

## BEING A FEMALE SCIENTIST IN USA by Dr Elisabeth Komives.

For the first seminar of this academic year, we had the pleasure of listening to Dr. Elisabeth Komives.

Born and raised in Wisconsin, she was one of the first students to decide to go to university outside Wisconsin. With the support of her parents, she decided to apply for the MIT to challenge herself. As she was a woman, she found it easier to enter to the MIT as there were not many at that time studying there. She told us how she realised in the MIT that she truly loved Chemistry and working on a lab and how because of that she entered in a program for undergraduate research.

Because of a bad experience with an advisor she had to leave and go to the UCSF, which at the end was better for her as she found a program that was better for her and an advisor that helped and taught her a lot despite the fact that, in words of another UCSF female student, didn't like women, a statement based on a bad experience of a friend of hers that didn't get along with him. She told us how she learned from this that you can come stronger after a bad experience and how important is to not rely only in one person's opinion.

After that she spoke about when she went to Harvard and about how important is to learn how to talk to your advisors. She had many work opportunities when she ended her studies because, in addition to her intelligence and being a very good chemist, she was a woman.

She got a tenure after finding some problems in the publication of her papers and after a lot of hard work and patience. She reminded us about the importance of standing for ourselves and not giving up if we find difficulties and also, that we shouldn't worry too much if one career path does not work because there are many others.

She ended her talk with a main message after answering to some of our questions and giving us some more advice: "do what you enjoy and love".