



## School of Chemistry

# Minutes of the School Committee Meeting

### Friday 7 April 2017

**Present:** Manuel Ruether, Sinead Boyce, Sylvia Draper, Joanna McGouran, Mike Bridge, John O'Brien, Carl Poree, Peter Dunne, Mike Lyons, Patsy Greene, Gary Hessman, Valeria Nicolosi, Teresa McDonnell, Brendan Twamley, Tom Conroy, Manuel Ruether, Max Garcia Melchor, Maria Copley, Noelle Scully, Wolfgang Schmitt, Paula Colavita, Isabel Rozas, Mike Southern, Stephen Connon, Colm Healy, Dónaill MacDonaill, Paul Wix, Tim Suits, Chloe Halloran, Jennifer McHugh

In attendance for item 315: Maura Horan

**Apologies:** Thorfinnur Gunnlaugsson, Mick Morris, AnneMarie Farrell, Tim Suits

**314.** The minutes of the meeting held on March 10<sup>th</sup> 2017 were approved.

#### **315. Maura Horan (Head of Digital Public Affairs and Communications in TCD)**

The Schools website needs revision as it is out of date. An analysis of the Chemistry webpage for the month of March showed that there were 17,498 page views, of which 13,153 were unique views. The figures for January and February were similar.

The Chemistry homepage has the highest traffic, with the academic staff page being the second most visited web page. The UG homepage was also very popular but the PG homepage had very low viewing rates. The website was most visited by people from Ireland, the UK, India and the United States (in descending order). Organic chemistry was the most popular webpage accessed through a Google search. Google Analytics could determine that the site was most viewed by people in the age range of 25-34.

Maura reported that there were 219 broken links on the website and 59 words that were flagged as being misspelt. This may be an overestimate as it is likely that some scientific words/journal names are not included in a UK English dictionary. In order to improve the webpage the School will need high quality images and videos, which may require a photoshoot. Chemistry will need to clean up its website (remove out-of-date material and files) before being provided with the new template.

Maura will send Sinead a file listing the broken links so that they can be addressed.

#### **Matters Arising**

##### **316 M.Sc. Energy Science**

The HoS met with Igor Shvets regarding the M.Sc. in Energy Science. As both of their terms of office are coming to an end, he suggested that future planning be left to their successors. Charles Patterson will proceed with getting the paperwork through the Graduate Studies process and will provide feedback to the working group.

### **316.1 Assistant Professorships in Physical Chemistry**

There were 102 applications, from which a very strong shortlist was invited to interview. Two preferred candidates have been offered the positions. They are currently in negotiations so have expressed interest but have not formally accepted the posts. The HoS hopes to be able to name the successful candidates at the next Committee meeting. The HoS asked that her thanks to Robert Dryfe, the external selection-panel member, be noted in the minutes.

There were 15 applications for the Teaching Fellow role and interviews will be held on April 25<sup>th</sup>.

### **316.2 Head of School Nomination**

There was one nomination for the HoS position, namely Mike Lyons and his nomination has been approved by the Provost. The election process will be organised by the Faculty Office and ballot papers will be circulated in due course.

### **316.3 School of Chemistry webpage**

The School of Chemistry's website needs to be updated as a matter of urgency. It is proposed that funding be found for a short period (3-6 months) to pay someone to clean up the data and revamp the website.

### **316.4 Irish Research Council (IRC)**

Six of the School's IRC PG applications were funded, with five of these being in Organic Chemistry.

### **317. Report from the Head of School**

There is still no clarity regarding overhead distributions across College. The Dean of Research is anxious to change the way that overheads are split between College and the Academic Unit(s), with a smaller portion going to College (proposing 35% rather than 50%). If it does emerge then Academic activities will benefit. The HoS met with Lorraine Byrne (Managing Director, Amber/CRANN) to look at the division of overheads arising from the Amber One programme. Many of the supports/facilities that Amber provides, including industrial liaison workers and technical support, are paid from overheads. The maximum split that they could afford to give Schools is 30%. This split would be backdated to the project start date in 2013 so the School will be due backdated overhead money. The Amber grant was worth over €50 million, with €7.8 million in overheads. There are a number of other institutions associated with Amber, including the Royal College of Surgeons and UCC. About €6.6 million are still held within TCD, distribution is to the TCD centre which is the college and to the TCD academic units. Roughly €2.6 million of the overheads are being used to support Amber operations. The remaining funds are to be split 70:30 between Amber and the Schools. Chemistry is likely to receive €176,000 across the five years of the award, amounting to only €30,000 a year. To put this in perspective, one Chemistry PI with an SFI award generates more overheads for the School than the entirety of the research activity housed in CRANN of all of the School's PIs who are involved in Amber. In response to a question, the HoS reported that Amber's overheads are being used to support mostly salaries for people in the commercial offices and technical support for the AML and the Clean Room. SC questioned if those people should be on the main grant. Valeria Nicolosi responded by saying that the technical staff in CRANN is not directly funded through any project. It also costs roughly €350,000 a year to pay for service contracts for the instruments housed in CRANN. Most of the overheads go on technical staff and service contracts. The HoS said that the School should work to gain a fuller understanding of how CRANN operates so that there is no duplication of effort. She also advised that the School look closely at Amber Two, encouraging more engagement before the application is submitted. In response to concerns raised by some of those at the meeting regarding the School's equipment stock, the HoS mentioned that the School had been successful in getting approximately €500,000 in equipment through the recent equipment call, out of a total

budget for the College of approximately €2million. She did note that this was not enough to ensure that aging equipment could be replaced.

**Action: More involvement to be taken in the Amber Two application**

### **318. PIQA (Principal Investigator Quantitative Analytics)**

The Dean of Research has put together an analytics package called PIQA (Principal Investigator Quantitative Analytics) with the aim of collating data very similar to that gathered for the research section of the School Review. PIQA has been made available to Heads of School, who can use it to view the levels of research activity of PIs within their schools. There has been a kickback against this initiative by those in AHSS who feel that the data that they generate cannot be captured in a quantitative way. The Dean of Research wants each school to generate its own research metrics against which individual performance can be measured. In answer to a query, the HoS reported that the original presentation indicated that PIQA would be connected to promotion.

On a separate matter, the HoS reported that the QS world rankings across the College have plummeted, particularly for Schools. The reason given for this decrease in rankings was that the data submitted to the QS had serious omissions and errors. As a School, Chemistry has done amazingly well in retaining its top 100 world ranking.

### **319. Reports from Members**

**319.1** The DTLUG reported that the Teaching Committee Working Group (TCWG) will meet the following week. Carl Poree is to be invited to join the Teaching Committee.

**319.2** The DTLPG outlined a new proposal regarding Trinity Awards, which would have all but one Trinity Award per School disbursed at Faculty level following a central application process rather than being distributed to Schools based on the numbers of postgrads who complete their PhDs. If this comes into effect, the School's current method of allotting Trinity Awards would largely disappear.

**319.3** The CTO1 confirmed that the relocation of the liquid nitrogen is going ahead. It is hoped that, following agreement between Physics and Chemistry regarding the relocation, the work will be completed during the summer.

### **320. Safety**

Mike Bridge discussed a room in the TBSI building that is being used as a dumping ground. Staff must be off the grounds of Trinity by 5:30 pm in advance of the Trinity Ball.

### **321. AOB**

Maria Copley asked if it would be possible for staff to be trained in First Aid. Teresa McDonnell said that she would contact Estates and Facilities regarding this matter.

**Action: Teresa McDonnell to contact Estates and Facilities regarding First Aid training for staff.**

**321.1** The HoS updated those present on Niamh McGoldrick progress following a serious illness. Niamh is making a good recovery. Flowers and a card were sent to her from the School.

**Next meeting:** Science Lecture Theatre, June 30<sup>th</sup> 2017