



# Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science



Trinity College Dublin | The University of Dublin  
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## FEMS News

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EMS News



Contact us:

### From the Dean's Desk

Welcome to the first edition of FEMS News, an e-newsletter for the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science. We want you to know what's happening in your Faculty, especially so that you can contribute to decision-making. This newsletter is therefore intended to provide information to those who may not receive it through School or Course channels. We are inviting contributions from all areas of the Faculty especially from our representatives on Board and Council, other committees and groups, from union and student representatives. Hopefully in that way, we can help contribute to a balanced debate on issues for decision in College.

We now have a functioning office at 27-29 Westland Row, accessible from the Hamilton Concourse and a full team of support people. Please feel free to come down and see us!

Some major issues which I am grappling with at present, are dealing with the financial situation and how it impacts on College and the Faculty, maintaining academic standards, maintaining and improving the principle of academic primacy in College Governance, maintaining and improving value for money from support services. The financial situation has disimproved with the deterioration in the State's finances. College has suffered cuts in real terms from HEA funding for some years. In this calendar year we have seen a reduction of funding of approx. 5%.

This has led to us having to make savings of that order across College. FEMS has made its savings mainly from fortuitous resignations and retirements, and from various budgets such as Special Skills, self-financing courses, pay and non-pay budgets. I have worked with School Heads to try to minimise effects on provision of service of these savings.

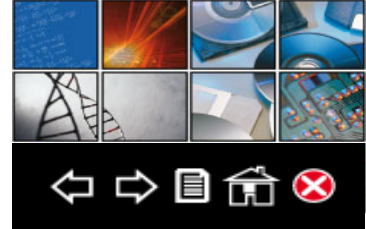
Internally the Faculty faces a difficult financial time, with Board discussing possible adjustments to ARAM which mainly have a negative financial effect on FEMS. This could add to the overall deficits that all faculties face with HEA-derived income not keeping pace with inflationary pay awards. As Dean I have tried to inform all our decision-makers on the consequences to FEMS, ARAM and College of making adjustments to ARAM, which leads to large swings in income for Schools.

The new structures in College are starting to take shape, and as Dean I seem to be involved in most of these new Groups, Committees, etc. These include:

The Executive Officer Group, which consists of Provost, Vice-Provost-Chief Academic Officer, 3 Faculty Deans and Chief Operating Officer, with some others in attendance, concentrates on policy and strategy, and feeds proposals into Board.

The Academic Management Group has all members of the Officers group, and meets monthly to exchange information and views on academic matters.

A new Estates Strategy Group has been set up under the COO and includes 3 Faculty Deans, to streamline campus development and property issues. This



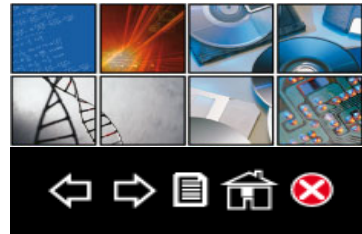
Group will feed well-developed proposals into the Site and Faculties Committee.

A sub-group of Executive Officers Group (Funding Group) has been set up to deal with the financial situation. This group is working on providing a true picture of our finances with projections over 5 years, with the intention of firstly providing information to Board and the College community, and subsequently monitoring the financial situation and impact over time as new policies develop on education and research. This group will evolve in to a Strategic Planning Group in the New Year.

Recently I met the student representatives from FEMS to hear their views on College affairs, and to collate some of these concerns for FEMS Executive and specific Schools. I hope we will meet regularly to provide a channel of communication from students to staff.

We have come to the end of another Term. I hope everyone will be able to take a well-deserved holiday and come back refreshed in the New Year.

**Dean, Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science**



## Research

### Call for papers – Journal of Postgraduate Research

The call is now open for submission to the Journal of Postgraduate Research 2008/2009. The journal is published annually by your Graduate Students' Union and aims to showcase the entire breadth of Trinity's research talent. It presents you with a great opportunity to publish part of your work in a peer-reviewed journal before you receive your postgraduate degree and compete for the prize of best paper, rewarded with €500. Submissions should be academic papers not exceeding a word count of 5,500, include an abstract of up to 200 words and be prepared according to the Chicago Manual of Style (with endnotes rather than footnotes). **Deadline for submission is Friday, 20th of February 2009.**

In the past years the JPR submissions from the Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics and Science have lagged behind the numbers of students in Arts disciplines, so the GSU would particularly like to encourage scientific papers this year. To this end, two new categories of submission will be accepted for Volume 8

**Group papers:** These should be articles from up to three authors giving an overview of the work carried out in your broader research group, focusing on a specific theme of research. These papers should be concise and accessible to a lay reader and explain clearly the academic context in which this research is done.

**Correspondences:** These are shorter papers that can include preliminary results or describe a work in progress.

Take a look at last year's JPR here <http://www.gsu.tcd.ie/publications/JPR/2007-8>.

Submissions should be brought to the GSU Office in House 6 in hard copy, with contact details.

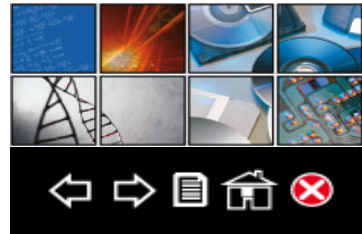
### ISA Medal Awarded

Mr. Conor Gaffney, a doctoral student in the School of Computer Science and Statistics, has been awarded the Irish Software Association Student Medal for 'the most innovative and commercially viable software product or service'. The competition was of a very high standard with applicants from across the Irish university and higher education sector.

The research was carried out as part of the ADAPT research project on personalised eLearning and supervised by Prof Vinny Wade, Head of the Schools Intelligent Systems Research Laboratory. The ADAPT project is an interdisciplinary project involving both the Department of Computer Science (Prof Vinny Wade and Dr Declan Dagger) and the Department of Psychiatry (Prof Michael Gill and Dr Brian Fitzgerald) in Trinity College.

The project has been researching the use of personalised simulation to achieve more effective and efficient soft skills learning and training. In particular the research has been applied in higher education as well as in corporate learning contexts. In TCD, it is being researched to help teach medical students (in Psychiatry) interview skills, by simulating interviews with mentally ill patients.

It is a great indication as to the quality of the postgraduate research being conducted in TCD.



### **SFI Funding Schemes**

Science Foundation Ireland has launched several new funding schemes. For further details visit:

[http://www.sfi.ie/content/content.asp?section\\_id=605&language\\_id=1](http://www.sfi.ie/content/content.asp?section_id=605&language_id=1)

## **Dates for the Diary**

- 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2009 -Trinity College Science Ball (see below)
- 20<sup>th</sup> February, 2009 – Deadline submission of papers to Postgraduate Journal of Research
- Schedule of Meetings of the Faculty Executive are available on the Faculty website:

<http://www.ems.tcd.ie/local/>

### **Science Ball**

Premier Social Event for Science Students in Trinity.

Venue: Clontarf Castle Hotel

Date: 4th February 2009

Tickets will be available from stands in the Hamilton Building in weeks leading up to the event and will also be available from class reps where required.

## **Working Groups/ Committees Items**

The current phase of the work of the Statutes Review Working Party is coming to an end: after widespread consultation, initial drafting is all but complete, and it is hoped to publish a first full draft early in Hilary Term '09.

The activity of the Working Party has been aided immeasurably by thoughtful and valuable contributions from every element of the College community, and it is hoped that you all will continue to share your views/ with the team. Visit:

<http://www.tcd.ie/local/statutes/haveyoursay.php>

## **Media**

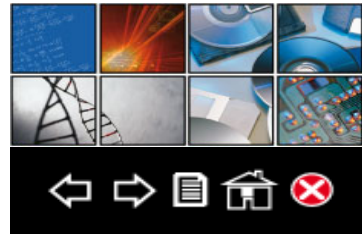
### **Communications**

The Dean and the Faculty Administrator met with the Communications Office to discuss the publicity requirements of the Faculty for the forthcoming academic year including how to proactively identify stories/ articles. Suggestions of appropriate items from the Schools are welcomed. (Email: [butlerv@tcd.ie](mailto:butlerv@tcd.ie) ) It is hoped to submit at least 1 article a month, please avail of this resource and publicise the good work that is on-going in the Faculty.

### **In the Press**

Recent articles featuring the Faculty or TCD are available from the Communications Office. Faculty specific articles are circulated to all Schools as appropriate.

Please also see the following website: <http://www.tcd.ie/Communications/news/pressreleases/>



## EMS Faculty Office Updates

### Faculty Office:

- **Website** - The Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science website is live: please visit <http://www.ems.tcd.ie/>
- **Venue** - Faculty Conference Room is now refurbished and available for bookings. (~20 people). If you would like to avail of this facility please contact Ms Sonya O'Connell [oconneso@tcd.ie]
- **Office Staff** – The following are the staff of the Faculty Office. Please contact us if you have any queries or we can be of any assistance:
  - Ms Victoria Butler** – Faculty Administrator (ext. 1474)
  - Ms Cara Ryan** – Faculty Human Resources Advisor (ext. 3967)
  - Mr. John Donaghy** – Faculty Finance Advisor (ext. 2102)
  - Ms Sonya O'Connell** – Executive Officer (ext. 2291)

### Administration

#### Faculty Safety Committee

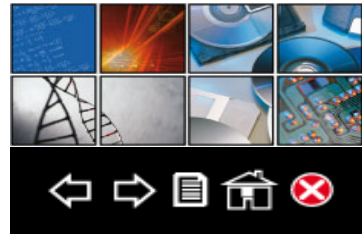
It is proposed to hold the first meeting of the Faculty Safety Committee in early January. If you have any items you would like to place on the agenda please contact your School Representative or Ms Victoria Butler (butlerv@tcd.ie)

#### Meetings

The Faculty Administrators, from across the 3 faculties meet fortnightly with the Academic Secretary for information sharing and to ensure consistency across College. It is hoped that these meetings combined with the meetings of the School Administrators will provide a forum for discussion where ideas can be shared and any issues can be identified and resolved, allowing the Faculty to process business as efficiently and effectively as possible. If there are any specific issues for the Faculty please do not hesitate to contact Ms Victoria Butler on [butlerv@tcd.ie](mailto:butlerv@tcd.ie).

#### Centralised Print Management Working Groups

Following a proposal from the Chief Operating Officer, a working group has been formed to examine a proposal for a centralised print management contract. The Faculty Administrator has been nominated to represent the Faculty on the group which is co-ordinated by Mr. Ben Hartnett, Procurement & Contracts Officer.



## Human Resources

### Policy Changes

Three new policies were launched in late 2008:

#### 1. The Faculty of Engineering, Mathematics & Science Personnel and Appointments Policy & Procedure

This document contains detail on the new procedure to follow in relation to processing Staffing Submissions following the dissolution of PAC in October 2008. It also contains all the forms you will require when making staffing applications to the EMS. A separate sheet is included which gives information on which forms to use on which occasions. These are the forms which **MUST** be used in future. Submissions to the Faculty Executive Committee should be made to the Faculty HR Advisor 10 working days before the meeting date. All meeting and submission dates are available on our website. This procedure also located on the Faculty website.

#### 2. Supporting Staff with Disabilities Guidelines for Staff and Managers

The official launch for this new programme was on the 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2008 in the Atrium. For your information, the assistance of the Disability Service is now available for both Staff and Students in the future. Further information on this new initiative is located at:  
[http://www.tcd.ie/disability/staff/staff\\_with\\_disab.php](http://www.tcd.ie/disability/staff/staff_with_disab.php)

#### 3. Dignity & Respect Policy

This policy was launched in August 2008; details of the new policy are available at:  
[http://www.tcd.ie/Staff\\_Office/policies/healthsafety/DIGNITY\\_AND\\_RESPECT.pdf](http://www.tcd.ie/Staff_Office/policies/healthsafety/DIGNITY_AND_RESPECT.pdf)

The Staff Office is running a Training course for staff in the New Year. The course is aimed at Managers/Heads of Schools involved in investigating cases under the College's new Dignity and Respect Policy. It aims to give the skills to enable staff to investigate cases under the policy.

The Staff Office is also running a number of Awareness Sessions open to all staff. This course is to raise awareness on the policy, procedures, supports available to staff, and the roles of responsibilities of everyone involved in the policy. If you would like to get involved in either aspect, please contact Ms Cara Ryan on [ryanc9@tcd.ie](mailto:ryanc9@tcd.ie) or ext 3967 to book a place.

### Recruitment

New Recruitment Procedures were approved in August 2008 and are located on the Staff Office website at:

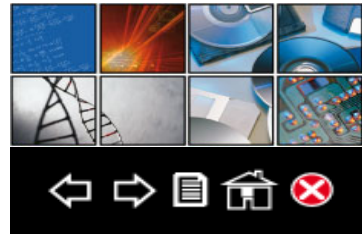
[http://www.tcd.ie/Staff\\_Office/recruit/pdf/College%20Recruitment%20Procedures%202008.pdf](http://www.tcd.ie/Staff_Office/recruit/pdf/College%20Recruitment%20Procedures%202008.pdf)

Please note particularly the new requirements around the role and responsibilities of selection committees and the short listing process in general. It also contains newly published information detailing the restrictions placed on Advertising posts internally/externally.

### Equality Project – “A Day in the Life”

In a joint initiative organised with the other Faculty HR Advisors we applied and were granted an allocation from this years Equality Fund to run a series of journals/articles entitled “A Day in the Life” over 5 months from January to May 2009. The theme of the project is to promote an inclusive college community in the hope of raising the level of awareness and understanding of one another's roles and responsibilities within this and the other faculties. Expressions of Interest are sought from all Staff in the Faculty in the positions of Head of School, (Junior) Lecturer, Executive Officer, Technical Officer and an Under-Graduate Student in 1<sup>st</sup> Year to contribute an article for the Series under the above heading. The article will be published on the Faculty website and there will be a prize for the winning entry. For more information on this project, please contact Ms Cara Ryan on [ryanc9@tcd.ie](mailto:ryanc9@tcd.ie) or ext 3967.

All staff within the Faculty are encouraged to contact the HR Advisor with any suggestions or comments they have in relation to HR practice, policy or otherwise in the Faculty.



## Finance

### e- Strategy

A meeting was recently held in the Treasurer's Office to discuss the proposed implementation of a College e-Strategy. It is envisaged that a College wide IS review will be undertaken to assess current and future information requirements. Thereafter the goal will be to implement IS solutions to meet these future information requirements with the expressed aims of co-ordinating and interlinking systems that currently operate independently of each other i.e. SAS, HR & Finance

### Information Seminar

For the first time, a Treasurers Office Information Seminar will be held in the Faculty. It will take place on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> February from 10am – 12.30pm, exact venue TBC. Topics covered will include coding and general ledger, accounts payable, research, procurement, accounts receivable and taxation. This seminar will also give Faculty staff the opportunity to meet some of their colleagues from Treasurers Office.

If you would like to confirm your attendance at this seminar, please contact John Donaghy (Faculty Financial Advisor) at [donaghj@tcd.ie](mailto:donaghj@tcd.ie) or on ext 2102.

Also, if there are any further items that you would like added to the agenda or if there members of the Treasurer's Office staff you would specifically like to meet, then please advise John directly.

### Faculty Finance

As noted by the Dean much financial debate and decision making is on-going in College at present. If you have any queries, comments or issues please do not hesitate to contact the Faculty Finance Advisor @ [donaghj@tcd.ie](mailto:donaghj@tcd.ie)

For details on the role of the Faculty Advisor you can also consult the recently updated Treasurer's Office website:

[http://www.tcd.ie/Treasurers\\_Office/finadvisors/index.php](http://www.tcd.ie/Treasurers_Office/finadvisors/index.php)



*Merry Christmas and every good wish for 2009 from all in the Faculty Office!*

### Contact Details

We welcome your comments on any of the items featured above

Alternatively, if you have something you would like to include in the next edition, please contact us on:

[fems@tcd.ie](mailto:fems@tcd.ie)

PH: 01-896 2291

