

## GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN UNIVERSITY MANAGEMENT

### 1. Background

The Graduate Certificate in University Management provides an avenue for prospective and current managers in higher education to develop the professional knowledge and skills that will enable them to work effectively in senior administrative and academic management roles in Australian universities. Enrolments will be open to University of Melbourne staff only in the first instance. In the second year of operation the course will be open to practising and prospective managers from outside the University. The program will be taught at the Parkville campus and will comprise four subjects. Three of these are core subjects taught within the Faculty of Education. The fourth subject is selected from three existing masters level subjects from the Faculty of Economics and Commerce. The program will be available from Semester 2, 2004.

As universities have grown and diversified, the demands on university administrators have similarly changed. The challenges of size, resulting from the development of mass higher education, have coupled with increasing accountability to government and, paradoxically, a simultaneous and growing market orientation. All these have created increased demand for skilled, professional managers to coordinate administrative and support services as infrastructure for the teaching and research that is the core business of higher education.

At the University of Melbourne in 2003, 53% of employees are general staff. (University of Melbourne Statistics 2003 Table 4.04) Many of these staff have, or aspire to, management roles. The proposed course will build on professional knowledge developed through work experience and undergraduate studies in another field and develop specialist skills and knowledge related to management in a university setting.

The course is primarily designed for practising administrators who are in or who seek promotion to roles at the department manager or program manager level or higher. That is, it is aimed primarily at staff with appointments at the HEW 5 to HEW 8 level. There were 1623 EFT staff at these levels at the University in 2003 (*ibid*).

The need for a course of this type was first identified by Human Resources and University Systems Project staff as a result of a perceived skills gap following the introduction of the Themis Finance system. In semester two 2003 the University funded 40 staff to undertake a postgraduate subject in the Faculty of Economics and Commerce *Accounting for Decision Makers*. Staff enrolled in the subject showed a significant level of interest in a postgraduate award course that would further develop management skills in a way that was directly applicable to the peculiarities of working in a university.

Four focus groups of University of Melbourne staff were organised (with a total of 44 participants) to seek information about potential demand and curriculum interests. Two groups were drawn from participants in the sponsored accounting subject, and the other two groups comprised staff who responded to an invitation in the University's *Staff News* weekly email bulletin. In general there was strong support for a postgraduate course that would allow participants to develop transferable management skills and to understand the complexities of the policy and organisational frameworks of higher education. The staff expressed interest in part-time, face-to-face learning that would link with their daily work.

The proposed course contributes directly to the 'Quality People' goal of the University's Strategic Plan. In particular the program will address the high turnover of HEW 5 - 7 staff who leave the University for career advancement. If the University is able to support these staff to undertake postgraduate study in university management, it is possible that more of this cohort will be considered for promotion and may feel a stronger commitment to working in higher education.

RMIT is the only other Victorian university that offers an accredited program in this field. The RMIT Graduate Certificate/Diploma in Leadership in Tertiary Institutions is specifically designed for staff at RMIT and content relates to RMIT policies and governance.

The Association of Tertiary Education Managers (ATEM) is the professional association for managers in higher education in Australian and New Zealand. ATEM is currently developing a framework for professional accreditation that may give recognition for postgraduate study of this type. The course outline was sent to the ATEM President and initial feedback is that the course content is consistent with current thinking about any formal qualification requirements for accreditation.

### Quality Assurance

A web search has revealed a number of programs in university management offered at universities in the United States of America, Canada and the United Kingdom. Most of these are designed for academic staff who take on administrative and leadership roles and therefore focus of academic co-ordination of courses and programs. Others, such as the University Management Course run by the Centre for Higher Education Research at the University of Manitoba emphasise financial, legal and HR skills without a focus on the higher education context.

The program with the closest overlap of intent is the Certificate of Advanced Studies (Higher Education) from the Graduate School of Education at Harvard University. However the proposed program at the University of Melbourne is distinctive because of its balance of theoretical and applied knowledge and its focus on the Australian higher education environment.

## **2. Course/Program Objectives**

The course will prepare graduates for management and leadership roles in Australian universities through a combination of seminars, skill practice, individual and group reflection and project work that relates to the participants' workplaces. At the completion of the course participants will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of higher education in Australia including policy framework and governance structures
- Demonstrate familiarity with some key theoretical explanations of universities as organisations
- Apply leadership and management strategies in a university context
- Demonstrate competence in specific business, planning and management skills in a university environment
- Reflect critically on their practice as university managers
- Analyse complex organisational issues and apply higher-order intellectual skills to these situations
- Work effectively as a member of a team, including contributing to group learning
- Continue to undertake self-directed learning

## **3. Entry Requirements**

An applicant may be eligible for entry into the Graduate Certificate in University Management if they have:

- Completed a bachelor's degree (in any discipline) and
- At least two years work experience in a university or other post-secondary education institution or equivalent

## Selection

The Selection Committee will evaluate the applicant's ability to succeed in the course using the following additional criteria:

- Undergraduate degree
- Current employment or work experience in a university or equivalent setting

## **4. Course structure**

Participants must complete 50 points to include:

XXX-XXX	Understanding Higher Education	12.5 points
XXX-XXX	Leading and Managing in a University	12.5 points
XXX-XXX	Strategy and Planning in Higher Education	12.5 points

Plus one of:

306-660	Accounting for Decision Making	12.5 points
325-640	Marketing Management	12.5 points
325-663	Human Resource Management	12.5 points

## **5. EFTSU and Budgetary Consequences**

This is a fee-paying course. It is hoped that the University will sponsor up to 40 staff members per annum to undertake the program: from 2005 it will be open to external applicants on a fee-paying basis..

As the course is offered on a part-time basis only it will not be available to international students at this stage.

### **Graduate Certificate in University Management – 50 credit points** (*new course*)

1. The Selection Committee will evaluate the applicant's ability to pursue successfully the course using the following additional criteria:
  - a three year Bachelor's degree in any discipline (or equivalent); and
  - at least two years of documented work experience in a university or other post-secondary education institution, or equivalent.