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Imperial College
London

Academic Gender Strategy Committee

5th June 2014
14.00 – 16.00
Boardroom, Faculty Building

Minutes

Present:  Professor James Stirling  Chair
          Professor Anand Anandalingam  Dean of Imperial College Business School
          Professor Dot Griffiths  Provost’s Envoy for Gender Equality
          Ms Kim Everitt  Deputy Director, HR
          Professor Jo Haigh  Co-Director, Grantham Institute for Climate Change & Environment
          Professor Jeff Magee  Dean of the Faculty of Engineering
          Professor Stephen Richardson  Associate Provost (Institutional Affairs)
          Dr Vicky Salem  FoM, Athena SWAN Coordinator

Secretary:  Ms Hailey Smith  Welcome Service Manager – Senior Recruitment

Agenda Item  Action

Item 1 – Welcome and Apologies

1.1  Apologies were received from Professor Dermot Kelleher and Professor Maggie Dallman, Dr Vicky Salem and Professor Jo Haigh had been nominated to attend in their respective absences.

Item 2 – Minutes of the Last Meeting and Matters Arising

(appendix 1: Notes of the Meeting – 28 Feb 2014)

2.1  The minutes were agreed as an accurate record of the previous meeting.

2.2  (re. minute 5.6 - 29 November 2013) The pledge to academic women was now in the contracts of all new female academic and clinical academic staff.

2.3  (re. minute 5.8 – 29 November 2013) The web project for the College had been delayed and so it still remains essential that gender equality is a prominent feature.

2.4  (re. minute 2.2) The Institute for Clinical Sciences had submitted an Athena SWAN award application.

2.5  (re. minute 3.3c) A ‘five years on’ survey of Elsie Widdowson holders would be carried out. It is hoped that impact statements gathered would form part of the Women of Imperial Week exhibition.
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2.6  *(re. minute 3.3d)* The resurrection of exit interviews for female academics was in hand.  

2.7  *(re. minute 3.3f)* Professor Griffiths said that she had spoken to the President briefly about matters of gender equality and she was very supportive.

2.8  *(re. minute 3.3g)* Progress had been made across all actions of the Academic Diversity Task Force report.

2.9  *(re. minute 5.1)* The Chair explained that it had been decided that the College would not respond to the letter printed in the THE (20 Feb 2014) as it was an internal matter for the University of Cambridge.

2.10 *(re. minute 7.1)* Further data had been sort from BP-ICAM about the gender split of male and female contributors to the project:

The percentages for Imperial College at November 2013 were as follows:

Academic: 61.5% male, 38.5% female  
PI: 50% male, 50% female  
Co-I: 63.6% male, 36.4% female  
PDRA: 75% male, 25% female  
PhD: 20% male, 80% female

BP-ICAM had noted that the representation of women from Imperial was particularly good, in comparison to other university partners.

2.11  *(re. minute 8.1)* The video of Dame Jocelyn Bell's speech at an Imperial Business Partner's event in February 2014 had been placed on the College’s ‘Women at Imperial’ webpage ([www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/women](http://www.imperial.ac.uk/equality/women))

2.12  *(re. minute 9.1c)* Professor Griffiths would provide her Envoy’s Report at the October 2014 meeting of the Academic Gender Strategy Committee.

2.13  *(re. minute 10.2)* It had been agreed between the Provost and the President and Rector that the proposed slot at the upcoming Heads of Departments’ dinner would be postponed. It was thought that the autumn term would be a better time to speak to the Heads of Departments.

2.14  The Provost would use the dinner in June to reflect on his first year at the College, during which he would mention the work of the committee.

Ms Smith

**Item 3 – Athena SWAN Awards Update**

3.1  *(Post meeting note: a report of Athena SWAN awards and application status by department is appended).*

3.2  It was noted that as of April 2014, all departments within the Faculty of Medicine had received, or had applied for, awards. As of 2015 all
College departments will have received, or applied for, awards.

3.3 Mr Rob Bell, Athena SWAN Coordinator, would also be working with the Business School about an application to the gender equality charter mark which is to be piloted for non-STEM departments.

3.4 The committee agreed that it would like the webpage list of Athena SWAN award holding departments updated, so that it also listed departments that were ‘in the process of applying’ and ‘planning to apply’. Ms Smith

Item 4 – Unconscious Bias Training

4.1 It was agreed that it was important for all senior staff to be trained in unconscious bias and noted that this training had already begun in some areas of the College.

4.2 The current design of the unconscious bias training was discussed. It was thought that if someone was coming to the concept of unconscious bias for the first time then the course was very good, but it lacked tools to help staff put their learning into practice. It was thought that an ‘intermediate’ training course could be designed to further develop Imperial-specific skill implementation. Ms Everitt

4.3 Ms Everitt said that it would be possible to develop this further training in-house but funding might be required. Unconscious bias training would be part of the College’s general training provision. Ms Everitt would progress the intermediate unconscious bias training course. Ms Everitt

4.4 Professor Anandalingam noted that he would like the Business School’s senior staff to take unconscious bias training. Ms Everitt

4.5 Training in unconscious bias would be arranged for Provost’s Board members, and a date would be set for it to run as soon as was practicable after the summer. Ms Everitt

Item 5 - Athena Committee Meeting Feedback

(appendix 2: THE – Maternity Pay)

5.1 Professor Griffiths reported that the committee had discussed maternity leave for postdoctoral staff and comparisons had been made between the College’s maternity provision and those of other Russell Group institutions. Professor Griffiths

5.2 The Athena Committee was concerned about the maternity arrangements for postdoctoral staff, as not all funders would fund maternity pay or extend the length of grants to cover periods of maternity leave. Professor Griffiths

5.3 Maternity leave for PhD students was also a matter of concern; the committee would seek data on the number of PhD students taking maternity leave, but it was thought that the numbers were rather small. Professor Griffiths
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5.4 The Athena committee would like issues relating to maternity leave and pay to be discussed at a College level. The Chair said that this issue had already come up at Provost’s Board; he said that he would see that the matter was incorporated in a parallel discussion about childcare support.

The Chair

5.5 Ms Smith would research examples of good practice in place at other institutions.

Ms Smith

Item 6 – Staff Survey 2014 – Athena SWAN

(appendix 3 : College Survey 2014 – Athena SWAN)

6.1 The committee considered findings of the Staff Survey 2014 that related to Athena SWAN.

6.2 Professor Griffiths said that the findings were broadly similar to the Equality Challenge Unit’s findings on the impact of the Athena SWAN Charter. She said that people saw change occurring but did not always relate it to Athena SWAN efforts.

6.3 The committee was disappointed that the some staff were still not aware of Athena SWAN nor the Academic Gender Strategy committee, but it was noted that feeling the benefits of good practice was considerably more important than knowing the guise under which they were implemented.

6.4 Professor Griffiths said that she would discuss awareness of Athena SWAN at a future Heads of Department’s meeting.

Professor Griffiths

6.5 Considering the survey free text comments, the committee was pleased to see that there were lots more positive comments about Athena SWAN, than negative. Professor Griffiths said that she would seek a slot at the Faculty of Medicine board to address a few negative comments that had been made.

Professor Griffiths

Item 7 – Envoy’s Report

(appendix 4: Government Response and appendix 5: Athena SWAN report)

7.1 Professor Griffiths reported that she had proposed that the College hold a Women of Imperial College week, to coincide with International Women’s Day 2014. The College foyer would be used to host an exhibition celebrating the women of the College, both staff and students. She hoped that departments would also run their own events during the week of celebration. Professor Griffiths said that she would pitch the idea at Provost’s Board and hoped that the incoming President would also be involved.

7.2 Professor Griffiths was continuing her interviews with the College’s female professors and she was also interviewing men too. She had completed interviews within the Faculty of Natural Sciences and was starting to interview staff in Engineering. She said that immediate findings had demonstrated a feeling of distance between staff and the ‘blue cube’. She was asking if staff were interested in moving to more senior roles and what support they might need. Professor Griffiths
said that she was also asking about the factors they thought were most important to their success and what they would change about the College.

7.3 Regarding her contact with the corporate world, Professor Griffiths was visiting PWC and BP in July 2014.

7.4 Professor Griffiths had been invited to speak at a Westminster Briefing about the House of Commons report into Women in Science. Both she and Professor Debra Humphris had also attended the Westminster HE Forum to talk about gender and STEM.

7.5 The committee discussed the possibility of a family day event, noting that the NHLI had run such an event to great success. The committee agreed that it would like to replicate this success for more staff but careful thought would be needed on how to run such a large event. It was thought that something might be arranged to run alongside the Festival, given that a lot of effort was going into encouraging school participation. Professor Griffiths would speak to Mr Tom Miller about this.

**Item 8 – Julia Higgins Awards**

8.1 An event would be held in the autumn term to celebrate this year’s winners and award the Julia Higgins certificates.

8.2 The nominations for next year’s awards would also happen in the autumn term. An announcement of the nomination period would be placed in the Provost’s Briefing.

**Item 9 – REF Data**

*(appendix 6: REF 2014 Equality Profiles)*

9.1 The committee considered the REF2014 equality profiles. The committee noted the slight percentage difference between women who were eligible and those who were submitted, but such small numbers limited the statistical relevance of the data.

**Date of the Next Meeting**

24 October 2014
14.00 – 16.00
3.19 Faculty Building