

Notes on Women in STEM committee meeting July 23 2019

1. SAGE action plan

What does Lesley Hughes/the Dean/SAGE want us to accomplish? (Evidence-based fixing the system approach.)

What would we like to accomplish on this committee?

What are the key issues that we **need** to address? How to communicate with our staff and with the GESAT?

- We are asked to develop approaches to fixing the system. We can work with HR in some regards, and we can try to influence hiring policies or PDR policies or promotion policies within the Faculty or a single Department by trialling ideas in a small scale to demonstrate what works.
- Recruitment is a key issue: wording of ads, we discussed various unis which have advertised female only positions – mixed views on whether this helps the women who are then appointed.
- An example of a local trial is anonymised recruitment – creating a spreadsheet of the applicants – no names, no genders - to review for shortlisting meeting. In some cases we may choose not to do this to ensure a gender balanced short list.)
- WOMEEESA is building a database of women (or men) who are available for speaking or looking for jobs.
- See the new Academy of Sciences website – listing women across the Sciences who are interested in mentoring, board membership, outreach, research expertise/collaboration etc. Please sign up! <https://www.stemwomen.org.au>
- STEMMINIST bookclub features books on STEM and gender – online discussion and meetups including MQ – find out about them on twitter – we should promote the bookclub – founded by Dr Caroline Ford. Current book is Angela Saini “Superior” <https://twitter.com/stemminist> This helps us form networks and build support. Also Women in Engineering and IT symposium being run by UTS and UNSW this year – Yijiao is helping with organisation. More ideas – Lean In email list and Lean In Circles; Franklin Women Newsletter and Franklin Society (for Women in Life and Health Sciences).
- Our committee may need a new philosophy to become a D&I committee (and new membership). Some members prefer to work for women in STEM. Suggestion: create a Faculty D&I committee and make Women in STEM a subcommittee of that committee? Also create a new D&I website and post our women in STEM website on that one. Need to ensure that our efforts are not diluted. Roberta believes that D&I can benefit women. We will also retain our Twitter handle. @STEMwomenMQ (please follow!)
- The EBA has new “teaching leadership” roles – these enable people to progress through to level E in promotion. We discussed whether this would help or not help women – we should challenge stereotypes of women as teaching focussed, or less research intensive, but in some disciplines there are some excellent women who are teaching focussed, and it is good to give them opportunities to progress.

2. Preliminary faculty data for March 31 2019

Positive:

Gender pay-gap is relatively small at every level (less than university average)

People taking carer’s leave are both men and women

Negative:

Women who apply for positions at MQ do at least as well as men who apply, but not enough women apply.

To make any impact on recruitment we need a more diverse pool of applicants

Proportion of women applying for promotion is lower than the proportion of women in the pool at each level. (Do women feel they have the “leadership” credentials? Are they given opportunities to develop these credentials? Do women feel recognised and rewarded for their service roles?)

Promotion to level D is less successful across the university (not just our faculty and not just women).

- Strategies for improving recruitment: advertise level B/C not just level C. Advertise more than 1 position at once. Review wording of advert carefully. Promote the advert to your network and actively encourage women to apply.
- Consider referee letters carefully – provide feedback to referees if their letter is highly gendered.
- Promotion – should we encourage women to apply? We really need to mentor them (1 to 1) so they understand how to present MQ their achievements and skills in each area (not what they are going to do but what they have done). We also need to give them opportunities to progress and demonstrate leadership. This could be part of the PDR process but it does not feel like that is working in the intended way at present. Professional staff may feel that PDR is ok?
- PDR should be an opportunity for career level discussions – need to remove barriers to having these discussions in a supportive way, or offer independent mentoring. Rosemary gave an example of promotion workshops in her dept. Each area of contribution is discussed in a separate workshop and the achievements at different levels are reviewed. It is transparent so everyone in the department knows what the others are doing (teaching, research, service) as they are a small department with high teaching expectations.
- Rosemary’s first questions in PDR: What makes you happy? What is not making you happy?

3. Faculty Diversity and Inclusion Committee Draft Terms of Reference

Executive Deans need to have Action plan in place by March 2020 (we may get an extension because our Dean is leaving in August)

Feedback on these Terms of Reference?

- Need a new meeting to go through the draft Terms of Reference. TBD after we have had a chat to Bernard.

4. Formation of a Faculty Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Committee

Do we morph into the EDI committee or start a new committee?

Call for volunteers/nominations/co-options? Ensure representation from diverse groups not just male/female.

Who wants to join the GESAT as Faculty representatives? Which Departments have EDI committees?

How do we maintain the umbrella structure of the Faculty committee containing reps from the department committees, and feeding reps to the University GESAT committee?

- Rob, Heather, Kerrie and Judith will aim to consult Bernard Mans about his expectations (as Interim Executive Dean) for the new committee. This will come to the next meeting later in August.