

Irish Federation of University Teachers

IFUT ***2010***

Cónaidhm Éireannach na Múinteoirí Ollscoile

IRISH FEDERATION OF UNIVERSITY TEACHERS

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CÓNAIDHM ÉIREANNACH NA MÚINTEOIRÍ OLLSCOILE

IFUT 2010

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A. ANNUAL REPORT

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Whenever I sit down to write an Annual Report I find that on most occasions a catchphrase or a saying keeps cropping up as characterising the year in question.

In last year's report I referred to IFUT's experience of the year 2008/2009 as "a game of two halves". Regarding this year and for the past twelve months one phrase has been constantly in my mind and frequently on my lips. We have been 'like an undertaker in a famine' – never so busy, never having so little that is good or positive to show for that work.

As you read into this year's report, two features in particular emerge and re-emerge. The first is the depressing lack of progress in resolving several longstanding grievances (notably regarding promotions systems and staffing issues). This is a direct consequence of the pall of gloom which has descended on our public finances and therefore on our public services. The second feature is the exceptional amount of time spent in seemingly endless and ultimately dispiriting negotiations with our national employer – the Government.

The average trade union official working in the Public Sector could expect to engage in rounds of these types of negotiations perhaps once in every three years or so. In the past year alone we have had no less than three marathon sessions which included more all-nighters than my addled brain can count.

If I appear downbeat in the writing of this report, at least we can take comfort in the accuracy of our predictions. This is how we finished off the introduction to last year's report.

"Our members face a huge assault on their personal standards of living, and the Education Sector, especially the Higher Education Sector, is being hit with almost unconscionable reductions in its already inadequate budget. This, combined with the recently announced ban on recruitment and promotions, seems to guarantee that the year ahead will be one of difficulty and struggle for our members."

That was written after the imposition of the Pension Levy – the Public Sector Workers' Tax. At the time, IFUT members had also just voted by 67.7% to 32.3% for industrial action to bring the Government back to the negotiating table. In that, at least, the exercise was effective.

After several stop/start attempts, negotiations got under way in earnest in November/December '09. The challenge for the trade unions was to get the Government to accept that there was an alternative to pay-rate cuts. Against all the odds the negotiations succeeded. It was politics and ideology which let us down.

Agreement had been reached on a deal which would see Public Sector workers accept the kind of arrangement which has saved countless employments in the Private Sector. We would accept unpaid layoffs (leave) in return for the preservation of salary levels and pensions and other derivative entitlements. This gave the Government its needed short-term immediate savings whilst productivity measures which would – if agreed – replace the unpaid leave, would give them ongoing, permanent savings.

The body language of our negotiating interlocutors was unmistakable. They were delighted. Some even explicitly, though understandably off the record, said it was an historic and positive win/win deal. The Government Chief Whip told members of our team that the Taoiseach was "fully committed" to the deal and that it was his (the Chief Whip's) job to get the Fianna Fáil backbenchers (by then in a Liveline/IBEC generated state of panic fed on ignorance and half-truths) "back into line".

Less than three hours later the Minister for Finance pulled the plug on the whole process and insisted that the only solution acceptable to him was direct reductions of salaries. These he delivered in his Budget a few days later. In common with the entire cohort of Public Sector trade unions, IFUT proceed to ballot its members for industrial action.

As in 2009, the clear majority of those who voted, voted for industrial action. However, unlike last year, our constitutional threshold of 66.6% was not reached. The details of the vote were:

Ballot Issued 1,688

Ballots Returned	699
Spoiled Ballots	3
Votes For	426 (61.2%)
Votes Against	270 (38.79%)

Notwithstanding our absence from the fray, a campaign of limited but effective and escalating industrial action by other Public Sector unions did force the Government back to the table.

The resultant “Croke Park Proposals” provide for a policy of no further pay cuts for four years, no compulsory redundancies, extension of protection of pensions for at least one more year, assurances on outsourcing and redeployment, negotiations on new pension arrangements and a mechanism to evaluate savings with a view to using these to finance restoration of pay levels, all in return for “sectoral transformation measures”.

As with practically every single such Public Service Agreement in the past, this quid pro quo is neither lucid nor pre-determinable. Read optimistically, they could amount to no more than minor irritants. A worst case scenario would have us wave goodbye to fundamental and irreplaceable aspects of our jobs as academics.

At the time of writing a decision by our members on which of the above outcomes is more likely has still not been taken. However, the IFUT Executive has decided unanimously that the risk is too great and the stakes are too high and accordingly it is recommending a rejection of the proposals.

I am reluctant, even in the context of such a challenging year, to finish on a low note. The introduction to last year’s report, quoted above, had as its very final words the following:

“IFUT’s strength and resolve will be needed more than ever. Building on what we have already achieved we have good reason to believe that we are up to the task.”

Bearing that sentiment in mind it is no harm to tell IFUT readers of this document that it is safe to read on through the following pages. It is not all depression and bad news. We did achieve notable, significant and hard earned advances. At the end of a tough year we can realistically say that we have never before been so strong in terms of membership numbers, relevance, public profile and, issue by issue, effectiveness.

In the coming year our members will need a trade union like they have rarely needed one before. Our non-union colleagues will need one even more. Each one of us should try to make each one of them see this reality as soon as possible. We should make it clear that it is in our mutual, collective interest for them to add their numbers to our strength.

I. REMUNERATION/PAY AGREEMENTS

1. Towards 2016

The pay increases of 3.5% and 2.5% negotiated in late 2008 as part of the Second Phase of Towards 2016 were, as reported last year, never paid. In fact, as we are only too painfully aware, rather than pay increases all of the Public Sector has been hit with a combination of the Pension Levy and direct salary cuts.

The position of IFUT therefore has been quite clear that, since our employers have not honoured the terms of Towards 2016, we do not regard ourselves as being bound by other items in that agreement. It is noteworthy that despite the constant media efforts to portray the Public Sector as pampered and the Private Sector as being riven with pay cuts and unemployment, it is a fact that significant numbers of companies in the Private Sector have paid the full terms of Towards 2016 in the last twelve months.

2. O'Brien Review Body Report

As reported last year there was considerable confusion about the implementation of the O'Brien Review Body increases for University Professors. These were held up pending the resolution of issues surrounding "unauthorised payments" in the University Sector. By now all of our members concerned have been paid the full terms of the O'Brien Report. However, we are taking a case to the Labour Court on behalf of one member in respect of the unilateral discontinuation of an allowance which was paid to him on foot of extra identifiable duties which he continued to perform after the discontinuation of the allowance. We are treating this as a straightforward breach of contract.

The latest O'Brien Review Body Report was basically commissioned by the Government as an exercise in 'reverse benchmarking'. Using this report the Government announced the extension of the salary cuts affecting all other Public Service grades to members, including those in IFUT, covered by the O'Brien Process. These cuts have been of the order of 8% and 12%.

3. Benchmarking Awards for Senior Experimental Officer (TCD) and Chief Technical Officer (UCD)

As with the terms of the standard increases under T2016, these awards remain unpaid.

4. 'Voluntary' Pay Cuts, UCC

Members in UCC were requested by the President to agree to voluntarily surrender one week's pay (the equivalent of 2% pay cut) in order to "maintain

jobs" in UCC. IFUT strongly criticised this move as amounting to "moral blackmail". We did not see that individual members should be held responsible for the threats to the job security of their colleagues arising directly from Government decisions. In the event, UCC Management was told that no matter how much money was raised in such a manner the job cuts imposed by the HEA would stand. Therefore, the President refunded all monies donated by the undisclosed numbers who had responded to his invitation.

5. Non-Payment of Increments, RCSI

In October the Management in RCSI announced that they were withholding the payment of increments due to all employees. Following co-ordinated opposition from all of the RCSI trade unions this position was reversed in January 2010.

6. Non-Payments of Increments, Tyndall National Institute, UCC

The Executive has authorised the holding of an industrial action ballot in opposition to the decision of Tyndall Management to withhold annual increases due to our members in the Institute.

II. CONDITIONS OF EMPLOYMENT

1. St Catherine's College of Education for Home Economics

- (a) **Fixed-Term Staff** Due to the extraordinarily protracted tactics employed by the Department of Education before eventually paying the compensation which IFUT had secured for former fixed-term employees, this compensation became liable to the newly introduced Incomes Levy. IFUT regards this as effectively rewarding a Department for delaying the payments which were due to former employees and as such it is our intention to refer the matter to the Ombudsman.
- (b) **Claim for One Member** We are seeking the implementation of the terms of the Labour Court Recommendation which awarded €15,000 to each of four members of the Retired Staff of St Catherine's to one additional member. As the Department has refused to co-operate with normal industrial relations machinery we are referring this to the Labour Court for Arbitration under Section 20 of the Industrial Relations Act.

2. Contract Researcher, NUIM

IFUT made a formal complaint to the European Commission about the terms of the Labour Court Determination which refused to grant permanency

to a fixed-term worker on the basis that she had signed away her rights when she underwrote the College's "objective grounds". Unfortunately the indications are that the EU Commission will not intervene in what they see as a 'national' problem within Ireland. In the meantime we have been to a Rights Commissioner trying to force NUIM to recognise that they must pay this member the same redundancy compensation as has been paid to other, permanent members of staff in NUIM. A decision is awaited.

3. Promotion to Associate Professor, UCD

As reported last year the Labour Court was unable to issue a Recommendation in this case due to the fact that the claimant was retired by the time the issue had been referred to them. Since then IFUT has engaged in intensive political lobbying and it now appears that we will be rewarded by an amendment to the Industrial Relations Act allowing for access to the Labour Court for retired members. With regard to the substantive case the Executive agreed to finance the cost of the first stages of a legal action against UCD and this matter is being kept under continuous review.

4. Dispute Arising from Promotions, SPCD

This age discrimination case is, incredibly, still "in the queue" to be heard by the Equality Tribunal.

5. Age Discrimination Cases, UCD

IFUT assisted two members who had independently initiated claims of age discrimination in promotions in UCD. In the first of these cases the Equality Officer found that there was insufficient evidence to justify the allegation of age discrimination and in the second case the decision of the Equality Officer is still awaited.

6. Royal Irish Academy/Promotions

The Labour Court issued a Recommendation in respect of this case which, though inconclusive, may yet provide a platform to move forward on this long-running case. However, it is true to say that as with almost every other section, the current financial climate is acting as an inhibitor to us in driving this claim forward.

7. Quota-Free Promotion System, NUIM

Our fears as expressed in last year's report of this agreement becoming a victim of the national embargo on recruitment and promotion appear to be justified and, much to the annoyance of our members in Maynooth, all of their years of negotiation have now resulted in a stalemate.

8. Attempted Displacement, UCD

This issue has been resolved to the total satisfaction of our member concerned.

9. College Language Teachers, UCC

The creation of a second post of responsibility as had been agreed with IFUT was held up, again due to the Government embargo. However, following further negotiations and the assistance of the LRC a formula of words has now been agreed to resolve this issue and we expect the second post of responsibility to be filled shortly.

10. Workload Models/Academic Freedom, TCD

The document drawn up by our TCD Branch dealing with Workload Models and Academic Freedom is still held up by College Management. As this document was drawn up in response to a request by the Labour Court for TCD and IFUT to engage to agree on a protocol in this area, it may be necessary for us now to revert to the Labour Court to move this situation forward. Worryingly the current Provost of TCD recently sought to delete the word "tenure" from the TCD Statutes. This illustrates the mindset of certain Senior Management in the universities with regard to a fundamental aspect of the contract of academics.

11. Payment of PhD Fees, TCD

Following the referral of this issue to the Labour Court the matter has now been resolved to our members' full satisfaction.

12. Pensions for Ex-Carysfort Staff in TCD & NUIM

This issue is still winding its way through legal processes.

13. Library, TCD

We are currently pursuing a case for the granting of a Contract of Indefinite Duration to one of our members in the TCD Library. Also during the year IFUT Head Office was involved in talks with regard to the Staffing Structure in the Library. These talks are ongoing.

14. Library, NUIM

The claim for additional increments for our members in the Library in NUIM has stalled due to the current economic climate.

15. Unfair Dismissal, RCSI

IFUT was successful in having a Rights Commissioner declare a purported redundancy of one of our members to be an unfair dismissal. The Rights Commissioner recommended reinstatement of the employee concerned. RCSI has now appealed this decision to the Employment Appeals Tribunal.

16. Extension of Fixed-Term Contract, UCD

We succeeded in securing a temporary extension of a contract to allow a member to complete

aspects of her research.

17. Regularisation of Lecturers Contracts, Geography Department, UCC

UCC had failed on several occasions to implement an agreement on the regularisation to full-time status of 3 of our members in the Geography Department, UCC. At the time of writing it appears that this issue has been resolved to our satisfaction following the reference of the issue to the Labour Relations Commission.

18. Threat of Compulsory Redundancy, MICTL

A proposal to make one of our members in MICTL redundant with effect from 31 March 2010 was successfully resisted and the issue has since been resolved by an offer of redeployment. This issue was particularly important given that Management's actions appeared to have been based on the fact that this member was on a Contract of Indefinite Duration and as such they were treating her differently than 'an ordinary permanent worker'. Our victory establishes clearly that there is no such valid distinction and that a person on a CID is a permanent employee.

19. Pensions & Other Issues, MDIE

Management in the Mater Dei Institute of Education have been seeking to have our members there accept the imposition of the same pay cuts as were applied in the Public Sector generally and also the terms of the Pension Levy. IFUT's response has been that we would give consideration to such issues only when our members in Mater Dei were given the benefit of full cover in the State Pension Scheme which applies to our colleagues in the rest of the Public Sector. This issue is ongoing. Our members in Mater Dei are also participating simultaneously in an exercise dealing with the chronic underfunding of their current Private Pension arrangement.

20. Proposed Closure, Milltown Institute for Theology & Philosophy

Following the announcement by the Management of MITP of their intention to close the Institute, negotiations have proceeded to effect a redundancy settlement while also dealing with the issue of tenure. These negotiations are ongoing.

21. Individual Cases

Apart from the above disputes, IFUT Head Office was involved in numerous cases on behalf of individual members in TCD (two cases involving bullying and non-delivery of a promise of continued employment); UCD (claim for a Contract of Indefinite Duration); SPCD (European School breach of promise with regard to pension

arrangements for a seconded staff member); RCSI (complaints against Management including two members of IFUT on the Management team); NUIM (threat of dismissal of a Senior Manager); and MICTL (mediation arising from complaint by one member against another).

III. GENERAL CONTACTS

Irish Congress of Trade Unions

1.1 The most significant development in the past year was the election of the General Secretary to the Executive Council of Congress. This was a significant achievement not least because IFUT was the union with the lowest number of guaranteed first preference votes going into the election (we had two votes and the quota was 19). Following intensive lobbying and the accumulation of an impressive range of support, IFUT was elected on to the Council on the first count. Having a place on the EC has been of major benefit to IFUT in pushing forward our agenda for higher education amongst our colleagues in the wider trade union movement. It has also added significantly to our influence in the whole area of public policy, pay policy, social and political issues etc.

1.2 Public Services Committee The General Secretary continues as a member of the Public Services Committee of Congress. In the past year there have been more meetings of this committee than ever in its history due to the nature of the extremely difficult industrial relations situation. This commitment is extremely time-consuming, but unavoidable.

1.3 Other ICTU Committees IFUT is represented on the following committees:

Health & Safety Advisory Committee: Mike McKillen, TCD.

Retired Workers' Committee: Colum Ó Cléirigh, SPCD.

Solidarity Committee: Iain Atack, TCD.

Task Force on Bullying in the Workplace: Kevin Davison, NUIG; Rosarii Griffin, MICTL; and Brian Ó Curnáin, DIAS.

2. Teacher Unions

We continued to work very closely with our colleagues in the ASTI, TUI and INTO. As in the case of the Public Services Committee of Congress, the number of meetings which have been held of the four teacher unions is out of all proportion to previous practise. However, this level of engagement is crucial if we are to maintain a

consistent and unified approach in defence not just of our members' interest but of the entire Education Sector itself.

We also maintained excellent relations with the teacher unions in Northern Ireland, in particular UCU, UTU and NASUWT.

3. Trades Councils

Our representatives on Trades Councils are as follows:

Dublin Council of Trade Unions: Hugh Gibbons, President.

Cork Council of Trade Unions: Michael Delargey, UCC.

Galway Council of Trade Unions: Liam Carroll, NUIG.

Kildare Council of Trade Unions: Rose Malone, NUIM.

Limerick Council of Trade Unions: Tony Bonfield, MICL.

4. Union of Students in Ireland (USI)

Relations with USI continued to be very good. The General Secretary was one of the main speakers at a USI Rally against the re-introduction of undergraduate fees. IFUT and USI also issued a joint statement on the damaging effects of the recruitment embargo.

At European level EI and the European Students' Union (ESU) have signed a mutual support agreement.

IFUT Head Office makes extensive use of student newspapers in all of the colleges to get across our views on topical issues in education.

5. International Work

5.1 BIGTU IFUT plays an active influential role in the British & Irish Group of Trade Unions which meets twice per year.

5.2 HERSC The Higher Education & Research Standing Committee of Education International is probably the most important international body representing the interests of higher education staff. IFUT has played a prominent part in HERSC ever since the foundation of that organisation and we continue to be very involved and engaged and indeed influential in the deliberations of this important body.

5.3 ETUCE/EIPES IFUT is a member of the European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) and also the Education International Pan-European Structure (EIPES). In common with most other members of both organisations, IFUT has worked for several years to achieve a rationalisation and unification of both structures in the European context. After many years of negotiation a proposal to

merge the two organisations narrowly failed to get the requisite two-thirds majority at a conference in Warsaw in November. This conference was held on the same day as our National Stoppage 24 November 2009. This was a significant setback and IFUT is committed to working with our colleagues to try to revive the impetus for unity as soon as possible.

5.4 EQAR IFUT is represented on the European Quality Assurance Register by Daire Keogh, SPCD. Daire has established a significant international reputation in the area of quality assurance as it relates to the Higher Education Sector.

5.5 TUAC TUAC is the Trade Union Advisory Committee of the OECD. Meetings are held twice per annum and IFUT has attempted to be represented at as many of them as possible. A particular focus of our interventions at TUAC meetings has been to draw attention to the very neo-liberal aspect of OECD pronouncements, in particular with regard to higher education. In conjunction with our international colleagues we have also been very active in trying to dissuade the OECD from giving undeserved recognition to the international ranking of higher institutions.

6. SCOTENS

Philomena Donnelly, SPCD is the nominee of IFUT on this body.

7. International Labour Organisation

During the course of the year the General Secretary was requested by EI to represent higher education at an ILO Workshop designed to draw up a Best Practice Toolkit for Human Resources Policy in the Education Sector. This document which will be published shortly will be distributed by the ILO to governments and higher education institutions world-wide.

8. Haiti

The Executive decided to donate €2,000 on behalf of IFUT members for the relief of suffering following the Earthquake in Haiti.

This donation was channelled through Education International and the Haitian Teachers' Union.

9. Ethical Purchasing

During the year the Executive agreed to switch our meetings and conferences, as far as practicable, to hotels which recognise the right of their employees to be represented by a trade union.

We hope this will demonstrate that IFUT is willing to play its small part in combating the

widespread exploitation which exists in the Hotels Industry. Local Branches are urged to adopt a similar policy.

IV. EDUCATION & RESEARCH

1. ESPVG

After many years of campaigning, IFUT succeeded in getting a place as of right on the Education Sector Performance Verification Group (ESPGV). We played a full and constructive part for the first few months of our tenure in this position but, regrettably or otherwise the ESPVG is now increasingly irrelevant given the collapse of 'T2016'.

2. National Council for Curriculum & Assessment

Rose Malone, NUIM proposed by IFUT and Michael Delargey, UCC nominated by the Minister are the two IFUT representatives on the NCCA Council. Also during the year Michael Finneran, MICL was nominated on to and accepted into membership of the Early Childhood & Primary Education Committee of the NCCA where he plays an important role.

3. Higher Education Authority

During the year IFUT continued to maintain a high level of contact with the HEA. We met with them and made our objections very clear to the Employment Control Framework for Higher Education which was promulgated by them. As a result of our representation and the lobbying by the universities the ECF was modified several times in the course of the year but it still remains a draconian instrument limiting if not totally precluding promotions and recruitment. There is no doubt that it is one of the most damaging edicts ever issued in its effect on the viability of our higher education system, in particular at university level. Arising from the Employment Control Framework IFUT has distributed to all Branches a Briefing Document with regard to our position on the Non-Filling of Vacancies. In short we have taken a decision that we will not collude with this run-down of the education system and our members will not take on additional duties without remuneration and will not fill vacancies which arise as a result of the recruitment embargo.

IFUT also took issue with the HEA over what we saw as their inspiration behind the proposal by UCD to introduce a 'Redundancy Statute'. This attempt was defeated at Governing Authority level in UCD primarily through the actions of our IFUT representatives. However, it is significant that a similar proposal has since been rolled out in NUIG and the IFUT Branch there is equally opposed to

any such Statute being incorporated.

4. Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG)

IFUT continues to be nominally a member of this Group. However, there have been no meetings in the past twelve months, at least not that we have been made aware of.

5. European Sectoral Social Dialogue for Education

The proposal to setup a Sectoral Social Dialogue for Education continues to make progress. An organisation representing education employers on a Pan-European basis was established during the course of the year and a formal proposal to the European Commission for approval for a Social Dialogue Structure has been lodged.

V. ORGANISATION & COMMUNICATIONS

1. Membership

The total membership of IFUT is 2,055 compared to 1,935 last year. The breakdown of this is as follows (last year's figures are in brackets): 1,548 (1,519) on higher rate of subscription, 135 (80) on lower, 44 (33) on leave of absence and 328 (303) retired. Details of Branches are given in Appendix A.

2. Executive and Trustees

As of 14 April 2010 the Executive had already met 12 times during the year.

The Members of the Executive are as: Hugh Gibbons, TCD (President); Liam Dowling, TCD; Joe Brady, UCD; John Dunnion, UCD; Michael Delargey, UCC; Seán Tobin, NUIG; Rose Malone, NUIM; Daire Keogh, SPCD; Deirdre McMahon, MICL; Anthony Harvey, RIA and David McKeon, CICE.

At a meeting of the Executive on 28 May 2009 Dr Daire Keogh of SPCD was unanimously re-elected as Vice President-Finance.

The Executive agreed that each member should take responsibility for a specific portfolio and these were allocated as follows:

Tenure & Related Matters: Michael Delargey, UCC.

Equality: Rose Malone, NUIM

Cursaí Gaeilge: Seán Tobin, NUIG

International Issues: Daire Keogh, SPCD

Recruitment: David McKeon, CICE

Administration & Finance: Daire Keogh, SPCD

IFUT Website: John Dunnion, UCD

Publications: Anthony Harvey, RIA and Deirdre McMahon, MICL

Services to Members: Joe Brady, UCD

Bologna Process: Deirdre McMahon, MICL

The following **Trustees** were elected at the

2009 ADC: Breandán Ó Cochláin, NUIG; Maureen Killeavy, UCD; and Colum Ó Cléirigh, SPCD.

3. Council

The Council met three times during the year.

4. Report of the Equality Committee

The Equality Committee's work during the year was concentrated on analysing the gender imbalance in IFUT and a questionnaire has been prepared which be issued shortly.

5. Media

The past year was a good one in terms of our visibility in the print and broadcast media. Apart from certain high profile references to IFUT and our place in the Higher Education Sector, we also are pleased to announce that we are now routinely contacted by journalists in connection with stories relative to this sector. It seems to be now accepted by the media that when it comes to academic affairs and higher education that IFUT is an essential port of call.

6. IFUT Website

The website continued to be used extensively during the year and the feedback from members is universally positive. We are now working on proposals to develop even more sophisticated and targeted communications systems such as 'linked-in' UCC, members' forums on the website, twitter, face book etc. As with many such endeavours the possibilities are endless and the limitations mainly come down to our own resources and the fact that annoyingly each day still only has 24 hours.

7. IFUT Badges

We produced a specially designed badge for IFUT members during the course of the year and this was launched at a very successful formal occasion. The badge has been widely distributed and a new batch has been ordered from the suppliers.

Also during the year we commissioned a special ceremonial badge and ribbon for Past-Presidents of IFUT and this has been presented to each of our contactable Past Presidents.

8. IFUT Staff

The Executive discussed the Federation's staffing levels on a number of occasions during the year. It was noted that we still rely on two people to run the business of the Federation despite significant increases in workload and membership numbers.

A decision was taken to move to the appointment of an Assistant General Secretary on at least a part-time basis, but not to rule out a full-time appointment if resources allow.

*Mike Jennings,
General Secretary,
24 April 2010*

IFUT Initials

AH	All Hallows College
APSCEH	Association of Professional Staffs in Colleges of Education & Humanities
CB	Central Branch
CICE	Church of Ireland College of Education, Rathmines, Dublin
CITC	Church of Ireland Theological College
DDH	Dublin Dental Hospital
DIAS	Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies
HRB	Health Research Board
MDIE	Mater Dei Institute of Education
MICL	Mary Immaculate College, Limerick
MITP	Milltown Institute of Theology & Philosophy
NUIG	National University of Ireland, Galway
NUIM	National University of Ireland, Maynooth
RCSI	Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland
RIA	Royal Irish Academy
ST A	St Angela's College, Lough Gill, Sligo
ST C	St Catherine's College of Home Economics, Sion Hill, Dublin
SPCD	St Patrick's College, Drumcondra, Dublin
SPM	St Patrick's College, Maynooth (Pontifical)
TCD	Trinity College Dublin
UCC	University College Cork
UCD	University College Dublin

APPENDIX A

BRANCHES, BRANCH SECRETARIES & CENTRAL BRANCH CONVENORS 2009/10

(First figure in brackets, current membership; second figure, last year's.)

- 1 Trinity College Dublin (403/408) & Dublin Dental Hospital (16/14)**
Secretary – Aidan Seery, Education
DDH Contact - Frank Houston, Restorative Dentistry
- 2 University College Dublin (391/366)**
Secretary – Russell Higgs, Mathematics
- 3 University College Cork (434/394)**
Secretary – Angela Flynn, Nursing & Midwifery
- 4 National University of Ireland, Galway (95/89)**
Secretary – Mary Cawley, Geography
- 5 National University of Ireland, Maynooth (243/231)**
Secretary – Peter Murray, Sociology
- 6 Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (67/67)**
Secretary – Elizabeth Doyle, Student Affairs
- 7 St Patrick's College, Drumcondra (143/135)**
Secretary – Orla Nic Aodha, Library
- 8 Church of Ireland College of Education (17/15)**
CICE Convenor – Finian O'Shea, Education
- 8 Mary Immaculate College, Limerick (153/145)**
Secretary – Deirdre McMahon, History
- 9 Central (93/85)**
ALL HALLOWS COLLEGE (1/0)
Convenor – Bernadette Flanagan, Spirituality

CHURCH OF IRELAND THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE (1/3)
Convenor – Patrick Comerford, Spiritual Formation

HEALTH RESEARCH BOARD (3/3)
Convenor - Joan Byrne, Microbiology

DUBLIN INSTITUTE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES (17/17)
Convenor (Senior Professors/Registrar Group) - Fergus Kelly, Celtic Studies
Convenor (Non-Sen. Prof. Staff Group) - Malachy McKenna, Celtic Studies

MATER DEI INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION (27/18)
Convenor – Noel Jackson, IT Services

ROYAL IRISH ACADEMY (21/20)
Convenor - Anthony Harvey, Dictionary of Medieval Latin from Celtic Sources

MILLTOWN INSTITUTE OF THEOLOGY & PHILOSOPHY (11/12)
Convenor – Gesa Thiessen, Systematic Theology

ST CATHERINE'S COLLEGE OF EDUCATION FOR HOME ECONOMICS - c/o Head Office (11/11)
EX-CARYSFORT - c/o Head Office (1/1)

APPENDIX B

COUNCIL & EXECUTIVE 2009/10

*(Executive: President and 8 Members)

BRANCH ENTITLEMENT

DEPARTMENT

TCD 8/9 + Pres

Dónall A. MacDónaill
*Hugh Gibbons (Pres)
Aidan Seery
Pat Wall
*Liam Dowling
Darryl Jones
Mícheál O'Siochrú
Cormac Ó Cuilleanáin
Gobnait Byrne

Chemistry
Computer Science & Statistics
Education
Education
Electronic & Electrical Engineering
English
History
Italian
Nursing & Midwifery

UCD 8/9

Paddy O'Flynn
*John Dunnion
Marie Clarke
Donal Fitzsimons
Maureen Killeavy
*Joe Brady
Russell Higgs
Regina Joye

Chemical Engineering
Computer Science
Education
Education
Education
Geography
Mathematics
Nursing & Midwifery

UCC 9/9

Mike Murphy
Michael Creed
David Murphy
*Michael Delargey
Tom Andrews
Angela Flynn
Michael Mansfield
Bridget McAdam-O'Connell
Sorcha Healy

Applied Psychology
Civil & Environmental Engineering
Computer Science
Education
Nursing & Midwifery
Nursing & Midwifery
Physics
Sociology
Tyndall National Institute

NUIG 4/5

Breandán Ó Cochláin
Catherine Emerson
*Seán Tobin
Agnes Tully

Chemistry
French
Mathematics
Nursing

NUIM 5/7

Joe Larragy
*Rose Malone
Detta Dickinson
Colin Coulter
Peter Murray

Applied Social Studies
Education
Mathematics
Sociology
Sociology

RCSI 0/4

MICL 5/6

Tony Bonfield
Michael Finneran
Rosarii Griffin

Education
Education
Global Development through Education

Deirdre McMahon
Patrick Connolly

History
Theology & Religious Studies

SPCD 6/6

David Millar
Maev O'Brien
Pat Burke
*Daire Keogh
Colum Ó Cléirigh
John O'Flynn (*alternate*)
Joe Travers

Educational Research Centre
Education
English
History
Music
Music
Special Education

CICE 2/2

Lucy Turley
*David McKeon

Art
Education

CENTRAL 3/5

*Anthony Harvey
Joan Byrne
Gesa Elsbeth Thiessen

DMLCS, RIA
Microbiology, HRB-TCD
Systematic Theology, MITP

NOTE

In addition to the President ex officio, there were entitlements to 62 representative places, of which 50 were filled. Therefore, there were 50 people on Council out of a potential 61.

APPENDIX C

IFUT COMMITTEES & WORKING GROUPS 2009/10

Standing Committee

EQUALITY

Marie Clarke	Education, UCD
Maureen Killeavy (<i>Secretary</i>)	Education, UCD
Nóirín Ní Nuadháin	Adult Education-English, SPCD
Anne Clune	English, TCD
Catherine Emerson	French, NUIG
Grace Neville	French, UCC
Angela Ryan	French, UCC
Joan Byrne	Microbiology, HRB
Colum Ó Cléirigh	Music, SPCD
Noreen Kearney	Social Studies, TCD

APPENDIX D

IFUT AFFILIATIONS, MEMBERSHIPS & ASSOCIATIONS 2009/10

Irish Congress of Trade Unions (ICTU)
& its Councils of Trade Unions in Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Kildare

British and Irish Group of Teacher Unions (BIGTU)

IFUT-NIAC Liaison – (Nth Ireland Advisory Committee/University & College Union)

Education International (EI)
& its EI Pan-European Structure (EIPES) *
& its Higher Education & Research Standing Committee (HERSC)
European Trade Union Committee for Education (ETUCE) *

People's College (ICTU)

National Women's Council of Ireland (NWCi)

Network for Education and Academic Rights (NEAR)

Society for Research into Higher Education (SRHE)

Irish Labour History Society (ILHS)

* EIPES covers all of Europe, while ETUCE operates as an autonomous unit within this on the basis of EU-EFTA membership.

B. PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

Dr Hugh Gibbons, Computer Science, TCD

Fraternal Delegates, Guests, Delegates, Colleagues and Friends, it is a great pleasure to welcome you to the Annual Delegate Conference of the Irish Federation of University Teachers.

Ireland is renowned as the Island of Saints and Scholars but that refers to Ireland 14 hundred years ago. Today we have little or no saints and due to the Government and its consultants we will have little or no Scholars either. The Government is ruining a successful University system.

The Irish University system has always had to struggle and was never properly funded even during the years of the Celtic Tiger era. In 1996 the Notre Dame Football team played the Navy football team in Croke Park. It was reported then that Notre Dame had just finalised a 300 million dollar deal for the TV rights for their football games. At the time, this was more than the total Government core grant to the University system.

Recall also that during the nineties the Philanthropist, Chuck Feeney, donated an estimated one billion dollars to the Irish University system. His attitude was that rather than give his tax dollars to the US Government, he would give away his money to more worthy causes. What Chuck Feeney's billion achieved in the nineties (e.g. the Helix in DCU etc.) will give one some idea of the value of a billion which seems to be devalued today in the billions that have been donated by the Government to the banks. Even so, a devaluated billion would now be very welcomed by the Universities.

In spite of underfunding, the Irish University system is a successful university system. According to the Irish Independent at the end of last month (John Walsh 26th March) an EU study reported that

- Irish graduates are the most highly employable in Europe;
- Irish universities have the highest graduation rate in Europe;
- Ireland has the highest percentage of graduates in Europe;
- Universities in Ireland, Finland and Sweden are given the highest 'excellence' rating by academics in other EU countries.

The EU study indicated that Ireland is at the top of the 'efficiency' league table and the Independent quoted Professor Jim Browne, president of NUI Galway, who said the study was a clear vindication of the efficiency of the Irish university system.

The Heads of the Irish Universities regularly report that the Irish University system is about half the cost per student as an equivalent UK University, for example, Queens Belfast, never mind the likes of Oxford or Cambridge.

It is a testament to the Irish University system that it can achieve so much on so little.

Unlike the banks and other such institutions the Universities are not and were not profligate. On the contrary they are generally well organised and have not been involved in scandals that have plagued institutions such as the banks. Yet public money is available for those who squandered billions. Twenty two billion euro of taxpayer's money is donated to the Anglo Irish Bank, more billions is donated to the other banks and multi billions to NAMA but there is no money to invest in the public service or to invest in the Education sector in particular. Is it the case that the incompetent get rewarded while the competent are punished?

Embargo

The Universities are being ruined by the Government Embargo and Moratorium.

Posts in Universities remain vacant as the Government refuses to allow the filling of vacancies. As a result departments are struggling to maintain their courses. In the rare case, the Government has had to relent and allow an academic post to be refilled but then only on a contract basis. Is the strategy to make all academic posts contract posts so as to avoid tenured posts?

The promotions systems in the Universities has been put in abeyance and staff who hear the good news that they have been promoted then hear the bad news that they will not be paid their new salary.

For staff who take on extra responsibilities, like being Head of Department, the allowances have been withdrawn. Who would want to take on extra responsibilities in this situation?

Cuts in the Core Grant

The Universities will be ruined by the latest cuts in the core grant. Not that Trinity College is singled out as all universities are affected by the cut in their core grant but Trinity College is about to lose 27 million out of their core grant of 105 million. How is this 27 million cut to be managed. Cutting the salaries of staff has already been done and so that is a saving. Bring in more students! TCD intends to augment the current 10,000 undergraduate students with 3,000 more. Some new blood lecturing posts will be allowed, about 20 I am told i.e. 1 new academic staff member per 150 students and all these new posts will be on contract. This number of new staff is nowhere near what will be required. There is no mention of additional support staff.

Let me tell you about the parable of the donkey. The story goes about a donkey owner on the beach. The owner considers a magnificent scheme for saving money. He decides to put the donkey on half rations for a week. On half rations the donkey operates fine, it seems. After the week and having saved lots of money the owner decides that he can save even more if he puts the donkey on even less rations. The donkey begins to slow and to encourage the performance of the donkey the owner resorts to the stick. Time goes on as the owner continues this cost saving approach. Then the donkey dies.

That is how the Government is treating the Universities

Research

It is clear from the EU study mentioned above that the Irish University system is successful in graduating students with highly regarded qualifications and so the Universities have great success in teaching.

The Universities have also great success in research. Due to a great influx in funding for research through the likes of the SFI, the universities have very successful research. Even when research money was rare, the Universities managed to do highly regarded research.

In the early nineties according to a reliable source who worked then in the Department of Finance, the Department was very reluctant to fund University research even though the Universities were constantly lobbying for research funding. At that time the Department of Finance considered that funding University research would only be a subsidy to big companies and if the companies wanted the Universities to do research for them, then the companies should pay for it themselves. That attitude should be put in place now by adding a small levy to the corporate tax. This levy could be ring-fenced for education since some of the corporations are very concerned about our underfunded education system.

The only research the Dept. of Finance is interested in is research that would give rise to a commercial return and this mostly relates to Science and Engineering research. While initially the Dept of Finance was reluctant to fund University research, in the late nineties the Dept changed its mind and in 2000 the Government set up Science Foundation Ireland (SFI).

Did this sudden burst of research money save the Universities from their underfunding? While the research funding was very welcomed by the Universities it brought its own problems. Initially, SFI refused to pay the social costs of the professional researchers and so it was left to the Universities to pay for the social costs such as holiday pay, maternity leave, pension contributions etc. Since the SFI funding was ring-fenced for research the Universities were left to pay millions for the social costs. In effect, the Universities were subsidising SFI. Eventually the Government was persuaded to force SFI to pay the social costs.

The Universities employ hundreds of professional researchers mostly on contracts funded by SFI and these professional researchers are generally the lower paid in the academic world. Like all public service workers they suffer the 7% pension levy which does not go to their pensions, if they have any. They also suffer the recent 7% public service cut in salary.

Universities carry out all kinds of research; research that is socially useful, research that investigates the fundamental properties of nature, research in mathematics, research into our history, languages, culture, education and even economics. Also pursued is research that is commercially relevant. Only the commercially relevant research is funded by funding bodies like SFI, other university research is funded by the University or by philanthropists etc.

Much of University research is opportunity driven rather than mission driven. I am quoting here from Professor Edsger Dijkstra, who was a distinguished Computer Scientist at the University of Texas in Austin.

He adds:

This, by the way, is why managers hate much of university research: because it is not mission-oriented, they cannot manage it.

To understand Government funding for research, Dijkstra invites us to take part in a thought experiment. Imagine, he says, if Alchemy and Chemistry co-existed and were competing for research funding. Needless to say, almost all the funding goes to Alchemists, who in their effort to make gold from cheap base metals, address the Government's highest social concern of how to make money from nothing. The Chemists are

derided as none of their work contributes anything to the central problem of gold-making. When Chemistry then makes assumptions about the fundamental properties of matter that would exclude gold-making, it is accused of being counter productive, demoralising and harmful to the national interest. By the time Chemistry accurately predicts the failure of Alchemy, derision turns to hostility and accused of wasting taxpayer's money several Universities are forced to close down their Chemistry departments.

Dijkstra also had a sense for the mischievous.

He considered himself Chairman of the Board of the fictional company Mathematics Inc., that he imagined commercialised the production of mathematical theorems in the same way that software companies had commercialised the production of computer programs. Mathematics Inc. had a proof of the Riemann Hypothesis which of course was a company Trade Secret. The imaginary company demanded royalties from any mathematician who assumed the Riemann Hypothesis in their proof.

The Riemann Hypothesis has yet to be solved. Should mathematicians continue to work on such a problem when the best mathematicians so far have failed. This problem is one of the Millennium Prize Problems and so anyone who solves it gets a million dollars from the Clay Mathematics Institute. Will the solving of this problem have any commercial value? Not particularly except for the million dollars to the winner.

Academic Freedom

As mentioned Universities are involved in many various areas of research and much of that research is opportunity driven and seeks knowledge for its own sake. Should Universities have the right to pursue knowledge for its own sake?

At the International Conference convened by UNESCO in 1950, in Nice, the Universities of the World stipulated three indissociable principles for which every university should stand, namely:

- the right to pursue knowledge for its own sake and to follow wherever the search for truth may lead;
- the tolerance of divergent opinion and freedom from political interference;
- the obligation as social institutions to promote, through teaching and research, the principles of freedom and justice, of human dignity and solidarity, and to develop mutually material and moral aid on an international level. "

At the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education (2009), section #37 of the Communiqué states "For the quality and integrity of higher education, it is important that academic staff has opportunities for research and scholarship. Academic freedom is a fundamental value that must be protected in today's evolving and volatile global environment."

The Irish Government has signed up to this UNESCO Communiqué.

These internationally-recognised principles of academic freedom are recognised in The Universities Act, 1997.

"a member of the academic staff of a university shall have the freedom, within the law, in his or her teaching, research and any other activities either in or outside the university, to question and test received wisdom, to put forward new ideas and to state controversial or unpopular opinions and shall not be disadvantaged, or subject to less favourable treatment by the university, for the exercise of that freedom."

The Universities Act also recognises the Autonomy of Universities. The Government should properly support the Universities in their research and teaching and not interfere or try and control what the Universities do. Let the Universities get on with the job they are good at.

Benchmarking and Croke Park Proposals

Last year in the context of the economic crisis, the then IFUT President Joe Brady, referred to 'sharing the pain'. He said:

"I can see the necessity to 'share' the problem but it really galls me that those who now invite me to share the pain did not invite me to share the gain, nor would they ever do so in the future. Remember Benchmarking I and Benchmarking II? We hope to get out of this pit in the not too distant future but I wonder if future gains will be shared on the same basis as the pain?"

Recall in Benchmarking 1, that academics in general received the lowest award, of 3%. In Benchmarking II, the award was lower still, 0%. Academics gained little from Benchmarking. While Benchmarking was marketed as an attempt to equalise public and private pay, one of its main goals was the breaking of relativities. The relativity of academics to posts in the Civil Service was broken and since then the pay scales of the Civil Servants have gone ahead of academics.

Let me try and tell you how Benchmarking worked.

I was involved in organising the Job Evaluation Exercise in TCD on both Benchmarking occasions. The Job Evaluation Exercise, dreamed up by the Government consultants, applied to all 300,000 public service workers and a sample number of staff from each category of work were asked to fill in the same form. The form involved answering about 20 questions, for example; education qualifications, responsibilities, health and safety etc. I could not see how the form could differentiate all the possible categories in the Public Service. I asked the senior civil servant involved how this Job Evaluation Exercise worked in determining the Benchmarking awards. To take an example, a sample lecturer fills in the form. The Consultants involved in the Job Evaluation Exercise would give the filled in answers an overall score, let us say 42. Then the Consultants looked up their private workers categories to look for a category that had the score of 42. It did not matter if the private and public categories were comparable. We have no idea what category in the private sector was compared to the category of lecturer. All that mattered was the score of 42. This just does not make sense.

Consider as well all the time since then that was wasted in filling in the Action Plans forms for both the Sustaining Progress Agreement and the Towards 2016 agreement.

Even after the unions filled in all the Action Plan forms for Towards 2016, the Government decided to pull out of Towards 2016 and refused to pay the 3.5% increment due in 2008. Worse was to come in the following Budgets. Through the tax levies and the Public Service cuts of the so called Pension Levy and the recent direct pay cut, the salary of a public service worker has been reduced by 20%. As one's pay could be regarded as a right like a private property right, the only way the Government could cut Public Service pay was to change the law of the land and that is what the Government did.

Was there a Public Service Strike because of this? There was but just for one day on 24th November last. This strike day was unique for IFUT as it was the first time they went out on strike for about 30 years. IFUT with the other ICTU unions completely closed Trinity for the day, another unique happening.

Could things get worse? Indeed they did. The unions are now asked to sign up to the Croke Park Proposals. These proposals have been referred to as revolutionary proposals; counter revolutionary is more to the point. If these proposals are imposed then they will set back the hard won rights and conditions of public service workers by years. These proposals are not about savings in the University system but to control and interfere. The Government is more concerned about creating University Inc. and to sell education for profit. There is no profit in pursuing knowledge for its own sake and rights like academic freedom are obstacles to a free market in education.

The IFUT Executive has unanimously rejected the Croke Park proposals and recommends to members to reject them as well in a ballot.

IFUT is affiliated to ICTU and also is part of the Public Service Committee. There is the possibility that the members of other public service unions will accept the Croke Park proposals. Fair enough, but that does not mean that should IFUT members reject the proposals they will then be obliged to accept them just because other unions have accepted the proposals.

In 2003, the biennial conference of ICTU passed the following motion:

"This conference respects the integrity of each union or group of unions in both the negotiation of the conditions of service of their members and the decision-making process in relation to any such negotiation. This conference directs the Executive Council to respect these principles in any future negotiations towards any proposed national agreements, and to utilise approaches such as the local bargaining clause in the PCW in order to implement such principles."

This is ICTU policy. This implies that it is only IFUT, as a union, that determines the pay and conditions of its members.

Consider the following from the Croke Park Proposals in the section: 'University and other Higher Education Institutes'.

"A comprehensive review and revision of employment contracts to identify and remove any impediments to the development of an optimum teaching, learning and research environment. This review and revision to be completed in advance of the start of the 2010/11 academic year."

The contract that a worker has is between them and their employer. It is acknowledged that one's union can help set up a contract for a category of staff but in the end it is the member who signs the contract. In this context and the fact that academics have the right to academic freedom and tenure would such a comprehensive review and revision improve the contract of members, I think not. IFUT should not agree to any review or revision of the contracts of its members.

Consider another clause from the same section:

"Co-operation with redeployment/re-organisation/rationalisation arising from the review of Higher Education strategy and changing economic and social circumstances."

This review of Higher Education strategy has yet to be done and so how could anyone expect members to co-operate with the unknown. Let us see the review first and then we will consider our response.

In regard to the Croke Park clause:

'Co-operation with the introduction of work load management and full economic costing [FEC] models and with the compilation of associated data to support these'

IFUT has already a policy on this. It advises members not to co-operate with Work Load or FEC models that are not negotiated and agreed with the union.

As mentioned the IFUT Executive recommends rejection of the Croke Park proposals and I urge members of IFUT to do likewise.

Finally,

I mentioned at the beginning that we have little or no saints, but IFUT has an angel in Phyllis Russell who runs the IFUT Head Office.

As a union negotiator our General Secretary, Mike Jennings, may not be considered an angel by human resources personnel but to us he is our defender, defending the union both at a national level and at a local level in defending the rights of individual members.

The union is run by the Executive, Council and all the branch secretaries who unselfishly give their time and support to the union; without them we would not have a union.

After 3 years as President and one year as outgoing president, Joe Brady is stepping down. I thank Joe for his great support and commitment throughout the year. He will continue to be the conscience of the union and as one knows we do follow our conscience.

Thank You.

C. RESOLUTIONS & REMITTED MOTION 2010

RESOLUTIONS ON POLICY

Damage to Careers of Female Lecturing & Research Staff

This ADC strongly rejects the continuing policy of non replacement of staff on maternity leave, adoptive leave and sick leave as well as the retraction of SFI's eligible leave supplement for same. We call strongly for the government to recognise the serious damage being done predominantly to the careers of female lecturing and research staff.

Substitute Cover for Maternity Leave

ADC demands that the substitute cover for maternity leave is made statutory for the Irish university sector thus allowing women participate on an equal basis as men within this sector.

Substitute Cover for Medical Leave

ADC demands that substitute cover for medical leave is made statutory for the Irish university sector.

European Science Foundation

This ADC calls upon the editors of academic journals in the Humanities in Ireland to disengage their publications from the European Science Foundation's so-called "European Reference Index for the Humanities", since the latter is fundamentally flawed both in concept and in methodology and is dangerous in the uses to which it might be put.

Institutional Bullying

This ADC condemns the level of institutional bullying which is being experienced by IFUT members. This ADC calls on IFUT to raise awareness of this issue and to urge the relevant bodies to take steps to eliminate bullying in third-level institutions.

Career Structure in Colleges of Education and Humanities

The ADC is alarmed by the threat to undermine recent painstaking, yet modest, progress in the career structure in the Colleges of Education and Humanities. It calls on IFUT to take every measure possible to defend career structures from further deterioration and to restore this progress.

University Funding

This ADC mandates the Executive to continue to highlight the underfunding of our universities and higher education generally.

We note that universities are more and more forced to rely on private funding and the recent controversy regarding so-called grade inflation illustrates that private companies will not hesitate to use their influence to interfere in academic affairs.

If private businesses genuinely wish to assist financially in the funding of higher education without interfering with the integrity of academic standards or diluting Academic Freedom, they could demonstrate their good intentions by asking for a set percentage of corporate taxes to be ring-fenced for higher education.

Equal Rights for Gay & Lesbian Couples

IFUT supports full and equal rights for gay and lesbian couples in the State in the matter of marriage.

Public Service Pensions

This ADC notes the serious concerns of members regarding suggestions from some spokespersons that the current conditions attached to public service pensions may be changed by government. We also note the considerable stress that this issue is causing to members, particularly those who are close to retirement.

We call upon IFUT to work with other public service unions and through ICTU, to resist any change to the conditions attached to public service pensions.

Public Sector Pensions Rights

The ADC calls on IFUT to resist any changes to public sector pension rights and to condemn the government's lack of clarity regarding its proposals.

Pension and Pay Cuts on Public Service Workers

IFUT condemns the savage pension and pay cuts on public service workers to pay for the amoral practices of individuals and banks and calls upon any in-coming government to reverse these cuts and acknowledge the contribution to Irish society by third-level education along with the general public service.

Introduction of 10 year Academic Contracts

IFUT expressly opposes any attempts by University management to introduce medium to longer term academic contracts to replace permanent contracts.

Fixed-Term Contracts

This ADC declares its total opposition to the instruction issued by the HEA that such limited number of appointments as are exempted from the embargo on recruitment must all be offered as Fixed-Term Contracts only.

This decision is contrary to the terms of several European Court of Justice Rulings on the Fixed-Term Workers' Directive and, if persisted with, will totally undermine the whole concept of academic tenure.

The ADC mandates the Executive to campaign politically and industrially to have this HEA decision rescinded.

Casualisation of Education

ADC calls upon the in-coming executive to condemn the casualisation of education and examine the role of part-time and contract lecturers and those without contract in the Irish university sector with a view to monitoring and furthering their working conditions.

Loss of Expertise due to Retirement and Early Retirement

We propose that where there is significant loss of expertise and experience in departments within the Colleges of Education due to retirement and early retirements, and in cognisance of a very recently acquired career structure that transparent processes for dialogue be mandatory between management and staff in order to have discussions on changing work conditions and some agreed vision for future development of programmes and continued delivery of quality education. Lack of discussion and information makes planning for the next academic year an impossibility.

“Croke Park Proposals”

This ADC notes and endorses the decision of the IFUT Executive, arrived at at its meeting of Wednesday 14 April 2010 to put the “Croke Park Proposals” out to ballot by all IFUT members with a recommendation for rejection.

This ADC resolves to respect the wishes of the members as will be expressed in this ballot.

The ADC further resolves that any resolutions regarding threatened industrial action should only be put to members if/when it is clear what it is that they will be responding to by such a threat.

Pay & Conditions of Public Sector Workers

This ADC condemns the use of ‘public interest’ legislation by the government to diminish the pay and conditions of public sector workers, leading to a circumstance in which people now enjoy rights only as long as the State chooses to permit such rights to exist; a position which is not a hallmark of a democratic society. This ADC calls upon IFUT to use its influence among our fellow unions and the ICTU to develop a coherent and effective opposition to such legislation, including constitutional challenge.

Grade Inflation

This ADC, noting that the recent controversy regarding ‘Grade Inflation illustrates:

- That the former Minister for Education was much more attentive to the pronouncements of the Chief Executives of private corporations than to the concerns of academic staff or students or higher education management;
- That the maintenance of the integrity of our academic grading system requires the continued deployment of traditional university quality control systems viz. a robust system of peer review combined with significant engagement by academically qualified externs;

- That we need to restore the teaching of undergraduates to its rightful place as one of the core and central functions of a university;
- That the pursuit of a high position in superficial international rankings can distract emphasis from this core function and distort the other main purpose of the university – the conduct of research – into areas where funding is more important than originality and short-term applicability is more prized than truly pioneering, ground-breaking discovery;

calls upon IFUT to take the appropriate steps to ensure that such fabricated controversies are not permitted to become the vehicle and justification to diminish university autonomy.

REMITTED MOTION

Review of Governance of Primary Teacher Colleges of Education in Ireland

ADC Calls for a HEA / DES review of the governance of Primary Teacher Colleges of Education in Ireland with a view to democratising state funded colleges.

RULES

Rule 9 (a) has been amended as follows:

“Council shall meet at least three times per year and may decide to hold one or more of these meetings outside Dublin.”

Rule 9 (h) has been reworded as follows:

“The Incoming or Outgoing President (as appropriate) shall chair meetings of Council. In his/her absence the Vice-President (Finance) shall take the chair and in his/her absence, one of the members of Council, chosen by the meeting, shall take the chair.”