that can only be achieved when there are people available to engage in that process. The cuts to guidance counsellors in schools and the declining numbers of academics in third level makes this necessary engagement very remote. It is very important that students who are struggling to meet the academic requirements of their courses are identified with a view to providing additional academic (and social) guidance and supports, particularly in the first year of their studies (McGuinness *et al.*, 2012). This requires personnel.

4.3 *Teaching Quality*

At the launch of the *National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning*, Minister Quinn suggested that this initiative will allow the system to provide all students with a teaching and learning experience of the highest quality through engagement with innovative pedagogies and technologies that support these (Quinn, 2012).

Irish academics engage in innovative pedagogy. They emphasise international perspectives, a values-based and meritocratic approach in their teaching in line with their colleagues from Finland, the United Kingdom and Austria (Höhle & Teichler, 2013).

The range of diverse teaching methodologies employed by Irish academics compare very favourably ranking third after their colleagues in the UK and Finland on these approaches (Höhle & Teichler, 2013).

What we strive to develop within our students is intellectual curiosity – to give them the potential to develop. To do this, students, need individual support. This cannot be achieved while staff-student ratios are deteriorating significantly in the university sector.

Table 1 Staffing levels in higher education in Ireland 2008-2011

University	Academic Staff Only	Student (WTE) Numbers	Ratio
2008-09	4,795.56	89,650	18.7
2009-10	4,543.98	95,061	20.9
2010-11	4,426.31	106,448	24.0

Source HEA, 2011. Report *Sustainability Study: Aligning Participation, Quality and Funding in Irish Higher Education*.

Despite the 12% decrease in core staff numbers and the increase in staff-student ratios from 1:18 in 2008/9 to 1:24 in 2010/11, Irish academics still prioritise values and diverse approaches in teaching and learning. This is achieved within a quality assurance system, legislatively based and widely respected internationally (McGuinness 2009). This is an outstanding achievement and would be judged as such if we were only in the business of teaching and graduate supply. Regrettably, this increase in the staff student ratios does indicate a future erosion in research strength. Increased teaching loads of staff in Irish third level education mean that less time is available for necessary research activity.

5. Research

Increasing pressure on Irish and European academics to raise research funding from external agencies has been a feature of academic life over recent years. This is particularly difficult during a period of financial stringency. However, certain subject areas, particularly those within the Arts and Humanities are much less likely to secure research funding than areas connected with subjects such as Science and Medicine. Further, there is a pressure on all academic staff to produce more extensive research than heretofore. Drennan, et al., (2013) reported that both senior and junior academics in Ireland, similar to colleagues in Europe, are

in agreement that the pressures to increase research productivity are a threat to the quality of research.

Peer reviewing is an important external research activity undertaken by academics. Senior academics in Ireland report high levels of involvement in this activity (90%) ahead of their colleagues in Germany (52%) and the Netherlands (55%). Irish junior academics (56%) have higher levels of engagement in this activity compared to their German colleagues (17%). Irish academics (75%) have the second highest levels of participation as members of scientific committees after Switzerland (84%). **Collaborative research work amongst academics at national and international levels has increased in recent years.** Irish senior academics (90%) ranked third after colleagues in Switzerland (95%) and Austria (92%) with reference to international collaboration (Drennan *et al.*, 2013).

Irish universities continue to do well. The impact of Irish research is at an all-time high (HEA, 2011), but this level of research activity is undermined by declining income levels, increases in staff–student ratios and excessive administrative burdens.

Our success rate is ahead of the EU average when it comes to winning funding under the *EU's Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development* (FP7) (Hennessy, 2012). The Advisory Council for Science, Technology and Innovation, in their publication *Staying the Course* noted that 'Ireland has benefited greatly from, and contributed to, international relations and the internationalisation of research (Hennessy, 2012).

Much emphasis has been placed on collaboration among academics particularly with reference to bidding for research funding. However, the imperative to collaborate is management led rather than coming from the nature of the work of existing research teams and this actually undermines the organic research process. Further, pressure from Government to increase such collaboration is a cause of similar problems. This was reiterated in the publication of the *Research Prioritisation Steering Group Report* (2011).

The government announced in March 2012 that it would refocus public research spending on 14 areas with the greatest potential for creating jobs and growth. These priorities place a strong focus on life sciences and information technology as well as innovation in manufacturing,

services and business processes. There is a bias in favour of STEM - science, technology, engineering and mathematics - but that does not represent the range of knowledge or research interests in the universities (Barrett, 2013). Arts, humanities and social sciences subjects have been marginalised.

During the Seanad Debate on *Industrial Development (Science Foundation Ireland)(Amendment) Bill 2012* referring to the 14 priorities and the role of researchers Minister Sherlock commented:

They need to start thinking more laterally about engaging and collaborating in an interdisciplinary fashion, think about their own output as it stands at present and find new areas of opportunity for themselves (Sherlock, 2013).

All academics - regardless of their disciplinary background - should be both aware and wary of restricted interpretations of Government policy documents, particularly the research prioritisation exercise. The historic links between the university system and Irish society are deeply rooted in terms of the arts and humanities; social sciences; business; science and medicine. We must maintain the ideal of a comprehensive university system, sustaining education and scholarship across every discipline and this should be defended by all academics in the university system.

As academics, we must not take instruction from any Government minister as to our research priorities and we must preserve and defend our right to academic freedom always.

6. Rankings

High quality information and feedback for national and international students is necessary in mass systems and robust quality assurance is essential. The production of international league tables has become a lucrative business for those involved. They are presented as value-free, objective assessments when they are neither. They have become as pernicious as the ratings agencies have become in national economic terms.

Table 2 International ranking league tables

US News and World Report (with QS Symonds),
Times Higher Education Supplement (with Thomson Reuters),
Academic Rank of World Universities (Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China)
Global Universities Rankings (Lomonosov State University, Russia)
Scientific Papers for World Universities (Accreditation and Evaluation Council, Taiwan),
Leiden Research Ranking (Leiden University, Netherlands),
University Web Ranking (CSIC Cybernetics, Spain)

The most influential ranking league tables are Times Higher Education Supplement (THES) and Academic Rank of World Universities (ARWU, Shanghai Jiao Tong University, China). In rich countries they are used by governments in domestic policy debate and by universities in marketing and promotion, particularly in North and South East Asia. In emerging and developing countries used by governments as benchmarks for development of domestic institutions and systems. They directly affect institutional behaviour and indirectly high achieving student choice (McCulloch, 2013). ARWU is based solely on metrics with research (maths and science in particular), accounting for 90% of composite scores. THES is more balanced (30% teaching, 30% research volume, income and reputation, 32.5% research citations, 7.5% international and 2.5% economic innovation), but has actually a closer to 75% weighting for research (McCulloch, 2013). It is important to bear in mind not only what these rankings are based on but equally the areas and issues which they exclude. Both rankings reflect the prestige, high selectivity in student enrolments and staff appointments, economic resources and global reach of each university. They do not attempt to reflect diversity of institutions and systems, access and issues of equality, and their cultural economic and social contexts. Quality assurance and performance assessment should reflect the characteristics, resources and social and educational objectives of each institution and should be autonomously determined within each university using peer review and stakeholder consultation (McCulloch, 2013). This author goes on to say that academic freedom, collegial decision-making, trade union rights and employment standards should also be part of quality assurance criteria (McCulloch, 2013). Further, he disagrees fundamentally with the provision of league tables when these are used as a basis for competition between institutions. He asserts that the aggregation of data at national and international level for any

cross-institutional comparative purposes should prevent the construction of league tables (McCullogh, 2013).

As a member of Education International, IFUT supports its efforts to develop direct dialogue with the Berlin rankings group (CHE/die Ziet and IREG) on the development of University Ranking and U-Map, and with the EU on U-Multirank as these approaches are consciously constructed to enable comparison without league tables.

It is encouraging to note that Minister Quinn has expressed similar views, but disturbing that the HEA does not seem to be as well informed:

The pursuit of excellence is at risk of being reduced to a narrow pursuit of high profile league tables rankings. Some of those are based on limited and sometimes flawed or questionable indicators. We need to recognise the dangers of encouraging a culture of ‘playing the rankings’ in higher education to the detriment of more rounded and important quality development objectives (Quinn, 2013).

The view of the HEA is as follows:

All Irish higher educational institutions fell heavily in their academic reputation ranking. This plummeting of the international reputation of Irish higher education extends across all universities and disciplines and appears to be particularly severe in the areas of science, engineering and technology (HEA, 2012).

Irish universities have absorbed serious funding cuts while maintaining acceptable levels of excellence and quality as measured by existing rankings. More importantly, they have achieved this in the current financial climate with resources that are substantially smaller than those available to less successful competing national systems. The HEA should not be using rankings as a guide to measure development within the Irish third level education system.

Irish universities have become very influenced by rankings. It was distressing to read in the *New York Times* [December 30th 2012], that the company behind the QS World University Rankings announced “a new initiative that gives universities the opportunity to highlight their strength” by paying a fee for the chance to be rated on a scale of one to five stars. This initiative was introduced in 2012.

This article also reported that after paying a one-time audit fee of \$9,850 and an annual license fee of \$6,850, the University of Limerick is now able to boast that it has been awarded an overall ranking of four stars (Guttenplan, *New York Times*, December 2012). The author of this report went on to note that “the University of Limerick did not make two other major international rankings — Times Higher Education’s top 400 or Shanghai Jiaotong University’s top 500 — though it was listed as one of T.H.E.’s top 100 new universities” (Guttenplan, *New York Times*, December 2012).

University College Cork, also featured in this report. This institution came 190th in the QS rankings, and received an overall rating of five stars. This places it “among an international elite” that, according to QS, offers students “cutting edge facilities and internationally renowned research and teaching faculty”. However, it was further noted that “in comparison, it was placed in the 301-400 band in the Shanghai Jiaotong rankings and in the 301-350 band in the T.H.E. rankings”. An official from University College Cork is quoted in the *Irish Examiner* as stating if the QS stars:

result in attracting a single additional, full-time international student to study at U.C.C. then the costs of participation are covered.

Such attitudes are far removed from what we have come to expect from our higher education institutions.

Altbach, (2012) a leading author in the area of higher education, has described the star ratings as particularly problematic and conflictual. He points out that:

by asking universities to respond to surveys for rankings and then asking them to pay for a star rating — I'm not accusing them of pay-for-play. I don't have any evidence that is happening. But the appearance of conflict is there.

Ben Sowter, head of the QS Intelligence Unit provides a different and somewhat foreign rationale for the star system. He suggests that:

in a world where Harvard is five stars, why wouldn't you want to be seen as a three-star school? he added Plenty of people are happy to stay in three-star hotels.

If all of this is true of the management of our universities then as academics we must find the situation extremely disappointing and deeply depressing. Regrettably, it does seem that the management of two of our universities felt obliged to pursue this form of star rating and in doing so leave themselves, their institutions and their staff open to accusations of conflict of interest and the associated negative international publicity that accompanies this.

7. Staff and working conditions

7.1 *Workload*

As we are well aware colleagues, a key element of any higher education system is its staff. Minister Quinn has suggested that there is a need to have:

transparency relating to academic workloads and to have more public information about this (Quinn, 2012).

This was a very surprising comment by the Minister. Senior academics in Ireland work on average 50 hours a week. This compares to an average of 48 hours across European countries (Kwiek & Antonowicz, 2013). Junior academics work 47 hours a week on average, compared to 42 hours at this level across Europe. The Minister has also

commented that there were issues around embedded and restrictive work practices (Quinn, 2012). We reject this unfounded assertion. Academics in Irish universities in line with their European colleagues work under considerable personal strain (Kwiek & Antonwicz, 2013). **The Budapest-Vienna Ministerial Declaration on the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in March 2010, recognised the need for “a more supportive environment for the staff to fulfill their tasks...” This declaration highlights the centrality of this issue at European level and it should also be recognized in the Irish context.**

7.2 *Early Career Researchers*

As far back as 2005 we had an ageing academic workforce. In 2005 21% of academics in Ireland were over 55, compared to an average over all occupations of 12% (EGFSN, 2005). The proportion of PhD graduates entering the third level sector dropped significantly between 2001 and 2003, from 17.2% to 14.3% of graduates, while the proportion entering other fields/professions has risen from 82.8% to 85.7% (EGFSN, 2005).

Table 3 The Number and Percentage of PhD Graduates, Graduating the Previous Year, and Choosing to become University Academics versus Entry to Other Professions

2001		2002		2003	
Number	% of all PhD students	Number	%	Number	%

Third Level Lecturers	44	16.1%	56	19.5%	37	13.5%
Third Level assistants/demonstrators	3	1.1%	1	0.3%	2	0.7%
Total	47	17.2%	57	19.9%	39	14.3%
Other Professions	226	82.8%	229	80.1%	234	85.7%

Source: HEA First Destination of Graduates Reports.

In 2008, 46.7% PhD graduates were employed in third level, 34% of those were working in third level overseas (HEA, 2008).

The treatment of our early career researchers and academics has been disgraceful particularly in the way it impacts negatively upon the formation of their professional identity (Clarke *et al.*, 2012). In Ireland, many young academics have very fragmented employment experiences in the early years of their careers, they may move from position to position on short term or part time contracts. There is little by way of support for these early career people within university structures. Legislation, that was introduced as protection has led to a situation where they are disadvantaged time and time again. We have a paradoxical situation in many universities. These institutions are increasingly prioritising research, while at the same time discontinuing young researchers contracts of employment when there is a danger they will become eligible for a contract of indefinite duration. Securing fair treatment for researchers should be a major priority for all who are involved in higher education. IFUT is committed to representing early career researchers in the industrial relations context as per our Memorandum of Understanding, which we signed with the Irish Research Staff Association (IRSA) at our 2012 Annual Delegate Conference.

7.3 *Attitudes to the industrial relations framework.*

The most vulnerable university staff are increasingly seeing their jobs threatened as university management seeks to breach the provisions of the 2003 *Fixed-Term Work Act*. In 2012, IFUT dealt with 15 separate cases and had to fight each one to defend rights under the 2003 Act. Even though the Department of Education and Skills and the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform were aware of the large amounts of public money being spent by

universities to circumvent the 2003 Act, there appeared to be, at the very least, tacit approval for the actions of universities on this issue. In some cases, universities targeted lecturers and librarians for compulsory redundancy and unequal treatment. We had an unnecessary and prolonged dispute with Trinity College Dublin about three staff members whom they had tried to make redundant. The manner in which the university management acted indicated a blatant disregard for accepted industrial relations process. IFUT took a firm stand on this issue and our position was vindicated. However, it is important to point out that the situation should not have been allowed to go on for such a long period and did so without any public comment from the Minister for Education and Skills. We commend and applaud our colleagues who found themselves in this unenviable position for their resilience throughout their long struggle for success.

7.4 *Attitudes to equality*

Bullying and harassment cases in third-level institutions have consumed vast amounts of public money. When after going through the proper industrial process, awards are made to academic staff, the Department of Education and Skills has shown great reluctance to sanction the payments. This should not be happening.

In Ireland there is a higher proportion of females than males at junior lecturer level whereas the reverse is true at senior lecturer level (Goastellec & Pekari, 2013). In Europe, female academics spend more time on teaching-related activities when classes are in session than their male counterparts. This pattern is replicated in the Irish context among junior academics, where women spend 44% and men spend 36% of their time on teaching-related activities (Goastellec & Pekari, 2013).

It is difficult to believe that women in Irish universities are not replaced when they take maternity leave or adoptive leave, which is totally unacceptable. **The IFUT Equality Committee will continue to work vigorously to defend equal rights in all areas of university employment. We are delighted to be hosting Education International's second World Women's Conference, which will take place at the Burlington Hotel, Dublin, on 7-9 April, 2014 to discuss the theme *On the Move to Equality*.**

Conclusion

We are facing a very serious crisis in university education in this country for the reasons that I have outlined. When, in an extended recessionary period, major policy decisions concerning university education are based almost exclusively on reduced resourcing for the sector, the outlook for growth and development is bleak, for the universities themselves and for the higher education sector where they are located. Our students and society deserves better than this.

IFUT celebrates its 50th Anniversary this year. This union has grown in strength over that period of time and has made an excellent contribution to higher education and to the development of industrial relations. We can be justifiably proud of our achievements in both of these areas.

It has been a privilege and honour to serve as President of this union. I want to thank our General Secretary Mike Jennings, our Assistant General Secretary Joan Donegan and our administrator, Phyllis Russell for their constant assistance and advice.

I want to thank colleagues from my own branch in UCD who were so supportive of me during my term as President.

I also want to thank in particular the IFUT Executive, the elected leaders of this union, for their dedication, hard work and honesty of engagement.

Finally colleagues, I want to congratulate our new President, Dr Rose Malone on taking up office. We are very fortunate to have someone of her calibre and ability and I know that IFUT will prosper under her guidance and leadership.

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Appendix III

Speech by Mike Jennings, General Secretary, IFUT.

ANNUAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE

27 APRIL 2013

Colleagues, Delegates and Friends,

I am very pleased to formally present for your approval the IFUT Annual Report for the 2012/2013 session.

I am proud of the report. I am proud of the record of achievements on behalf of our members which it contains. I am proud of the evidence it provides of hard work on behalf of those members by our volunteer representatives and by the IFUT staff.

I am especially proud of my two staff colleagues, Phyllis Russell our Office Manager and Joan Donegan our Assistant General Secretary.

The only people who have any idea of how hard Phyllis works are the activists in the union, the Executive and Council members and those who have occasion to contact Head Office and, of course, Joan and I. But I would like everyone to know that it is literally true that without Phyllis IFUT would grind to a standstill. I have two words for Phyllis. They are simple but they are heartfelt – “thank you”.

I have known Joan Donegan for many years when we both worked in SIPTU. I have always admired not just her capacity for hard work and her skill as a negotiator, but also her style and approach to the difficult job of industrial relations. She is quiet and calm and

unassuming and not pushy, but my goodness is she effective. She is the living proof that you do not need to be a table-thumper to be a great union official. Joan's willingness to take on more and more work (I have often said that we pay her for four days per week and get 7 – quite a bargain!) has ensured that we manage to cope with one of the, if not the heaviest workloads of any year in IFUT's history.

This report is not divided up into Mike's work and Joan's work (or indeed Phyllis's work) and suffice it to say that I am entirely happy with that arrangement.

At this ADC, the ADC of our 50th anniversary year, we are pleased to welcome Minister Pat Rabbitte TD who is attending on behalf of and representing the Minister for Education and Skills, Ruairí Quinn TD. I have known Pat Rabbitte for many years and I am well aware of his connections to and interest in higher education. In welcoming him here to our conference I want to ask him to take very careful note of what I am going to say in this speech and also to pay particular attention to what our President, Dr Marie Clarke will say shortly. Indeed, the speech I make today has been specifically written with a view to its being heard and read by the Minister for Education and his Cabinet colleagues. I know that we can rely on the Minister for Communications to deliver our message in this regard.

In recent years there has been an extraordinary expansion of the level of direct, centralised control of our Higher Education Institutions, in particular our universities. There has been a corresponding and alarming contraction in institutional autonomy. This development is, I believe, totally contrary to the spirit and intent of the 1997 Universities Act. Even more worrying is the fact that, since institutional autonomy like its sister trait, academic freedom, is one of the fundamental characteristics required for an institution to be regarded as a true university, its loss or decrease brings with it the danger of a collapse of international recognition and respect. Universities are international in character and without the respect of others throughout the worldwide community of universities we will be severely diminished.

As an aside, let me emphasise that in sending out a warning signal about the danger to our international reputation I do not want anyone to be confused and to believe that I somehow give credence to the various purile league tables of "university rankings" which are regarded

by most academics as, at best, a distraction and, at worst, a malign source of justification for more managerialism and less scholarly excellence.

One of the curious aspects of this loss of institutional autonomy in favour of centralised control is that the process has been accompanied by an almost Orwellian disingenuity on the part of many of the main players. UCC for instance, at the highest level, gave approval to a lengthy piece of fiction which was presented to the Labour Court. In this document they wrote of their complete “independence” from the Department of Education and stated (with a straight face) that the Department did not exercise even “indirect control” over the university! I assure you that this extraordinary statement is true, we have the written submission in our files.

Of course, the above claim was made in the context where the university was trying to avoid being obliged to afford better treatment to certain of their staff on Fixed-Term Contracts and, by operation of the 2003 Act, if they admitted that they were under even the indirect control of the Department of Education they would have been obliged to concede IFUT’s claim.

The above facts will be a cause of especial disbelief and surprise to our colleagues who work with appalling conditions of employment and pay levels in the Tyndall Institute in UCC. Because here, although UCC admits that the pay and other conditions of employment of these staff is “unacceptable”, they insist that there is nothing they can do because they are so precisely and specifically under the direction and control of the same Department of Education.

They say that the first casualty of war is the truth. That maxim used not to apply to university governance.

But all of this loss of institutional autonomy, worrying and all as it is, is not the whole picture. The additional ingredient contributing to a serious impairment of the development of our universities in the interest of our society is that, although there has been a huge increase in the direct power of the Department of Education, there has been no increase in the level of understanding or knowledge within the same Department as to how universities actually

function and what their essential ethos consists of. In fact, I would go so far as to say that not only is there a lack of understanding of universities, there is distrust and a hostile attitude to them.

Let me give some examples taken from a recent and controversial context, the negotiations for 'Croke Park 2'.

Everyone knows that IFUT fought very hard to defeat these proposals which, in simple terms, sought to validate the Government's decision to break the solemn promises given three years ago in 'Croke Park 1'. I do not propose to deal with this issue in this address. The matter will be well covered later in the conference. But let me just say this much.

Bad and objectionable as were the threatened latest round of pay cuts (on top of our previous cuts) however, the items that actually, in my experience, caused the most anger and annoyance was the attitude to university staff displayed throughout the proposals.

Under "working hours" the LRC said that no one who worked 39 hours per week or more should be hit with additional hours. But the Department of Education, adding insult and contempt to injury, inserted an extra clause – a requirement that we work 78 hours more per year.

The only implication you can draw from that is that the Department thinks we work less than 39 hours per week. Thus they show that they are completely out of touch with the reality on the campuses. They have not read the reports issued to them by University Management (e.g. NUIM and UCD) which stated explicitly that academics work much longer hours than that and they also ignored or were not aware of the research findings revealed a year ago at this union's last conference by our President, Dr Marie Clarke. The evidence of the weekly hours actually worked by academics in Ireland (50) has been on the IFUT website for a year now.

The Department of Education also defied a Labour Court Ruling that allowances paid to individuals for additional duties which they continue to perform should not be abolished.

Despite this clear statement from the Labour Court, exam fees for junior academic staff were listed for abolition even though the Department could not give any coherent answer as to who they believed would do this extra work if it was no longer to be paid for.

Also, in a further astonishing display of unfamiliarity with what happens in the universities the Department, without consulting anyone and without even a veneer of supporting evidence, declared that a total of 16 hours would be recognised as sufficient to do all of this examination marking and correcting.

I wish to make one final point.

There is a further hugely significant example of one arm of Government not knowing what the other arm is doing. I am referring to the State's commitment to research excellence which IFUT fully supports.

But how can you foster research when there is a systematic belittling and downgrading of the career of being a Researcher? The Department of Education has instructed universities time and time again to oppose security of employment for Researchers. They actively sought, including by a written submission, to have permanent Researchers excluded from the no compulsory redundancy clause of 'Croke Park 1'. They have supported an 'Emigration Clause' which says, in effect, that Researchers can only be paid enhanced severance packages if they agree to stop researching in Ireland. And finally, as already mentioned, they have refused to lift a finger to restore any semblance of coherence or fairness to the miserable and anomalous pay structure of Researchers in the UCC Tyndall Institute.

And so, let me address the Minister directly and ask him to pass this on to his colleagues especially the Minister for Education and Skills.

Minister, we know our country is broke and our economy has been destroyed by a combination of recklessness, incompetence and greed. We know there is little or no point in making requests for expensive and costly concessions or improvements. But what we ask for costs no money. All we ask for is consistency and respect. We ask for fairness and we ask for clear thinking.

If you intend to persist with the micromanagement of the places where we work, then please at least appoint someone to come and talk to us and find out what we do and how we do it.

We have already taken major pay cuts. We continue to deliver a first-class higher education system despite the fact that we are covering for approximately 900 vacant academic posts. With less staff we teach the highest number of students ever to attend higher education in this country.

To quote W B Yeats “we are no petty people” we deserve better. The students and the country we serve deserve better.

I commend this report.

Appendix IV

Speech by Joan Donegan, Assistant General Secretary, IFUT

To

EQUALITY MOTION NO. 3

I am delighted to see so many familiar faces at our conference today and I am especially pleased to speak to you on the Motion of gender inequality in career progression in Academia. You are all very welcome. Céad míle fáilte.

They say that it takes two years for a Trade Union Official to achieve a (sense of understanding) of the sector they work in - and - four years to feel that they ***finally*** have their feet under the table.

Next Friday, I celebrate two years working as Asst. Gen Secretary with IFUT and I look forward very much to getting ***my*** feet under the table in that four year time frame!

During the last two years I can genuinely say that I have been astonished and sometimes even shocked at the issues which have been brought to my attention by way of telephone calls, emails, through the post or even when visiting the workplace;

Issues such as;

- Cuts in pay and pensions
- The issue of salaries paid to our young researchers who have invested a number of years in their education - only to achieve low pay with no guarantee of secure employment.
- The issue of longer working hours at an average of 50 hours a week for senior academics and 47 hours a week for junior academics.
- The issue of increased stress levels
- The issue of bullying and harassment
- The issue of non application of correct rate of pay
- The issue of micromanagement

- The issue of the inability of the HR Depts to resolve issues at local level without recourse to the Dept of Education or legal opinion
.....and I could go on.

However there is one issue that has not surprised me

one issue which remains a constant...

but it is one issue which never seems to land on my desk,

arrive in the post,
deliver by e mail
or even be raised in the workplace

and that is the denial or obstruction of career progression of women in the Academia.

A recent literature survey conducted by a Project initiated at University College Cork to address the issue of gender inequality in career progression in Academia - included Quantitative Research which indicated the all too familiar statistic;

28 Professors out of a total of 114 Professors are females

In other words ***only*** (25%) of women in UCC are Professors

49 Senior Lecturers out of a total 145 Senior Lecturers are female.
Only (34%) of women in UCC are Senior Lecturers

112 College Lecturers (above the bar) out of a total of 252 College Lecturers (above the bar) are female
This represents (44%) of women in UCC as College Lecturers (above the bar)

and

105 out of a total of 208 College Lecturers (below the bar) are female
which represents (50%).

Colleagues.....

The only category or grade that represents men and women equally in Academia in UCC is the College Lecturer (below the bar) scale.

The review of the quantitative and qualitative analysis conducted at UCC concluded that in ***2009 Ireland had the second highest Glass ceiling index for women in higher education.***

Following this review the *Through the Glass Ceiling* Project was the name given to a Programme of Positive Action, which was aimed at Career Progression for Female Academics and Researchers at UCC between 2010 and 2012.

A total of 219 female academics and researchers in UCC, from postdoctoral to professorial levels, participated in *Through the Glass Ceiling* during its 18-month period. The evaluation indicates that the project has had a significant impact on staff morale, productivity and wellbeing.

Drawing on a review of international literature, research and gender equality action plans as well as the feedback from project participants; - *provisional Gender Equality Action Plan Recommendations have been produced.*

I would like to take the opportunity to salute UCC for their sterling work in this regard.

There is also a second initiative underway at UCC called the Genovate Project. The proposal's full title is Transforming organisational culture for gender equality in research and innovation.

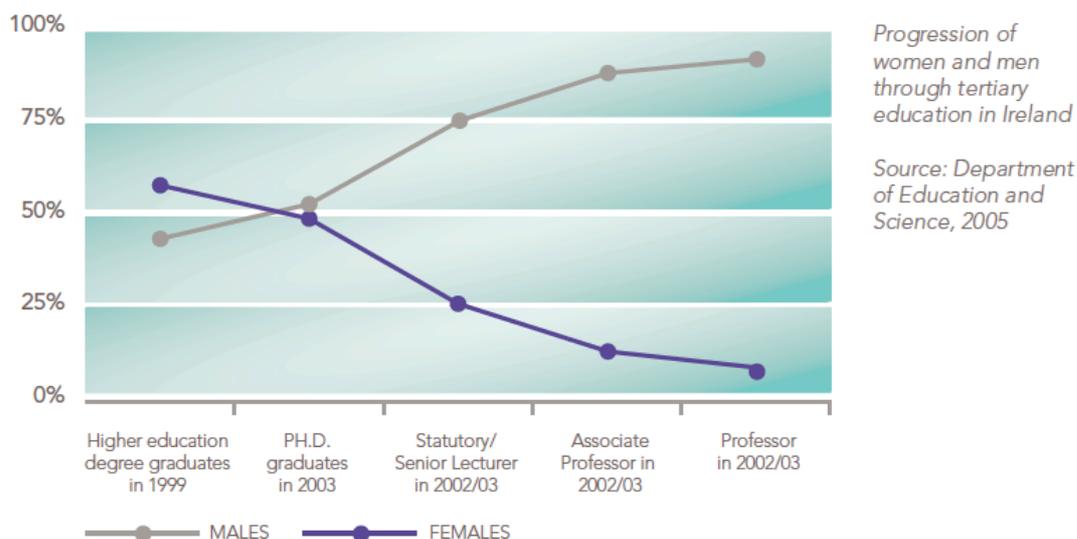
It will run from January 2013 to December 2016.

I am very pleased to say that I have been invited to participate as a strategic collaborator on the GENOVATE International Advisory Board and I look forward very much to working with this Committee.

I would also like to congratulate Trinity College Dublin who are also involved in the WISER Project (Women in Science & Engineering) – and their proposal's full title is; Achieving Excellence through Gender Equality in Academia.

I also understand that National University of Ireland Maynooth are embarking on a similar programme. Staff at NUIM have been invited to communicate views on gender equality to an NUIM Academic Council sub-committee that was established in January 2013. I wish them well with this work.

However, the latest Quantitative data into numerical form from the Department of Education and Science at 2005 indicates a continual decrease in the number of women achieving higher posts within Academia.



So the Question that needs to be asked is; -

Why aren't there - a higher number of complaints regarding this question coming to our office in IFUT or to the Trade Union Movement generally?

Why aren't there - a higher number of cases going to the Labour Relations Commission, Rights Commissioner Service, Labour Court, and Equality Tribunal?

and

Why is the number of women in higher positions within Universities continuing to fall?

An official complaint or legal action was taken by just 10% of those who experienced discrimination in Ireland in the two years 2009-2010, according to the Central Statistics Office. The CSO's Quarterly National Household Survey module on equality and discrimination, surveyed in the fourth quarter of 2010, also found that almost 60% of people who experienced discrimination took no action at all – verbal, written or official/legal.

Of the 12% of the overall population who said they experienced some form of discrimination, 48% said the discrimination was work-related. As many as 27% said the work-related discrimination had been on the basis of race/ethnicity/nationality and 21% on age, **while just 11% said it was on gender.**

Therefore it is crucially important that the Officials and Representatives of IFUT proactively engage with the important work taking place in our Universities in order to support such initiatives as outlined to a successful conclusion.

The Industrial Relations fora must become cognizant of the fact that deficiencies exist in organizational structures, which hinder career progression of women within the workplace. They need to know that this issue is gaining widespread attention and they must support the establishment of good practice in this area. The equality issue must not be treated as a luxury item where all other concerns take priority!

Our motion seeks to ensure that Equality remains a key component of the IFUT industrial relations agenda. In this work IFUT currently has the support of six women who are represented on the IFUT Equality Committee. They are Marie Clarke, Maureen Killeavy, Rose Malone, and Ann Louise Gilligan, Aislinn O'Donnell and Cora Cregan. The IFUT Equality Committee is committed to **defending equal rights in all areas of university employment.** I wish to pay tribute to their good work.

We are always looking for new members
men and women are very welcome!

"Mná na hÉireann" (Women of Ireland) was originally a poem written by Peadar O'Doimin in the 18th century, later put to music by Sean O'Riada. It's a tribute to the women of Ireland who supported the independence movement.

I would like to quote one line of that poem;

"Tá bean a déarfadh dá siulfainn léi go bhfaighinn an t-ór."

There's a woman who would say that if I walked with her I'd get gold.

I suggest we walk together to find that crock of gold!

I commend the motion to you.