Sister-Matic: Gender Mainstreaming in Higher Education

Professor Louise Morley
Centre for Higher Education and Equity Research (CHEER)
University of Sussex, UK

http://www.sussex.ac.uk/education/cheer
What is Gender Mainstreaming?

- Linguistic antithesis of gender marginalisation.
- New conceptual grammar for reform.
- International phenomenon.
- Widely used tool of the policy world.
- Strategy originally informed by feminist theory.
- Long-term strategy, with different stages of development.

Rescuing gender from invisibility in:

- Organisational planning
- Resource allocation
- Institutional practices.
Essential Ingredients

• Data
• Accountability/Evidence
• Policy Action/Implementation, not symbolism
• Strategic Planning NOT crisis or grievance management
• Systematic Change Interventions
• Professional Development
• Review/ Impact Evaluation
• Leadership
Challenges

• Gender = access, disadvantage and remediation (fix the women).

• HE products and processes = gender neutral.

• Power and privilege = under-theorisation.

• Gender rarely intersected with other structures of inequality.

• Sustainability
What Gender Mainstreaming is Not?

- Just Quantitative Change/Gender as a Noun
- Simply counting more women into existing:
  - Structures
  - Scripts
  - Systems
  - Gendered cultures
- Representation not the only goal for gender equality.
- Problem = the gendered world.
Gender as a Verb

Gendered power relations:

- Symbolically/ materially
  
- Construct
- Regulate

women’s everyday experiences.

Gender is:

- formed and reformed

in organisational cultures and social contexts.
Tools/Interventions

- Gender audit
- Gender-disaggregated statistics
- Equality indicators
- Engendered budgets
- Gender-impact assessments
- Gender monitoring and evaluation
- Visioning
Change Interventions

- **Excellentia, Austria**  
  (Leitner and Wroblewski, 2008)

- **Gender Programme, Association of Commonwealth Universities**  
  (Morley et al., 2006)

- **Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU)**  
  (Benediktsdotir, 2008)

- **Athena Swan/ Gender Charter Marks/ Aurora**  
  (http://www.ecu.ac.uk/our-projects/gender-charter-mark)
Norwegian University of Science and Technology (NTNU) Gender Mainstreaming

• Gender analysis;
• Gender policy development;
• Appointment of equality advisors;
• Committees for equality issues that report to high level management;
• The allocation of a budget for equal opportunity;
• Quotas for recruitment;
• Qualification stipends;
• Mentoring for female PhD students, Postdoctoral staff and associate professors;
• Networking;
• A start package for women in male dominated fields;
• Career planning support for women;
• Mentoring and career counselling support is offered for women entering HE management.

Impact
• 55% increase in the numbers of women professors in 5 years (rising from 9% to 14%), and parity in the numbers of males and females recruited (Benediktsdotir, 2008).
UK Athena SWAN/ Gender Equality Charter

• Established 2005 by UK’s Equality Challenge Unit for STEMM.
• Humanities and Social Sciences in 2015.
• Methodology of self-assessment, peer-review and continuous progression.
• 3 levels of awards for institutions and individual departments: Bronze, Silver and Gold.
• Awards for increasing levels of good practice in recruiting, retaining and promoting women in higher education.
Impact

- Increased job satisfaction/visibility for gender issues
- Familiarity with promotion procedures
- Workload management
- Data Collection
  (www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/evaluating-athena-swan)

Contracts Compliance/ Leverage

- 2011 - Dame Sally Davies (Chief Medical Officer)
- Medical schools without a silver award would not be eligible for Department of Health research funding.
Moving On

- Accountability of gender in quantitative and qualitative terms.

- Leverage e.g. financial/ reputational

- Gender to be taken out of crisis mode and into proactive, resourced, strategic interventions e.g. affirmative action.

- Action, monitoring and impact evaluation.

- Ultimate Vision = organisations, societies and socio-cultural practices to be gender free.
Follow Up?


