

Irish Federation of University Teachers

PROCEEDINGS

OF

ANNUAL DELEGATE

CONFERENCE

2016

Cónaidhm Éireannach na Múinteoirí Ollscoile

PROCEEDINGS OF 2016 ADC

1 OPENING

The President Mr Michael Delargey, UCC, opened the 50th Annual Conference of the Irish Federation of University Teachers at 11:00am on Saturday 7 May 2016 in the Gresham Hotel, O'Connell Street, Dublin 1. He welcomed all delegates, observers and guests.

The General Secretary then welcomed our Fraternal Delegates: Ms Rosena Jordan, Vice President, Irish National Teachers' Organisation; Ms Annette Dolan, Deputy General Secretary, Teachers' Union of Ireland; Mark Creelman, President, Ulster Teachers' Union and Jackie Reid, Deputy General Secretary, Ulster Teachers' Union; Rob Copeland, University and College Union, UK. He said that the Executive Director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers David Robinson had been delayed due to a flight cancellation and whilst unable unfortunately to attend he had sent greetings from the airport to the delegates at the ADC. Mr Jens Vraa-Jensen of (the DM the Danish Masters' Union) and Chairperson of the ETUCE Higher Education Research Standing Committee had also been unable at the last minute to attend and has sent greetings to the conference.

The General Secretary then read messages of solidarity which had been received from: Ms Chris Keates, General Secretary and Mr Patrick Roche, Deputy General Secretary of the NASUWT, UK; Ms Mary Bousted, General Secretary, Association of Teachers and Lecturers, UK; Ms Christine Blower, General Secretary, National Union of Teachers, UK; Mr Grahame McCulloch, General Secretary, National Tertiary Education Union, Australia; Mr Séamus Searson, General Secretary, Scottish Secondary Teachers' Association; Mr Larry Flanagan, General Secretary, Education Institute of Scotland; Mr Fred van Leeuwen, General Secretary, Education International; and Mr Martin Romer, General Secretary, European Director, ETUCE (The European Region of Education International).

2 STANDING ORDERS REPORT

The report of the Standing Orders Committee was presented to the conference and unanimously endorsed. It was also agreed that Dr Rose Malone, Outgoing President would be the representative of the Standing Orders Committee during the course of the conference and any queries or questions with regard to these should be addressed to her in the first instance.

Its adoption was also agreed unanimously.

3 ELECTION OF TELLERS

Alastair McKinstry, NUIG was proposed by Rose Malone, MU and seconded by Breandán Ó Cochláin, NUIG. Margaret Robson, SPD was proposed by Mike O’Keeffe, SPD and seconded by Orla NicAodha, SPD. These nominations were agreed.

4 PROCEEDINGS OF 2015 ADC

The proceedings of the previous Annual Delegate Conference were tabled for approval and on the proposal of Anthony Harvey, RIA, seconded by Hugh Gibbons, TCD they were agreed unanimously.

5 ANNUAL REPORT 2015/2016

The President then invited the General Secretary, Mike Jennings to present the Annual Report for 2015/2016. The text of the General Secretary’s Speech introducing the Report is attached as Appendix II. The General Secretary was followed by the Deputy General Secretary, Joan Donegan who gave a detailed exposition of the casework conducted by the union over the period of the previous twelve months. Joan on behalf of Head Office also expressed thanks to all representatives and all Branch activists who had worked so hard for the union over the period.

The President, Michael Delargey said that on behalf of all present and indeed on behalf of all the union he wished to express sincere thanks to Mike, Joan and Phyllis for all of the hard work done on our behalf over the year and indeed to express his thanks to the members of the Executive, Council and all representatives. He then invited speakers to address the report.

Hugh Gibbons, TCD inquired as to when we could expect the Report of the Expert Group on Fixed-Term and Casual Work for Lecturers. The General Secretary responded by saying the report was expected within the next week or so.

Angela Flynn, UCC thanked Mike and Joan for their work done. She also raised the question about dealing with promotions claims in the Labour Court. The Deputy General Secretary said that the Labour Court was very afraid of creating precedent for promotions and normally adopted a very very cautious and conservative attitude to such claims.

The President then put the adoption of the report to the ADC. It was proposed by Edward Lahiff, UCC and seconded by Anthony Harvey, RIA and agreed unanimously.

6 GUEST SPEAKER

The General Secretary then introduced Dr Micheline Sheehy-Skeffington as our Guest Speaker. He said it was truly an honour to have Micheline talk to us as she had put the whole question of gender equality in our universities front and centre of the national debate by her courageous stance and indeed by her generosity to her colleagues. He pointed out that her grandparents had taken double-barrelled names – Francis and Hanna Sheehy-Skeffington. What many people did not realise was that each of them had taken the other's surname and added it to their own. Francis Sheehy-Skeffington was a passivist and a feminist. Despite his passivism he was a member of the Irish Citizen Army and was murdered by the British Army while attempting to stop looting on 29 April 2016. Micheline then delivered her Address to the conference. Afterwards, the Deputy General Secretary made a presentation on behalf of IFUT and expressed her appreciation to Micheline for the work she was doing. The President also added his thanks and appreciation.

7 PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

The Presidential Address was delivered by Mr Michael Delargey of UCC (see Appendix III).

Following the President's Address the ADC Adjourned for lunch.

8 FINANCIAL REPORT

The Financial Report was debated in Private Session. It was presented to the ADC by the Vice President-Finance Dr Anthony Harvey. Anthony said that he and the Trustees had had a meeting with the Auditors where they had an opportunity to query each item of the Financial Report in detail and that therefore he was quite confident that the Financial Report represented the true situation within the union. He then went through the Financial Report in detail. In conclusion he said that he wished to record that we get much more than we pay for in that most of our work is done by volunteers and this work is backed up by the enormous dedication of our Head Office staff.

The Financial Report was then put to the ADC and on the proposal of John O'Flynn, SPD, seconded by Kelly Fitzgerald, UCD it was unanimously agreed.

9 APPOINTMENT OF AUDITORS

The General Secretary advised the ADC that the Trustees had decided to reappoint MAZARS as our Auditors for the coming year.

10 ELECTION OF TRUSTEES

Rose Malone, MU proposed that we re-elect the three existing Trustees i.e. Maureen Killeavy, UCD; Gerard Enright, MICL; and Cormac Ó Cuilleaináin, TCD. This was seconded by Patrick Connolly, MICL and unanimously agreed.

11 ELECTION OF PRESIDENT

The President, Michael Delargey said that he was very pleased to announce that Dr Aidan Seery, TCD, having been the sole nominee for the position, would at the conclusion of today's ADC, assume the title of Incoming President and subsequently President. He congratulated Aidan on his election and this announcement was greeted with warm applause. The President said he also wished to pay tribute to Rose Malone for the huge amount of work she had done as Incoming President, President and Outgoing President.

12 RESUMD DEBATE ON ANNUAL REPORT

Mike O'Keeffe, SPD commending the report said a copy of it should be sent to every Branch Secretary to be forwarded on to each and every member so that they saw the vast amount of work which is done every year by the union. Patrick Connolly, MICL said he fully supported this proposal. Alastair McKinstry, NUIG also supported it but suggested that the Annual Accounts should not be so distributed. David Murphy, UCC pointed out that all of the Annual Reports are published on the IFUT website. The General Secretary undertook to distribute the report as requested.

13 SECOND & THIRD GUEST SPEAKERS

The General Secretary then introduced Mr Rob Copeland, Policy Officer, University & Colleges Union and Mr Paul Roche, Manager of the TUI Credit Union each of whom addressed the conference.

14 MOTIONS ON POLICY

1 Appeals Systems in Promotions Procedures

University promotions systems need a robust and agreed appeals process - this was clearly demonstrated by the experience of the appeals procedure in operation in recent rounds of the UCD promotion to SL grade. Following the initial promotion of 42 of 149 applicants, and the later promotion of another group of 38 applicants who met the benchmarks, a further 38

*appeals were lodged to the Appeals Committee, an independent panel of UCD professors agreed with the unions. Significantly, almost half (17) of these appeals were deemed to exhibit **significant procedural flaws** in how they had been assessed by UCAATP. However, after identifying these flaws, the impotence of the UCD appeals system was revealed in the fact that these cases were simply referred back to UCAATP, who maintained the original decision without further elaboration in 15 cases, only changing their ruling on the two cases most likely to proceed to embarrassing litigation. This resulted in a significant loss of confidence in the integrity of the process in UCD promotions, and a view that the appeals system as it was operationalised was not fair, in short-circuiting back to the original deciding body even when a substantial number of procedural flaws were identified by an independent panel.*

Nor does the proposed shift to a rolling procedure for promotion applications obviate the need for a fair appeals process. The new system proposed for UCD initially considered that simply opening the system to re-application would bypass the need for appeals. The problem is that under such a system (as originally proposed), applicants who feel that they have been treated unfairly are penalized by being forced to wait for a year before reapplying, without recourse to any neutral party, while also being required to show in their re-application how they have remedied a failure that they may contest was inaccurate or unfair in the first place.

It is therefore proposed that university promotions systems should be required to set up fair and transparent appeals processes, where an independent group who examine cases for procedural flaws can make decisions on outcomes, without referring back to the committee that made the original decision on that case, since the latter have a vested interest in maintaining the original decision.

Proposer: UCD Branch

The motion was proposed by Tina Hickey, UCD and seconded by Russell Higgs, UCD. Russell said that the Labour Court has used the unfair rule in promotion schemes to reject claims for promotion on the basis that the “appeals had already been heard”. Therefore, it is very important that we engage locally and ensure that the rules are changed and allow us to dispute promotions to a third-party if necessary.

The motion was put to the conference and agreed unanimously.

2 Eligibility to Apply for Promotion

UCD Promotions’ Guidelines for Applicants currently state:

*“Candidates for promotion must be tenured academic staff **who will not have reached the normal retirement age prior to the effective date of promotion.**” (Guidelines for candidates, <http://www.ucd.ie/hr/promtions/>)*

In recent years there have been growing time lags between promotions rounds. UCD has held promotion to SL rounds in 2002, 2005, 2007, 2008, and 2012. For Associate Professor the recent rounds were in DATES. Given the lapses between rounds, which UCD would claim is due to its efforts to achieve a better system, it is discriminatory on age grounds to prevent members approaching retirement from applying under a new system, which was delayed by the university.

Proposer: UCD Branch

This motion was also proposed by Tina Hickey, UCD and seconded by Russell Higgs, UCD and agreed unanimously.

3 Collective Bargaining/New DCU

This ADC asserts the right of IFUT members to continue to be represented by IFUT following Incorporation of CICE into DCU. IFUT/CICE calls on ICTU to affirm IFUT’s entitlement to full collective bargaining rights in DCU.

Proposer: CICE Branch

The motion was proposed by Jacqueline Fallon, CICE. Jacqueline said that she wished to start by thanking the General Secretary not only for all his hard work but for his unstinting support for the members throughout the entire Incorporation Process. Quite simply, he is always there for us. The issue of union representation has been referred to the Irish Congress of Trade Unions and has been stalled for a considerable period of time. We simply cannot accept the right of anyone to dictate to us who should be our representatives. In this case it is, unfortunately, another union which is standing in our way and not the Management in DCU. The issue has been in discussion for two and a half years and it is a source of major frustration. Áine O’Neill, CICE seconding the motion said that this is the third time we have brought such a motion to the ADC. It is also the second year that we are awaiting a decision from the Irish Congress of Trade Unions. There had been a proposal to restrict our representation rights to one Faculty in DCU and this is not acceptable to us. She also wished to express her thanks to the General Secretary and to all representatives for their work on the Incorporation. Responding to the debate the General Secretary said that he was delightfully embarrassed by the very kind remarks made and was deeply appreciative. He restated the pledge on behalf of IFUT Head Office that we will continue to insist on having full equal rights for IFUT in DCU. He said he had to express his amazement as to

what the issue was for the other union which was opposing us. Surely trade unions should be working together and not in opposition to each other.

The motion was put to the floor and was carried unanimously.

4 Signing of Proposed DCU Incorporation Agreement

This ADC instructs the IFUT General Secretary to refuse to sign the proposed DCU Incorporation Agreement until all outstanding IR issues relating to the incorporation have been resolved.

Proposer: Michael O’Keeffe, SPD

Secunder: Maurice O’Reilly, SPD

The motion was proposed by Michael O’Keeffe, SPD. He pointed out that the work demands on the union representatives arising from Incorporation are quite incredible. The situation is far from rosy despite the optimism expressed by some in Management. There appears to be no proper attention being given to our multitude of grievances. For example, the threat to our out of hours payment at the instruction of the Department of Education, conference allowances, unfilled promotion vacancies. He would encourage the General Secretary not to sign any Incorporation Agreement until all of these issues are resolved. The motion was seconded by John O’Flynn, SPD. The General Secretary said that it was important to address the issue of when he on behalf of IFUT would sign an agreement. He undertook not to sign any agreement until the issues were resolved to the satisfaction of the members. In fairness to all concerned we should state that it was up to the members to decide when the issues were resolved and it did not necessarily mean that every single issue had been successfully negotiated. The negotiators will do their best and the members then will decide whether that is good enough or not, but it will not be decided on the basis of perfection. John O’Flynn, SPD said that it was important to recognise the huge amount of work which had been done and in this regard he wanted to thank the General Secretary and Rose Malone, MU for their input. There had been more than 35 meetings of the Central Negotiating Committee. Academic issues still remain to be tackled. We must insist on our careers not being undermined and badly affected simply because of an arbitrary timeline for Incorporation drawn up by others. Orla NicAodha, SPD said that she supported all that been said. The Mapping Process conducted by Price Waterhouse Coopers for people to transfer to jobs had been a horrible process. Maureen Killeavy, UCD introduced herself as ex-Carysfort and ex-TCD. She believed that some in the room were not born when Carysfort closed and it was amazing to think that not all of the issues are finalised even today. She agreed with General Secretary’s statement that you do not sign until a resolution as decided by the members has been achieved.

The motion was put to the floor and adopted unanimously.

5 Harmonisation of Pay Scales

That, consistent with the principles of collective bargaining, IFUT will take all appropriate steps to ensure the early removal of all discriminatory salary scales and contractual obligations on those appointed after 2011, including those arising from the harmonisation of pay scales.

Proposer: UCD Branch

In proposing the motion Russell Higgs, UCD said that the question of new entrants being out on lower pay scales is something that IFUT must pay serious attention to.

The motion was seconded by Aidan Seery, TCD and adopted unanimously.

6 Equality

In light of the findings in the Sheehy-Skeffington case at National University Ireland Galway as well as the results of the HEA survey on gender balance as at December 2014 it is evident that there is a very real problem regarding gender discrimination in Ireland in particular in our universities.

The recent NUI Galway draft task force report covers a range of equality measures and the HEA Review of Gender-Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions chaired by the former European Commissioner and Government Minister, Maire Geoghegan-Quinn is underway and a report by this independent and expert group will be completed in June 2016.

As the current crisis ought to be a turning point for positive concrete measures to emerge this Conference commits IFUT to ensuring that Equality remains a key component of its industrial relations agenda.

Proposer: Executive

The motion was proposed by the Deputy General Secretary, Joan Donegan. Joan said that we had already said much in relation to this topic in the course of the day. She quoted from the 1916 Proclamation where we committed ourselves to cherishing all of the children of the Nation equally. It was also significant that the Proclamation was addressed to Irish Men and Irish Women. The motion was seconded by Angela Flynn, UCC.

At this point Dr Micheline Sheehy-Skeffington said that she wished to express her gratitude to Joan and indeed to Mike for IFUT's tireless support for the campaign for equality in NUIG. She would be inclined to be quite cynical about some of the reports being issued with regard to the status of women and we need organisations like IFUT to monitor what is really happening. With regard to the Athena Swan Awards, she felt that any university which

engaged in litigation against gender equality rights should automatically be excluded. Heather Laird, UCC pointed out that there is also a workload aspect to the whole question of gender equality. See Appendix IV for full text of Joan's Speech on Equality Motion.

The motion was put to the floor and adopted unanimously.

7 Employment of Casual Labour and the Casualising of Labour at Third-Level

The employment of casual labour and the casualising of labour at third-level is an unacknowledged and widespread means by which the University Sector keeps down its costs: this practice also makes for a workforce that is unable to challenge the hierarchy on important matters of pedagogy as well as militating against academic freedom.

This motion calls on IFUT to negotiate with University Management to deliver meaningful contracts of employment; the contracts must afford the protection of employment legislation to staff employed on a casual basis.

Proposer: Margaret Robson, SPD

Seconder: SPD Branch Committee

The motion was proposed by Margaret Robson, SPD. Margaret pointed out that she also does precarious work in TCD. Therefore, she was speaking from personal experience as a precarious worker. The union affords us the only public space where we can speak out on these issues. Precarious and hourly paid casual workers constitute and under-class in our higher education system. The problem is especially acute for women. There is no payment for preparatory work or pastoral care etc. Our higher education system is heavily reliant on casual workers. Some had said that the solution lay in putting lectures online. This was more likely to lead to the creation of "moocs slaves". Hourly paid workers are made feel like outsiders and often made to feel hugely disrespected.

The motion was seconded by John O'Flynn, SPD and carried unanimously.

8 Access to Promotion

This ADC notes that fixed-term colleagues, particularly Researchers, have been denied access to promotion, grants and other academic privileges and believes all members should have equal access based on merit alone.

Proposer: NUIG Branch

The motion was proposed by Alastair McKinstry, NUIG. Proposing the motion Alastair said that he felt that the text was quite straightforward. We have been campaigning for years now on behalf of fixed-term workers. In effect there is an effective apartheid regime in our universities. A person on a Fixed-Term Contract is supposed to be gone after 3 years

but they are still engaged doing part-time teaching. So-called part-time teachers are also doing research, in fact they are doing everything that a Lecturer does but not being called a Lecturer. They are denied the right to build a career, denied the right to apply for promotion, denied the right to apply for funding. In NUIG it is estimated that there are 1,500 part-time teaching assistants. This is an area that we must concentrate our energies on. The motion was seconded by Breandán Ó Cochláin, NUIG. John Walsh, TCD said he supported the motion. He used to be a Post-Doc Researcher. Researchers are expected to bring in funding and if they do not do so their job ceases to exist. But you cannot apply for funds in your own name. This is insulting. In fact it is a quite pernicious practice. Anthony Harvey, RIA said he noted that the specific target mentioned was universities but other higher education institutions also mete out the same treatment to temporary and casual staff. In RIA there is no access to promotion for anyone at any time. The highest salary level is that of a UCD College Lecturer. He urged support for the motion but asked that we have regard to exploitation across the higher education sector.

The motion was put to the floor and adopted unanimously.

9 Inclusion of people from different cultures with different languages into Irish society

In the midst of conflict, education is often seen as a luxury for refugees. However, education is a fundamental human right, one that is vital in restoring hope and dignity to people driven from their homes.

This ADC believes that solidarity with the marginalised in society is a trade union responsibility and commits IFUT to promoting equality in developing strategies and campaigns to advance equality awareness on this issue.

Proposer: Executive

The motion was proposed by Rose Malone, MU. She said that the motion refers not just to those who have official status as refugees but all of those who are driven from their homeland including by economic circumstances and called migrants, not refugees. The provision of education must never be seen as a luxury. It is our duty to defend the rights of those who are at the margins of society. She was very proud of the conference on Linguistic Diversity organised by IFUT and said she wished to pay tribute to Áine O'Neill, CICE and Joan Donegan, Deputy General Secretary in this regard. She said she was glad that the Executive had agreed to do follow-up work on this theme and she also expressed thanks to John Gallagher our Media Adviser in this regard.

The motion was seconded by Áine O'Neill, CICE and adopted unanimously.

10 Joint MIC/UL Arts Degree

The National Executive of the Irish Federation of University Teachers condemns any attempt to create a joint MIC/UL Arts degree without the provision of an adequate number of full-time posts to service such a degree. A degree programme designed to be staffed by part-timers and paid by hour contract personnel will undermine the professional status of the profession and would be a betrayal of the hopes of our next generation of postgraduates for a financially secure future as scholars and academics.

Proposer: Executive

The motion was proposed by Mike Jennings, General Secretary. He said that the motion may not be strictly necessary as its content seemed to be self-evident. However, it is useful that it gives a clear mandate to the General Secretary and to the Executive to work on the issue.

The motion was seconded by Anthony Harvey, RIA and adopted unanimously.

11 Professional Added Years

This Meeting demands that the Universities, and the Departments of Education, Finance and Public Expenditure and Reform continue to honour longstanding custom and practice in regard to the Professional Added Years pension entitlements of IFUT members.

Proposer: UCC Branch

The motion was proposed by John Doran, UCC. He said that Professional Added Years had been recognised for over 100 years in areas where a long training and preparatory period were needed before one could get on to standard payments. When, in 2010, the University Pension Schemes had been taken over by the State it was explicitly on the basis of “no less favourable treatment”. However, many entitlements are discretionary and now the discretion is being exercised in a much more negative manner. As a minimum we should regard this as a breach of trust. Up to recently employees had a written statement showing their Professional Added Years. Recently such statements were provided online. Now the University had “updated” such documents by reducing the Professional Added Years to zero. Such tampering with conditions of employments has huge implications for all contracts and indeed all conditions of employment. In conclusion John said he would like to quote that “great Irish Philosopher” Ms Frankie Byrne “it may not be your problem but it could be some day”.

The motion was seconded by Angela Flynn, UCC and adopted unanimously.

12 Restoration of Pay Cuts

This Meeting demands the full restoration of pay cuts imposed on IFUT members including cuts in the rates of payment for examining.

Proposer: UCC Branch

The motion was proposed by David Murphy, UCC. He said that the 'elephant in the room' which was never discussed is that we, so-called higher paid people, had taken a pay cut also. Some media misrepresent our position as seeking pay increases whereas all we are seeking is pay restoration. As academics we tend to listen and discuss while others make demands. Maybe we need to look at ourselves in this regard. After all, we are always being told we do not live in an ivory tower. We are not looking for anything new, just the restoration of what has been taken away from us.

The motion was seconded by Edward Lahiff, UCC and adopted unanimously.

13 FEMPI Legislation

This ADC calls on the Incoming Government to immediately repeal all of the FEMPI legislation currently in operation.

Proposer: Executive

The motion was proposed by Peter Murray, MU. He said that for the benefit of those recently arrived from Mars, FEMPI is the Financial Emergency Measures in the Public Interest and there had been a half a dozen or so such Acts passed in recent years. The Minister Brendan Howlin had said that FEMPI is **Emergency** Legislation which requires annual review. Can the new Minister honestly claim that a financial emergency still exists or indeed can the Dáil so claim? Recently we have seen an orgy of pork-barrel politics with regard to wooing the Independent TDs. We need to say that enough is enough. The idea of gradual improvement is an absurdity. Either there is or there is not a financial emergency. The motion was seconded by Anthony Harvey, RIA. David Murphy, UCC said he strongly supported the motion. He would worry about the levels set by FEMPI becoming the basis for negotiation with the Public Sector Unions i.e. the State would use emergency legislation as a threat hanging over such talks.

The motion was put to the floor and agreed unanimously.

14 TTIP

The TTIP agreement between the EU and the United States poses a threat to democracy, social, environmental and educational standards and this ADC calls on the government to reject the TTIP agreement and ensure that trade agreements increase, educational, environmental and social protection standards rather than lower or endanger them.

Proposer: Executive

Proposing the motion Aidan Seery, TCD said that negotiations between the USA and the EU had begun in July of 2013. Recently President Obama had said that these would be “completed by the end of this year”. The provisions have been negotiated in the most extraordinary and most disturbing secrecy. Recently over 90,000 people had protested about TTIP in Hanover, Germany. The organisation Green Peace has also leaked extensive sections from the drafts of the agreement. We can see an end to democratically decided regularity instruments, in particular this could affect education. Companies who wish to provide privately funded education would have the right to challenge regulations on education promulgated by the State. There is even talk of the procedure for taking such a challenge to be removed from the National Courts and to be referred to a secretive body to be known as the International Dispute Resolution Mechanism (IDRM).

The motion was seconded by John Walsh, TCD and carried unanimously.

15 Employment in Higher Education

This ADC commits IFUT to fight against the scourge of precarious and casual employment in Higher Education.

Precarious employment is a cause of hardship for those directly affected. Not only is insecure employment a cause of anxiety, it also damages the creditworthiness of its victims (in respect of mortgages, bank loans etc.) and it undermines the capacity of those affected to enjoy real academic freedom.

Precarious employment also has negative effects on the quality of education because those on atypical contracts are not paid to conduct research nor are they paid for correction work, evaluation, student mentoring and counselling etc.

This ADC urges all branches of IFUT to conduct campaigns to highlight and fight against precariousness of employment in Higher Education.

Branches should seek to get their governing authorities to adopt a policy whereby full-time, permanent will be the norm which is departed from only where there are specific, identified and temporary reasons to do so.

At national level the IFUT Executive is requested to campaign on this issue in the media, in cooperation with other unions and like-minded organizations and by raising the issue with the Dept. of Education, the HEA, the IUA etc.

Proposer: Executive

The motion was proposed by the General Secretary. He said that the motion represented a call for action. What is happening is wrong, unethical and unfair and we must

act now. The President, Michael D Higgins had said recently that when academics need to research exploitation they no longer need to do fieldwork, all that is necessary is that they open the doors of their offices and look down the corridor. The motion was seconded by Angela Flynn, UCC. Edward Lahiff, UCC said he agreed with all that had been said with regard to this issue. The motion also requires us to represent members outside of our current narrow membership base. Heather Laird, UCC said we need to recruit more precarious workers into the trade union movement. We need more people like Margaret Robson who had spoken earlier. John Walsh, TCD said he also wished to support the motion. He said that we need to recognise that there is a strong fear-factor in such exploitation. We must not underestimate the power imbalance which exists. For exploited workers academic freedom is a myth. Cormac Ó Cuilleain, TCD said there had been an enormous sea change in the situation in higher education. Nowadays there is a huge cohort of exploited staff prepared to work for far below the normal rates. Kelly Fitzgerald, UCD referred to the work elaborated upon in the Deputy General Secretary's report. David Murphy, UCC said we should also highlight the de-professionalization which is occurring in higher education.

The motion was put to the floor and unanimously agreed.

16 Funding of Higher Education

Recognising that Higher Education contributes to the public good and that a progressive taxation system is the appropriate mechanism to fund public services, this ADC calls on the government to reaffirm its commitment to publicly funded Higher Education by reversing the damaging funding cuts experienced by the sector.

Proposer: Executive

The motion was proposed by Michael Delargey, President. He pointed out that individual students could be left with enormous repayment burdens. Higher education should be funded through direct taxation. €400M could be raised by a one per cent increase in corporate taxation.

The motion was supported by John Walsh, TCD and unanimously agreed.

15 CLOSING OF CONFERENCE

The General Secretary said that he wanted to especially thank the President, Michael Delargey for his magnificent job of chairing the conference and also to thank all of the delegates for their active participation and engagement. It had been a very successful

conference. He also wished to record the appreciation of Head Office for the work that is done all year round by the representatives which often goes completely unremarked upon and unnoticed. He thanks the guests and the speakers and congratulated the newly elected representatives and indeed the Incoming President. However, on a final note he wished to reserve a special thanks to the Head Office Team of Joan Donegan and Phyllis Russell for the incredible amount of hard work that they put in on behalf of the organisation.

The conference then concluded.

Appendix I

DELEGATES AND OBSERVERS AT 2016 ADC

(As recorded at Conference)

TCD

Darren Fayne	<i>Biochemistry</i>
Dónall MacDónaill	<i>Ceimic</i>
Hugh Gibbons	<i>Computer Science</i>
Aidán Seery (<i>Incoming Pres</i>)	<i>Education</i>
Pat Wall	<i>Education</i>
John Walsh	<i>Education</i>
Liam Dowling	<i>Electron&Elect. Eng.</i>
Cormac Ó Cullleanáin	<i>Italian</i>
Seán Hughes	<i>Library</i>
Colm Ó Dúnlaing	<i>Mathematics</i>
Gabriele Pierantoni	<i>Computer Science</i>

UCD

John Dunnion	<i>Computer Science</i>
Marie Clarke	<i>Education</i>
Maureen Killeavy	<i>Education</i>
Kelly Fitzgerald	<i>Irish, Celtic Studies</i>
Russell Higgs	<i>Mathematical Science</i>
Thomas Unger	<i>Mathematical Science</i>
Regina Joye	<i>Nursing & Midwifery</i>
Tina Hickey	<i>Psychology</i>
Paddy O'Flynn	<i>Student Consultative Forum</i>

UCC

John Doran	<i>Accountancy</i>
David Murphy	<i>Computer Science</i>
Michael Delargey (<i>Pres</i>)	<i>Education</i>
Heather Laird	<i>English</i>
Edward Lahiff	<i>Food, Business & Development</i>
Virginia Conrick	<i>Library</i>
Anita Wilcox	<i>Library</i>
Angela Flynn	<i>Nursing & Midwifery</i>

NUIG

Alastair McKinstry	<i>ICHEC</i>
Breandán Ó Cochláin	<i>Physical Chemistry</i>

MU

Robert Galavan	<i>Business & Law</i>
Rose Malone (<i>Outgoing Pres</i>)	<i>Education</i>
Maeve Martin	<i>Education</i>
Liam MacAmhlaigh	<i>Froebel</i>
Peter Murray	<i>Sociology</i>

MICL

Gerard Enright	<i>Maths&Computer St.</i>
Catherine Swift	<i>Irish Studies</i>

SPD

Margaret Robson	<i>English</i>
Orla Nic Aodha	<i>Library</i>
Liam O'Dwyer	<i>Library</i>
John O'Flynn	<i>Music</i>
Michael O'Keeffe	<i>Special Education</i>

CICE

Jacqueline Fallon	<i>Early Education</i>
David McKeon	<i>Education</i>
Áine O'Neill	<i>Special Education</i>

CB

Anthony Harvey (<i>Vice Pres-Fin</i>)	<i>DMLCS, RIA</i>
Kate O'Malley	<i>Documents on Irish Foreign Policy, RIA</i>
Joan Byrne	<i>Microbiology, HRB</i>

APOLOGIES

UCD

Gordon Cooke	<i>Conway Institute</i>
Joe Brady	<i>Geography</i>

UCC

Eoin Sheehan	<i>Tyndall Institute</i>
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MU

Saranne Magennis	<i>HE Policy Unit</i>
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NUIG

Seán Tobin	<i>Mathematics</i>
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FRATERNAL DELGATES

Rosena Jordan, Vice-Pres, INTO

Jacquie Reid, *Deputy General Secretary*, UTU

Mark Creelman, *President*, UTU

Rob Copeland, *Policy Officer*, UCU

Micheline Sheehy-Skeffington, *Plant Ecologist
and Women's Rights Activist*

Paul Roche, *Manager*, TUI Credit Union

Apologies

David Robinson, *Executive Director*, CAUT

Appendix II

IFUT PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Michael Delargey

7th May 2016

Colleagues when I took office last May a former President of our Union gleefully informed me that being President is fine – your two big tasks are chairing the ADC and delivering the Presidential Address. Having met a number of other union presidents over the last year, the one item we all had concerns about was delivering our respective presidential addresses. However I don't have much sympathy for some of my other presidential colleagues. The majority of them have to only do this once, they had no timetables at work whereas I had a full timetable and I am so jealous in that where they got to have wear a bit of bling and have a 'chain of office', in my case I felt I was very much 'chained to my office' – thank you UCC.

So far 2016 itself has been an eventful year in the life of our country with no doubt the 1916 Easter Rising commemorations rightfully taking centre stage. The Proclamation has hung in my study for many years and its aspiration to guarantee “equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens” and the Republic's resolve to “pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and of all its parts” are probably the ideals which have informed and will continue to inform my trade unionism. These aspirations will hopefully explain my thoughts on the current state of issues affecting IFUT and our members as we work in higher education.

Colleagues, this will be hopefully the first of two addresses that I will have the privilege of making to the ADC of union. I apologise now to you if there are some themes which I will have not addressed in my speech today but in this address I wish to make some observations on the state of Higher Education in which we practice our respective academic crafts. These observations concern issues which have struck me as relevant to our sector after attending conferences and numerous meetings over the last year but home and abroad. I also hope to set some challenges which we as Union must tackle so as to improve the working conditions experienced by our members. In writing my address, I am conscious that there are a myriad of issues affecting our sector and our membership. Today, I wish to highlight just three things:

1. I wish to share some facts with the new administration about the current state of Irish Higher Education and the consequences of lack of investment by government.
2. The need to fund pure research in our disciplines
3. The treatment of researchers and other precarious academic workers

The current state of Higher Education in Ireland

Here is some data about Higher Education for the new administration to ponder. A recent 2016 survey by our colleagues in ETUCE revealed that Ireland spends 0.5% of GDP on tertiary education. This figure is half of what it was two years ago and we are the bottom of the class in relation to investment in higher education.

According to DPER (2014) figures, 3,500 jobs were taken out of the HE sector in between the years 2008 – 2013. These cuts in funding and reduction in staff numbers are having detrimental effects on the quality of third level education which our students experience and on the working lives of our members. Enrolments in the universities have increased by 14% in the years 2008 - 2014 and this has resulted in a

reduced academic workforce with increased academic workloads to meet increased student numbers.

A 2015 study by Clarke, Kenny and Loxley on *Creating a Supportive Working Environment for Academics in Higher Education* reported that 72% of academics they surveyed believed that their working conditions had deteriorated. They were under pressure to teach more students and they worked longer hours. Excessive workloads can lead to negative work experiences. No one wins in this scenario. Neither staff nor student. The report authors rightly conclude that academics and students deserve a context where they can focus on the key areas of teaching, learning and research. Our HE institutions need to focus on the creation of supportive working environments.

Next year sees the introduction of Wellbeing as a subject at Junior Cycle. Our secondary students will take this subject and it will hopefully make a positive impact on their lives. I have a simple question – What about the Wellbeing of education staff? What steps will the new administration take to address the wellbeing of our members who are over working in an under resourced, over stretched system?

Investment NOW is needed in the higher education sector.

The new administration must increase spending in higher education and start reversing the employment control framework so that new additional academic staff can be employed by our universities and colleges so that we can begin to move towards the OECD staff student ratio of 16:1 and away from the current 20:1 ratio.

Colleagues, a General Election has come and gone and it looks like that we are finally about to have a Government. Colleagues can you recall the prominent role played by Higher Education in the discourse and discussions of education policy by all the political parties? I enjoyed reading the multitude of ideas and the vision concerning

Higher Education in party manifestos. Quite frankly, the concerns of our sector were conspicuous by their absence.

Our sector is expected to produce graduates who will drive economic and societal development. Our research outputs will be key drivers of economic growth and jobs will be created. Yes, the role expected of higher education is to be panacea for our economic and social ills. To paraphrase the Proclamation, our work and sector is important for the ‘happiness and prosperity of the whole nation’. If this is to be so, then may I respectfully suggest that the new administration and the opposition parties devote more of their time considering and acting in the best interests of higher education.

I have one simple message for the incoming administration:

Please treat our higher education sector with the dignity and respect which it deserves!

We need a social dialogue on higher education. IFUT members work at the coalface of our Universities and Colleges of Education. We have ideas and a vision for higher education which we believe will benefit the sector as a whole.

Minister we want to share these ideas and concerns with you and the new administration. Last May we invited the Minister to our ADC but she cancelled our date in a manner typical of the modern mobile phone era, by text. A year has passed and worryingly for our relationship there isn't even a chance of a second date on the horizon even though we wrote to the Minister expressing our hope that she may meet us. New Minister, I respectfully ask that you meet with this union and hear and take on board our legitimate concerns in relation to our sector.

The damaging cuts to our sector **MUST** stop!

IFUT over the next year must continue to highlight the effect of continued poor investment in our higher education. We must take our message to the general public and the new administration must start listening to us. Continued non-investment in Higher Education is impacting on the quality of the student experience and the staff experience.

However colleagues, we have watched our sister teaching union colleagues highlight their concerns over the well-being of their respective sector. We have watched and studied their tactics. We note how they have gotten the attention of the administration and the public.

Pure Research Today – Applied Tomorrow

Colleagues and guests, as I speak some of you are probably fidgeting with your mobile phones, laptops and tablets; texting, tweeting and snapchatting. These digital devices have become an integral part of the modern world. Last year in 2015, University College Cork commemorated and celebrated the life and legacy of George Boole. Boole was UCC's first professor of mathematics whose research interests included mathematical logic. He set out his ideas in two books, the *Mathematical Analysis of Logic* published in 1847 and *An Investigation of the Laws of Thought* published in 1854.

A little over a week ago on the 30th of April, it was the 100th anniversary of the birth of Claude Shannon. Shannon was an American mathematician and electrical engineer who is known as the 'the father of information theory'. As an undergraduate in Michigan, he had taken courses which included Boole's work. In 1937 as a masters student in electrical engineering at MIT he discovered that Boole's concepts had great utility in digital circuit design and so a potential use was found for mathematics research published some 83 - 90 years earlier.

What is the purpose of this short account of the history of mathematics and its contribution to another discipline? It is simply this.

Pure research in one discipline can contribute to applied research in another.

Pure, blue skies research today can be applied successfully tomorrow. Sometimes, our research may not have immediate application or utilisation. It may not be efficient in the neo-liberal view of accountability of research value and worth which seeks immediate payback and the generation of the ‘quick buck’.

The Digital Age wasn’t even a dream when Boole came to Cork to teach and research in mathematics. His research contributed to the field of mathematics. He knew his subject and he knew what research questions in his discipline needed to be addressed. Shannon had a problem to solve in circuit theory and he took an idea from pure mathematics and applied it successfully in the problems of circuit design. Boole’s work and research in mathematics suddenly had a value and use in a discipline which was the genesis of the computing revolution. The rest is as they say is history.

We are academics in various disciplines and each of us shares a loyalty to and concern for the state of our discipline. We know our disciplines. We can identify those research questions and areas in our discipline which we deem worthy of investigation. Our research may build and contribute to the knowledge base of our subjects.

In time, who knows, our research may have unintended consequences and applications in our field or in others. However we need support to do so.

Funding across Europe has been cut for pure basic research in disciplines such as the humanities, mathematics and social sciences. Ireland is no exception. 67% of the respondents in the 2015 study on

the working environment for academics in HE by Clarke, Kenny and Loxley considered the availability of research funding to be inadequate. Academics are being put under more and more pressure to source external funding streams but those funding streams are limited and in some disciplines virtually non-existent. The authors remind us that research areas that are not funded tend to be neglected, thus having a negative impact on knowledge generation and on the careers of academics who work in those less popular areas.

Last month I attended the HERSC meeting in Bologna. Whilst there the delegates to the meeting visited the University of Bologna. The VP for research there gave us a presentation on the university. I was amazed to hear him proclaim that universities should spend some of their funding on basic, blue skies research so as to have a competitive edge in ten years' time. This is an admirable recognition of the long term value of research and the necessity to invest now for future benefits. Perhaps our Irish universities should heed the advice of our Italian neighbours and allocate funding for research in those disciplines currently disadvantaged in external funding calls.

Investment now will reap benefits tomorrow. All academics must be supported in their research endeavours. We create new knowledge and this is always a positive outcome in any discipline.

The Forgotten cohort of Academic Workers

In 2007, this union decided to recruit researchers into our membership. Since then there has been an increase in researcher members within our ranks with some branches having researcher sections. There is close co-operation and a memorandum of understanding has been signed between IFUT and the Irish Research Staff Association. In 2015 colleagues there were 5,156 researchers in Irish Universities. This compares to 4,298 academics and 4,861 support staff. The vast majority 4,068, of our researcher colleagues

are on temporary contracts. Precarity of employment in research seems to be acceptable and the norm to our employers.

To us in the union movement, it is certainly not acceptable.

Researchers have continuously been excluded from national pay agreements and a career framework has been introduced by the universities which introduced a training element to a research 'career' so as to escape the obligations of the Fixed Time Workers Act and the granting of contracts of indefinite duration.

Our researchers do not enjoy the security of tenure and other benefits such as a career structure enjoyed by their academic colleagues. A dispute concerning researcher status and pay has been on-going now in the Tyndall National Institute in Cork for the last eight years. I am not being parochial in mentioning Tyndall or a Cork issue in my address to our National ADC. It is the word National in the Tyndall title which I wish to draw your attention to. Tyndall staff are very much representative of the national situation concerning our researcher colleagues in what-ever discipline they work in. No proper pay scales, no access to public pay agreements which awarded pay increases – Remember those!!! Yet they are subject to all the cuts in pay. Many of our researcher colleagues teach, supervise, apply for funding, do academic administration, mark examinations, publish and of course carry out research yet they are denied access to appropriate academic pay scales. Precarious and insecure employment is all too often a hall mark of our researcher colleagues. The official side seems intent in keeping this status quo.

Colleagues as a union there is an onus on us to tell employers that this is not acceptable and we will tolerate it no longer.

Yet again, researchers have been excluded from a national process. The Expert Group on Fixed-Term and Part-Time Employment for Lecturers was debarred from including researchers as part of its terms

of reference on the insistence of the Department of Education and Skills.

The continued maltreatment of the single biggest cohort of workers employed in the University Sector is unacceptable, and should no longer be tolerated.

We must as a union continue to organise and represent our researcher colleagues.

The Research enterprise is fundamental to our work but we must in solidarity ensure that those researchers who work with us side by side are treated fairly and afforded an opportunity to develop a research career and are fairly remunerated for it.

They carry out academic work and they deserve the due recognition for it.

‘Researchers save lives!’ – This was the campaign an Australian Union colleague told me about which highlighted how badly treated medical researchers were with respect to their terms and conditions. It got ordinary people talking as they realised and appreciated the critical role played by wet lab medical researchers in the development of treatments for various diseases.

We must continue to organise in this sector and so I ask all researchers to come and join us so that together we can improve the working conditions of all academic staff.

Of course precarious work is not just confined to researchers; unfortunately this is an increasing phenomenon amongst lecturers also. Across the OECD countries, there has been a phenomenal growth in the number of part-time academic workers. In the year 2000, there were 793,721 part-time academics. This had increased to 1,479,448 in the sector in 2012. An 86% increase in the use of part-time labour. This increased casualization has resulted in lesser terms

and conditions, less opportunities for development and income poverty for many of global academic colleagues. Ireland is no exception. The use of casual, part-time labour is on the increase as the neo-liberal ideas of low cost, high staff turnover and efficiencies are allowed to infect our academic system.

Once upon a time a colleague on career break or leave might have been replaced by a worker on a full temporary contract, now jobs are being split and hours are given. Some of our colleagues are on hourly paid contracts or are being offered teaching contracts for as little as 33 hours a year. This does not include preparation time, time spent dealing with student queries or course administration time. What hope is there to achieve happiness and prosperity by some of the lowest paid workers in our sector if after 8 years of study and scholarship, the best they can hope for is a few hours work a year? Income poverty, stress and hardship are affecting the quality of life of some of our academic colleagues. To many a living wage is beyond their grasp. Their lives are put on hold.

Worryingly, there is a misinformed perception by many low paid, part-time academics that they cannot join our trade union because they are not permanent! But perhaps the most tragic indicator of income poverty experienced by some of our academic colleagues is when they cannot join the union because they genuinely cannot afford the subscription.

Colleagues, we adapted our structures and subscriptions to accommodate researcher members. We now as a union must continue to organise our low paid colleagues and work to fight against precariousness of employment in Higher Education. IFUT is open to precarious academic workers.

As part of the Lansdowne Road agreement a commitment was given by the official side to publish the Expert Group Report on part time employment for Lecturers no later than 8 weeks after the acceptance

of the LRA by the public services committee of ICTU. It is now almost eight months since the acceptance of the agreement and yet we are still waiting for publication of the report.

This is unacceptable.

We have held our side of the LRA and we now demand the immediate completion and publication of the report. However on a more serious note, we hope that the delay in publishing a report and the fulfilling of one aspect of the agreement is not a sign of what is to come in relation to the delay by the Department in honouring the current pay agreement which also has pay restoration as one commitment.

We will not tolerate broken promises.

The Legacy of 1916.

Colleagues, as I deliver this talk, I am conscious that 100 years ago this week and next, the leaders of the 1916 Rising were executed. I am not a historian and I leave the task of rigorous historical analysis of 1916 to those of you in IFUT who are history academics. However it is only right and fitting that we remember and we thank all those brave men and women who believed and fought for the ideals of an Irish Republic. Religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities for all citizens, happiness and prosperity of the whole nation are ideals which every trade unionist would aspire to. The leaders of the Rising challenged the status quo. They claimed that there was a better vision for our country and they believed whole heartedly that to achieve this we must be an independent and sovereign nation. They sought freedom and paid for it with their lives. It was an event which was initially in some quarters viewed as unpopular and without a mandate but which sowed the seeds for independence a few years later.

As academics, sometimes we have to challenge the status quo, the conventional way of doing things. We have to continuously question

and challenge conventional wisdom and knowledge. Economic policy such as austerity and the right of all people to have a living wage or social policy such as access to housing and a decent health service are some of the societal issues in which we as academics must challenge the administration. We must not be afraid to outline different alternatives even if they seem to go against the ‘accepted’ way of doing things or the administration’s view of things. We are fortunate to have academic freedom and coupled with this, some of us are doubly fortunate to have tenure. Perhaps the price we have to pay for having both is an expectation by broader society to challenge and improve the status quo.

Returning to 1916, on the 12th of May we will remember James Connolly. As trade unionists it is only fitting that we do so and that we continue to work for the improvement of the employment terms and conditions and of the lives of all workers and particularly those amongst us who are low paid and in precarious employment. In the words of Connolly himself:

Our great work now is to consolidate our ranks, to educate our members, to lay broad and deep the foundations of a great Labour movement in this country

Colleagues, IFUT is the labour wing of the academic movement. Perhaps now is the time for us to become the academic wing of the labour movement.

Thank you.

Appendix III

Speech by Mike Jennings, General Secretary, IFUT.

ANNUAL DELEGATE CONFERENCE

7 MAY 2016

Colleagues and Friends,

I know you will think that I have a sad life when I tell you that one of my most joyful TV memories is the night that I first saw an ad for “Blue Band margarine – the American style margarine”!

I never felt that I was living in poverty, but if I was it was it was in “lace curtain poverty”. No neighbour must find out if you are struggling to make ends meet. There were 11 people in my family, including my parents and my grandfather. That’s a lot of butter! And margarine was much cheaper. Now the television was telling me that it was cool to use margarine! This memory was prompted by my reflection, in the preparation of this address, on the “lace curtain poverty” character of Irish Higher Education.

Higher Education behind the lace curtain is starving. It is overstretched to a degree never seen before. It’s funding has been decimated and it is fast running out of economies and alternative strategies to compensate.

There are only so many foreign students you can tap for full cost fees! There is no endless supply of philanthropists! The realisation is dawning slowly that you cannot sell your academic and research capacity to the highest private bidder and hope to maintain academic freedom and your reputation for independence.

And yet, we carry on with an outward smile and a determination “to keep up appearances” and “show a brave face”. Not alone are we substituting margarine for butter, we are watering the milk, darning socks and skipping meals.

Our neighbours on the other side of our lace curtain, the Government, parents, society in general, expect us to carry on as though all was “grand”. Well, it is not “grand” and it cannot and must not be dressed up and disguised as “grand” any more. The reality is stark.

Public funding of Higher Education in Ireland has declined dramatically in the last number of years. In 2007/08 funding from public sources represented 76% of the total. In 2015/16 this was down to 51%.

In money terms the funding of Irish Universities declined from €722,825 in 2007 to €522,214 in 2014. For the non-Mathematicians amongst you that’s a drop of over two hundred thousand euro.

While this funding was in decline our student numbers were soaring. HEA figures indicate that the number had increased by 31,000 in the period from 2008 to 2013. That is an increase of 16%. Alternatively, if you take the period to 2011 to 2016 the numbers have increased by 20,000.

So our funding is down dramatically, our student numbers have leapt forward, so what about our staff numbers? Incredibly, in the period 2008 to 2013 these dropped by 4,500 and the decline has continued since then.

Any wonder therefore that our student:staff ratios are at historically high levels and are completely incompatible with the standards expected in our Colleges. In the period 2008/09 to 2010/11 the ratio went from 1:18.8 to 1:24. This figure has continued to decline in the interval.

And then just for additional information we can recall that recent research carried out in TCD and quoted in the Times Higher Education magazine said that Higher

Education in Ireland supports 150,000 jobs in the Republic of Ireland. The research found that each €1 spent in Higher Education generates €4 for the Irish economy.

The report which I have the privilege to present to this ADC to day reveals the real picture of lace curtain poverty in Higher Education.

Our members have suffered savage reductions in pay and income over the past 8 years. And now when there is some pay-back on offer we are told that the soup will run out before it gets to our end of the long queue.

There is also real, actual poverty in our Sector. We have staff who are expected to cope on salaries of €5,000 per year for casual work. People who are deemed to be Permanent Lecturers are offered less than 20 hours employment per year! There are hundreds and hundreds of academics (Lecturers and Researchers) on insecure, short-term contracts. People who cannot scrape together the creditworthiness for a car loan never mind a mortgage.

The two big issues plaguing Higher Education in Ireland are chronic and acute underfunding and precarious, insecure employment. It is the effects of these two scourges which has resulted in the Annual IFUT Report which you have today containing more problems, more disputes, and more evidence of real hardship than any such report in our history.

The Minister for Education is not here today. She was not invited because last year when she was invited she gratuitously insulted us by refusing at the last minute to show up because we were engaged in trade union activity on behalf of our members!

Imagine the Minister for Finance refusing to attend a Bankers' Convention because he found out that they were charging interest on loans.

Imagine refusing to go to the Galway Races because you found out that people were trying to take home more money from betting or prize money.

The current “Acting Minister” has consistently ignored Higher Education and did not even respond to our formal request for her to declare the position on precarious employment in the Sector.

Let us hope that the next Minister is more “active” than “acting”.

So, the influential people on the other side of the lace curtain do not know about, or choose to ignore, the parlous state we are in due to underfunding and precarity.

That is bad enough. But what adds gall to the mixture is their confused understanding of our role and the contradictory messages they send to us and about us.

In any one business supplement of any national newspaper you will not be surprised if within the same pages you find three articles written by worthies which proclaim and denounce in turn as follows:

“There is no longer any such thing as a job or a career for life. Why does our Higher Education Sector not “teach” (?) adaptability and creativity?”

And then they say;

“The graduates from Higher Education are not fit for purpose. Why do they not “train” them more for the reality of today’s workplace?”

But they are not sure they want us to prepare students for “today’s jobs” because they also frequently complain;

“Why is our Higher Education system not producing more self-starters, innovators, people who can think ‘outside the box’?”

And, to add insult to injury they all agree;

“And by the way, when you are doing all of the above, please do not ask for any money. Sure, you will be grand!”

There is a great deal of talk just now about industrial relations disputes. “A Summer of discontent” is predicted. Employees right across all sectors of the economy are saying “we took the pain, now we want our share of the gain”.

Who is listening to our pain? How do we get our fair share?

The Deputy General Secretary and I are meeting next week with the Officers of the Public Sector Committee of Congress. The PSC is devising its strategy to ensure that public servants get the maximum reward possible for the patriotic sacrifices we have made over the past 8/9 years.

Even within the Public Sector family how can we ensure that the particularly brutal treatment of Higher Education and those of us who work within it, gets a fair hearing and a fair portion?

“What do you have to do to get noticed around here”?

If, as the recent past seems to prove, being responsible, being patient, coping as best you can, making do, keeping up appearances etc. leads to you being taken for granted as a minimum and often, in reality, hit with more blows, what is the remedy?

Do we have to threaten and, indeed, embark upon strike action? Do we have to close the Colleges in the short-term to ensure that they survive in the long-term?

Do we swap our lace curtains for placards?

Is there such a thing as being “irresponsibly responsible” in behaviour?

Would the students (and society) thank us if, by our silence, we continue to preside over the hollowing-out and the (slow?) death of our Higher Education system?

These are the issues and questions you the members of IFUT, the representatives at Branch and National level, will have to grapple with in the period ahead of us.

It is said “beware the anger of the patient man (or woman)”.

The report before you contains all the evidence you need that we have been patient. How long can that last?

Is it time to say to the new Government “don’t make us come out there, you won’t like what you will see”.

I commend this report.

-end-

Appendix III

Speech by Joan Donegan, Deputy General Secretary, IFUT on Equality Motion

7 MAY 2016

I would like to begin, by quoting some lines on equality, woven into the Proclamation of the Republic which Patrick Pearse read out from under the porch of the GPO on Monday, 24th April, 1916.

"The Republic guarantees religious and civil liberty, equal rights and equal opportunities to all its citizens, and declares its resolve to pursue the happiness and prosperity of the whole nation and all of its parts, cherishing all the children of the nation equally..."

Addressed to Irishmen as well as Irishwomen, in years when women in most of the wider world had not yet secured the right to vote, the Proclamation was, for its time, an exceptional document.

And as President Michael D Higgins said recently...

*"It was not a description of the actual state of Irish society, but a compelling vision of what it might become. And while we might, nowadays, chose to forget some of the other ideas or formulations contained in the Proclamation, its **emancipatory call** is certainly one that still resonates strongly with us, a century later."*

And it is that emancipatory call, dear colleagues that I ask you today to consider, because we in IFUT need your help.

We want to end gender inequality particularly in our universities—and to do that we need everyone to be involved.

It is time that **we all** perceive gender on a spectrum not as two opposing sets of ideals.

We want to try and galvanize as **many men and women** as possible to be advocates for gender equality. And we don't just want to talk about it, we want to make sure gender equality is achieved.

As an Irish woman in 2016;

- I believe it is right that socially and economically I am afforded the same respect as men.

As an Irish woman in 2016;

- I believe it is right that women be involved on my behalf in the policies and decision-making of my country.

But sadly, I can say that there is no **one country** in the world where all women can expect to receive these rights.

No country in the world can yet say they have achieved gender equality.

Our motion on Equality today considers

- the findings in the Sheehy-Skeffington case

This case gives us one of the clearest and most documented accounts of gender equality in Irish higher education as a consequent of the requirements of legal cases.

Not only did the Equality Tribunal recommend that NUI Galway promote Dr. Sheehy Skeffington to senior lecturer, NUI Galway was also ordered to review its "*policies and procedures in relation to promotion to senior lecturer to ensure they are in compliance with these acts with particular reference to the gender ground*". In addition, it must report back to the Equality Tribunal on its progress within a year.

Thank you Micheline.

Your courage and tenacity has certainly brought about a catalyze for great change;

- The subsequent NUI Galway draft task force report covers a range of equality measures supporting “*the introduction of a link between HEA funding of higher education institutions in Ireland and their progress in eliminating gender inequality*”. It cites international research (Wallon et al, 2015), which suggests quotas should be mandated by government, with “strong financial incentives for reaching the quota and strong sanctions for non-compliance”.
- It is felt by the task force that the situation in NUI Galway is such – with just 14% of professorships held by women – that “blunt instruments” such as quotas are needed, at least in the short term.

Another significant change;

The HEA after failing to provide figures from 2004 to 2012 such long awaited figures were eventually provided.

Figures to end 2014, indicates that NUI Galway has by far the worst record of any university for gender discrimination. While 53% of NUI Galway Lecturers are female, the figure drops to 30% for Senior Lecturers, 10% for Assistant Professors and just 14% Professors are female, the worst statistics of any university in all three grades.

And perhaps the most significant change of all;

The wider Review of Gender-Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions has been commissioned by the HEA. This Review is being prepared by a panel chaired by former Government Minister and EU Commissioner Maire Geoghegan-Quinn, who is looking at gender-profiles and gender-equality policies in all third level institutions funded by the HEA.

Its report will now be watched very carefully to see what improvements might emerge and if it follows the gender quota model now proposed for NUIG, and if so, what links will it have to HEA funding.

We are also aware of

- The Athena SWAN initiative, (and the successes in TCD and UL) which continues to encourage and recognise commitment to advancing the careers of women in Academia.

We are aware of;

UCC GENOVATE PROJECT which seeks to ensure equal opportunities for women and men by encouraging a more gender-competent management in research, innovation and scientific decision-making bodies. I am an external member of the UCC GENOVATE International Advisory Panel and an external member of the UCC GENOVATE Institutional GEAP Management Board. The UCC GENOVATE ends at year-end 2016.

Other related projects include;

- Integer in TCD
- Feasta in UL

We note the Irish Human Rights Equality Commission (ireck) legislation has introduced a new positive duty on public bodies.

And we applaud the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals, which truly reflect the aim to achieve women's social and economic empowerment.

However, although the Republic of Ireland is a signatory to the implementation of SDGs we remain unique in having a highly costly and fragmented early childhood care system where childcare is treated as a commodity rather a policy choice to treat childcare as a 'public good.'

The Irish Congress of Trade Unions has just published a new study of the problem and, more importantly, how it might be addressed.

Who Cares? Report on Childcare Costs & Practices in Ireland

The report highlights the low level of public investment in childcare provision in Ireland, by comparison with our European neighbours.

Much work needs to be done in this area.

Before I conclude I would like us to be mindful of the cases going to the High Court and Circuit Court for four women in NUIG.

And the case, which IFUT took to the Labour Court this week for one member at NUIG.

Although, the current crisis ought to be a turning point for positive concrete change we are still struggling.

But the good news is we have a uniting movement and we are committed to being part of that change.

Thank you.

Go raibh míle a mhait agait.