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THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
INTERIM BOARD OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES
MEETING 08/07

A meeting of the Interim Board of Undergraduate Studies was held at 2.15pm on **Friday 11 May 2007** in the **Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics, University of Melbourne.**

Secretary: Ms Karen Cairns
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(x47776)

Present: Professor Loane Skene (Chair), Ms Bree Ahrens, Professor Glenn Browning, Professor Cathy Falk, Professor Ruth Fincher, Professor Bruce Grundy, Professor Mark Hargreaves, Associate Professor Steve James, Associate Professor Ian Malkin, Professor Alistair Moffat, Ms Linda O'Brien, Professor Pip Pattison, Ms Joan Reese, Associate Professor Prem Bhalla (for Professor Richard Roush), Professor Jonty Stockdale and Associate Professor Christine Ure.

In attendance: Ms Karen Cairns (Secretary).

MINUTES

1. Formal Matters

1.1 Apologies

The Interim BUGS received apologies from Professor James Angus, Associate Professor Michelle Livett, Ms Gillian Luck, Dr Pat McLean, Professor Belinda Probert, Professor Peter Rathjen, Professor Richard Roush, Professor Ron Slocombe and Professor Greg Whitwell.

2. Minutes and Action Sheet

2.1 Minutes

The following amendments were made to the minutes of the previous meeting;

- Item 5.2 – ‘and this will continue to be the case’ was added to the end of the last sentence of the first paragraph
- Item 5.4 – the seventh dot point was amended to read ‘Will existing concurrent diplomas, such as those in information systems, creative arts and geographic information systems, be discontinued or recast in the new concurrent diploma format?’
- Item 5.4 – the first sentence of the second paragraph was amended to read ‘It was queried what consultation, discussion and strategising process had been undertaken in regard to the concurrent diplomas in Modern Languages, Music (Practical) and Mathematical Sciences and members were advised that only the Concurrent Diploma in Mathematical Sciences has recently been approved by Academic Board.’

With these amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 13 April 2007 (07/07) were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

2.2 Action Sheet

The action sheet was received. In regard to item no. 2 on honours, the Chair advised that a meeting of relevant parties is scheduled for later in May and that TALQAC is

also undertaking a review of documentation on honours with a view to achieving some consistency across all programs.

In regard to item no. 3 on orphan subjects, members expressed some confusion on this matter so the Chair agreed to seek further clarification from Professor Roush as to what he means by 'orphan subjects'; are they breadth subjects, legacy subjects or something else?

In regard to item no. 10 on mid-year entry into the BBiomed, the Chair of the BBiomed Course Standing Committee advised that there are some progression issues and that he will advise the Board on this matter at the next meeting.

3. Business Arising

3.1 Verbal Report From the Chair

The Chair conveyed to members a response from Professor Warren Bebbington addressing some concerns expressed by members at the previous meeting in regard to Open Day. The response clarifies that the only addition to past practice is that students will be encouraged to collect broad information packs on the new generation degrees at the marquee on University Square before they go to faculties/programs for more in-depth information.

The response reiterated that the Chair of each Course Standing Committee will be required on Open Day to present an information session on their respective degree once in the morning and once in the afternoon.

3.2 Administrative Responsibility for New Generation Degrees

Members expressed some concern in regard to processes and administrative responsibility for new generation degrees as they fall outside faculties and it is not clear where responsibility for various aspects of their administration will lie. The Chair indicated that the role of the Board, Course Standing Committees and faculties in new generation degrees has been raised with the MM08 Project Office and is a major item to be determined at the June Planning and Budget Conference. The Chair also advised members that, in order to inform this process, she is developing a list of functions for undergraduate programs that are currently undertaken by faculties and which will also need to be undertaken for the new generation degrees.

3.3 Subject Codes in the New Student Administration System

In addition to the discussion paper on subject codes in the new student administration system, which had been sent to members prior to the meeting, the Chair circulated a draft list of disciplines for consideration as 'areas of study' in Option A. Professor Pip Pattison also provided members with some further background on this matter. The following comments were made by members in regard to the discussion paper:

- A subject code that is meaningful to both staff and students is desirable
- Should subject codes have some correlation with DEST classifications?
- It would be useful to students if the subject code identified the fee payable for the subject
- With the current budget model, there is an issue with the subject code allocated to subjects taught across more than one department, particularly if the departments are also in different faculties
- In allocating subject codes which have some faculty or discipline specific identifiers in them, there is an issue with subjects which may be taught in multiple courses across different faculties

- It is essential that the year level be identified in the subject code

The Chair undertook to forward these comments to Ms Kim Stevenson-McBride.

3.4 Gender Studies Working Group

The Chair of the Bachelor of Arts Course Standing Committee (BA CSC) advised members that the Gender Studies Working Group had met yesterday for the second time and disbanded due to the Faculty of Arts curriculum review to be undertaken in second semester. The Chair of the BA CSC indicated that consultation with students would occur as part of the curriculum review.

As Ms Bree Ahrens, the student representative on the Board, was not present for this item, the Chair requested that the Chair of the BA CSC report this to Ms Ahrens and the Chair also undertook to email Ms Ahrens on this matter.

3.5 Concurrent Diplomas

Members discussed a document which provided responses from Professor Pip Pattison and the Chair to questions on concurrent diplomas which had been raised at the previous meeting. The following comments were made by members:

- If a concurrent diploma can be offered in any discipline, doesn't that go against the Melbourne Model where the number of undergraduate degrees has been significantly reduced?
- There is concern that undertaking a degree with a concurrent diploma could be seen as a 350 point double degree by stealth
- There are concerns about concurrent diplomas in terms of overloading, timetable issues and completion in three years alongside a degree.

The Chair noted that students will only be able to complete a second major as a concurrent diploma if it is offered as a concurrent diploma, and that there will not be a concurrent diploma offered in every major. If a department wishes to offer a concurrent diploma in a discipline, the proposal will need to be sent to the Interim BUGS for approval prior to being forwarded to UGPC. Members were requested to forward to the Chair any further comments or queries regarding concurrent diplomas.

3.6 Breadth Subjects in the New Generation Degrees

Members discussed the paper written by Associate Professor Michelle Livett, Chair of the Bachelor of Science Course Standing Committee (BSc CSC), on breadth in the BSc. Whilst specific to the BSc, the paper provides a template that could be used by other new generation degrees to describe to potential students what subjects they may take as breadth.

Due to the absence of Associate Professor Livett from the meeting, a query regarding Department of Information Systems subjects as breadth in the BSc, which also made reference to these subjects in the Bachelor of Commerce (BCom), could not be answered. *[Addendum: Subsequent to the meeting, Associate Professor Livett advised that this statement in the paper is not designed to be presented to students but to explain the BSc CSC's thinking to the Board. The reference to some Department of Information Systems subjects being designed to complement the core of the BCom was really a reference to the history of the subjects and it is not a good description for other purposes. It is the fact that the subjects offer ways of thinking and skills that contrast with the remainder of the BSc core that is vital to them being appropriate breadth for the BSc.]*

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Comments made by members on the paper, and its usefulness in providing a template for other new generation degrees, include the following:

- Members were impressed with the first page of the document in that it signposts a broad range of subjects on offer in other degrees as breadth, subject to pre-requisites and timetabling issues
- The paper provides a useful way of describing breadth to students and helping them to think through their breadth choices
- A similar paper on breadth for each new generation degree would be useful to departments wishing to offer breadth subjects as they can easily see in which degrees and which majors they may fit
- By indicating specific subjects as allowable for breadth, these subjects are somewhat 'privileged' in comparison to other subjects which could be taken as breadth but are not specified [*Addendum: Subsequent to the meeting, Associate Professor Livett advised that some BSc students are likely to seek guidance about the types of subjects which would be really valuable enhancements of the core subjects they complete in the BSc and the paper is an attempt to meet this need. However, there is not an intention to privilege these subjects and, if students have their own ideas about breadth, there would be no attempt to override these in any way. The intention is to strike a balance in advice to students that generates lively interest in choosing breadth from the diverse spectrum of available subjects, providing useful guidance without being too directive.*]
- Subjects which are complementary or contrasting to majors are both relevant as breadth
- There is some confusion in the meaning of 'complementary' as it can include diametrical opposites as well as everything in between
- CSC Chairs indicated that they could provide something similar to the seven points in the BSc paper to describe allowable breadth subjects for their respective degrees, and the Chair encouraged them to do this.

Members also expressed the following comments in regard to breadth subjects in general:

- Listing subjects in the handbook that are allowable as breadth for each course will be far too long and it may be better to have a description of what is not allowable as breadth for each course instead
- In order to accommodate all students who may wish to undertake a particular breadth subject, it may be necessary to offer more than one stream. Whilst large student numbers have resource implications for faculties, this approach may be necessary in preference to a 'first come, first served' approach to ensure that those students who enrol later are not disadvantaged
- Could it be possible in the new student administration system for students to enter their subjects for their major and then be able to view a list of allowable breadth subjects for which they have any necessary pre-requisites and no timetable clashes?
- It was suggested that a survey be undertaken on Open Day of potential students in each of the new generation degrees to assist in determining what subjects might be chosen as breadth and potential student numbers in these subjects

The Chair undertook to provide this feedback to Mr Russell Hillbrich to assist with timetabling of subjects in the new generation degrees.

3.7 Subject Pre-requisites in the New Generation Degrees

Members discussed issues involving individual subjects which do not have specific pre-requisites but are part of a course that has pre-requisites and which can be taken as breadth by new generation degree students who may not meet the course pre-requisites.

Members agreed that pre-requisites will be specified at the individual subject level rather than course level in future to ensure that only those students who have the necessary pre-requisites will be able to undertake a subject. In regard to sequences of subjects, second and third year level subjects will have the relevant earlier year level subject as a pre-requisite.

The matter of pre-requisites versus 'assumed knowledge' was discussed with members acknowledging that if 'assumed knowledge' is specified, a student who does not have this should have available to them bridging subjects to enable this knowledge to be gained.

4. Reports of activities relating to the Interim BUGS

None.

5. For information

None.

6. Any Other Business

None.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Interim Board of Undergraduate Studies will be held at 2.15pm, Friday 8th June 2007 in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics, University of Melbourne.

The meeting closed at 4.10pm

Distribution

Professor Loane Skene, Melbourne Law School (Chair)
Ms Joan Reese, Director, Melbourne Model Implementation
Professor Pip Pattison, President (Academic Board)
Ms Gillian Luck, Vice-Principal and Academic Registrar
Ms Linda O'Brien, Vice-Principal (Information Services)
Professor Philip Goad, Nominee of the Dean, Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning
Professor Alistair Moffat, Faculty of Engineering
Professor Belinda Probert, Dean, Faculty of Arts
Professor Margaret Abernethy, Dean, Faculty of Economics and Commerce
Professor Field Rickards, Dean, Faculty of Education
Professor Richard Roush, Dean, Faculty of Land and Food Resources
Professor Michael Crommelin, Dean, Faculty of Law
Associate Professor Ian Malkin, Associate Dean (Undergraduate), Faculty of Law
Professor James Angus, Dean, Faculty of MDHS
Professor Cathy Falk, Dean, Faculty of Music and Chair, Bachelor of Music Standing Committee
Professor Peter Rathjen, Dean, Faculty of Science
Professor Glenn Browning, Acting Dean, Faculty of Veterinary Science
Professor Jonty Stockdale, Head, School of Music, Victorian College of the Arts

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Associate Professor Steve James, Chair, Bachelor of Arts Standing Committee
Professor Greg Whitwell, Chair, Bachelor of Commerce Standing Committee
Professor Ruth Fincher, Chair, Bachelor of Environments Standing Committee
Associate Professor Michelle Livett, Chair, Bachelor of Science Standing Committee
Professor Mark Hargreaves, Chair, Bachelor of Biomedicine Standing Committee
Associate Professor Christine Ure, Associate Dean (Teacher Education), Faculty of Education
Ms Bree Ahrens, President, University of Melbourne Student Union
Ms Carmel Murphy, Director of Academic Programs (Student Access) (observer)
Dr Pat McLean, Manager, Growing Esteem Strategy Office (observer)

For Information

Professor Bruce Grundy, Deputy-Dean, Faculty of Economics and Commerce
Professor David Smith, Associate Dean (Academic), Faculty of Engineering
Professor David Chapman, Faculty of Land and Food Resources
Professor Bruce Singh, Associate Dean (Planning), Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences
Associate Professor Ian Holtham, Faculty of Music
Professor Andrea Hull, Director, Victorian College of the Arts
Professor Ron Slocombe, Chair, Graduate Programs Forum