College Athena Committee

Monday 18 December 2017
1300 – 1500
SALC 6, Level 5 Sherfield Building
South Kensington Campus

Minutes

Present:

Professor Stephen Curry  Chair, Assistant Provost (EDI) & Life Sciences
Mr Rob Bell  EDIC
Professor Mark Burgman  Centre for Environmental Policy
Ms Sharon Citrone  MRC LMS / ICS
Professor Tom Coates  Mathematics
Dr Caroline Colijn  Mathematics and Faculty of Natural Sciences
Professor Denis Doory  Aeronautics
Dr Liz Elvidge  Postdoc and Fellows Development Centre
Professor Sue Gibson  Chemistry
Professor Sian Harding  NHLI
Ms Rozi Harsanyi  Management trainee
Professor Richard Jardine  Civil Engineering
Dr Hector Keun  Surgery & Cancer
Dr Cleo Kontoravdi  Chemical Engineering
Ms Lindsay Melling  NHLI
Dr Edgar Meyer  Business School
Professor Aimee Morgans  Mechanical Engineering
Professor Catherine O’Sullivan  Civil Engineering
Dr Maria Ribera Vincent  Aeronautics
Ms Alexandra Williams  Civil Engineering
Mrs Jacalyn Murphy  EA (EDI)

Apologies:

Dr Claudia Clopath  Bioengineering
Professor Clare Lloyd  Faculty of Medicine
Ms Anna McCormick  Electrical and Electronic Engineering
Mr Sam McKenney  Design Engineering
Mr Christopher Peters  Surgery & Cancer
Professor Steven Riley  Public Health
Dr Vicky Salem  Medicine
Dr Leila Sheldrick  Design Engineering
Ms Rebecca Stiffell  Life Sciences
Professor Christian Speck  MRC LMS / ICS
Dr Ioanna Tzoulaki  Public Health
Professor Susan Eisenbach  Computing
Professor Eric Yeatman  Electrical Engineering
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<th>Agenda Item</th>
<th>Action</th>
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<tr>
<td>1. Introductions and Apologies</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>SC welcomed everyone to the meeting and members introduced themselves. Apologies were read.</td>
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<td>2. Minutes from the last meeting</td>
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<td>2.1</td>
<td>The Minutes from the last meeting were approved.</td>
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<td>3. Chair’s Introduction</td>
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<td>3.1</td>
<td>SC opened the meeting as the new Chair for the Committee. As part of his new 0.5 FTE role as Assistant Provost for Equality, Diversity &amp; Inclusion, he will be taking over some of Dot Griffiths’ responsibilities. Stephen introduced himself as a long standing member of the College, now in his 23rd year, he also worked for 4 years as Director of Undergraduate Studies in Life Sciences. He is very glad to be appointed and explained it is very positive that the College has invested in this new position, which ranges across the whole Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda and the appointment will bring a new focus. Stephen is talking to many people to ascertain what is happening and what we should be focussing on.</td>
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<td>4. College activities and Departmental report highlights</td>
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<td>4.1</td>
<td>SC will shortly be drafting the College’s Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy. There are two new committees, the EDI Strategy Group chaired by the Provost which includes the Deans as well as the Vice Provosts for Education and Research and Deputy Director of HR. The work of that group will be supported by the new EDI Forum, a larger group and more representative. The first meeting is on 11th January.</td>
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<td>SC</td>
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<td>4.2</td>
<td>SC advised that the College has signed up as a member of the Race Equality Charter, (REC) run by the Equality Charter Unit, much along the same lines as the Athena Swan Award, although the application will be made at College level only. SC will be leading a self-assessment team in the New Year. The REC application process is estimated to take around 18 months. SC has already talked to UCL who led on their application and is talking to King’s in the New Year.</td>
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<td>4.3</td>
<td>Events in the New Year were outlined:</td>
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<td>Diverse@Imperial, 29th January to 2nd February.</td>
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<td>- Exhibition in College Main Entrance</td>
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<td>- Outreach event for school children</td>
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<td>- Lunchtime talk by Dr Nike Folayan, Chair of the UK Association For Black and Minority Ethnic Engineers</td>
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<td>- Lunchtime stand in Sherfield Building to promote Active Bystander training.</td>
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Women@Imperial Week, 5th to 9th March, details to be confirmed.

RB advised there is a Public Health talk late February, early March and Department of Medicine Athena Lecture on 1st February.

4.4 SC had asked those attending today to submit a short report before the meeting and thanked those who had sent in their reports. Any other reports submitted after the meeting will also be circulated.

4.5 CK raised the issue of undergraduate students attending women’s networking events. She has very few female alumni coming to these events and the undergraduates are lacking role models from the industry, therefore she wants to target more senior people. CK is unsure how these events will be perceived as only women are attending and some are then offered a place afterwards. The Chemical Engineering Society, the representation committee for under graduate students has asked for help with this. Female students do not have enough contacts and would like to interact with alumni. It was suggested to have these events as an “Add on” as a precursor to a network event.

4.6 It was highlighted that Faculty of Engineering departments’ EDDC now have wider remits (beyond gender and academics) and there was some discussion about how departments currently work on BAME and LGBT issues and what more they could do in the future.

4.7 RB suggested that Departments could invite representatives from the College diversity staff networks to give talks. Recently the networks have had new Chairs:

- Imperial as One (Black and minority ethnic staff).
- Imperial600 (LGBT+).
- Able@Imperial (staff with disability).

4.8 It was commented that it would be useful to see how well students progress; are they taking a job to survive? RJ commented that they have carried out their own surveys about data collection. SC advised that Malcolm Edwards, Director of Strategic Planning, is aiming to create a dashboard to allow interrogation of data. The Vice-Provost of Education is also working on a policy to move the College to be more flexible on recruitment of students and to find out from the data about how different sub-groups of students progress. It would be useful to enable Banner to collate this data. Malcolm and the team are currently working on a large amount of data. SC will obtain an update from Malcolm.

4.9 COS asked if the College is encouraging students to declare if they are gay/lesbian/bisexual. More thought needs to be given on how this will be carried out. COS advised there is an issue with homophobia in engineering that impacts students. RJ commented it is going to be very hard to monitor. SC advised that part of the problem is the way the data is gathered. RB commented that all staff can, and should, log into ICIS to update their personal details.

http://www.imperial.ac.uk/admin-services/ict/self-service/admin-systems/icis/login/
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<th>4.10</th>
<th>SC advised that work needs to be done on the culture in terms of gathering data so that certain groups are not disadvantaged and that data collection needs to be handled sensitively.</th>
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<td>5. <strong>Support for student parents</strong></td>
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<td>5.1</td>
<td>CC raised the matter of support for students who are also parents as some are feeling isolated. A PhD student had emailed asking if they could attend an event on supporting women getting back into work, to be told it was for staff only. SC commented that Su Nandy has said that as far as possible courses are open to staff and students, particularly as the numbers would be very low. CC commented that support for students can be very good. There is a College policy on maternity leave that is not well known: <a href="http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/fees-and-funding/general-support/childcare/">http://www.imperial.ac.uk/students/fees-and-funding/general-support/childcare/</a></td>
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<td>Civil Engineering is now talking to students and meeting them individually as it is much easier to deal with issues in a proactive manner.</td>
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<td>5.2</td>
<td>CC commented that it is important to make it known to students what workshops are available. CC also raised the issue of childcare costs, which weigh particularly heavily on students and asked about schemes that allow them to claim childcare expenses to enable them to attend work related events. SC mentioned that in Life Sciences a dept-funded student travel award can cover childcare expenses to attend conferences. CC advised there is discretionary funding for hardship of students and in this childcare was a consideration. It was commented that there are a lot of College events that run out of hours including events at the Women@Imperial week and it would be useful if these events could be within hours – or that support might be provided to cover childcare costs. SC advised there should be co-ordinated action from Departments and he is very happy to share the form that is used in DoLS. There also needs to be guidelines for how attendance at evening events should be supported.</td>
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<td>5.3</td>
<td>It was commented that there are plans for childcare at White City. SC advised that Jane Neary, Director of Campus Services, is talking to two existing providers and they are now collaborating. SC will ask Jane for an update before the next meeting.</td>
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<td>6. <strong>Reporting of sexual harassment</strong></td>
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<td>MB advised that Student Services have funded 6 people to train as Sexual Violence Liaison Officers. He explained that at present staff training is uneven, students are unaware of the pathways for reporting incidents and the website is not informative. The College only have a handful of reported cases a year, it is possible that the vast majority are not recorded. These may generally be less serious incidents not likely to involve the police. SC advised that he has been speaking to Emma Chapman (Physics), who is a member of the 1752 group, who work on sexual misconduct issues in higher education. SC advised there have been some issues to do with</td>
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miscommunication within the College and there is a need to develop a coherent policy that is available for staff and students.

MB advised the website needs to be built up and CEP will be doing some work on this, e.g. leaflets on what is and is not sexual harassment and bullying. MB is drafting these and SC will ask him to present at the next meeting. Stephen and Mark are meeting with the Vice-Provost for Education after this meeting to discuss a review of policies and processes for dealing with cases of sexual harassment.

7. Women asking fewer questions

RB had circulated prior to this meeting a blog and research article on academic seminars which gave an interesting breakdown of who asked questions – and observed that women ask more questions if the first person invited to ask a question is a woman. RB advised that the School of Public Health had also looked at this and also found that women were asking fewer questions. RB commented that seminar organisers should be aware of gender balance as the College want to encourage everyone to take part. It was noted that this reflects how intimidating the environment is. Sian commented that the Chair and Facilitators have a responsibility for questions at a seminar and perhaps there should be some guidelines.

**Action:** SC to circulate guidance

8. Beyond Surveys: Ideas for challenging and changing departmental culture

8.1 RB wanted to raise this discussion point as a reminder that cultural change is a key aspect of Athena SWAN, and that communications and engagement of staff is perhaps something to think about more explicitly. Some departments have used alternative means, in addition to surveys, to engage staff, for example Culture and Behaviour Review in the Department of Chemical Engineering, and World Café style Staff Days in the Department of Surgery & Cancer.

EM commented that people need to feel the surveys are about us as a culture rather than individuals. RB advised it would be helpful to have more people engaged at meetings and academic away days, to try to directly engage with staff and encourage them to speak out. CK commented the surveys give an idea of where the problems might be which can then be dealt with. HK advised this also covers what was said earlier about drilling into the data. It was commented that communication in a large organisation can be difficult, but is key to so many aspects of culture.

9. Any other business

9.1 SC advised the College has signed the Declaration on Research Assessment. It was commented that it would be interesting to see job descriptions and person specifications for Heads of Departments. Cleo advised that we all have staff appraisals but academic leadership can only improve based on feedback. We need to recognise and evaluate everything people are doing.