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THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
INTERIM BOARD OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDIES
MEETING 09/07

A meeting of the Interim Board of Undergraduate Studies was held at 2.15pm on **Friday 8 June 2007** in the **Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics, University of Melbourne.**

Secretary: Ms Karen Cairns
kcairns@unimelb.edu.au
(x47776)

Present: Professor Loane Skene (Chair), Professor Margaret Abernethy, Professor Glenn Browning, Professor Cathy Falk, Professor Ruth Fincher, Professor Tony Goodwin (for Professor James Angus and Professor Mark Hargreaves), Associate Professor Steve James, Associate Professor Michelle Livett, Ms Gillian Luck, Associate Professor Ian Malkin, Professor Alistair Moffat, Professor Pip Pattison, Ms Joan Reese, Professor Richard Roush, Professor Ron Slocombe, Professor Jonty Stockdale, Associate Professor Christine Ure and Professor Greg Whitwell.

In attendance: Associate Professor Barry Hughes for Item 3.3, Ms Barbara Hammond for Item 3.4, Ms Heather Thomas for Item 6.1 and Ms Karen Cairns (Secretary).

MINUTES

1. Formal Matters

1.1 Apologies

The Interim BUGS received apologies from Professor James Angus, Professor Philip Goad, Professor Mark Hargreaves, Ms Linda O'Brien and Professor Belinda Probert.

2. Minutes and Action Sheet

2.1 Minutes

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

- Item 3.5 – the first dot point was amended to read '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?'
- Item 3.6 – the third last dot point on page 4 was amended to read '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.'

With these amendments, the minutes of the meeting held on 11 May 2007 (08/07) were confirmed as an accurate record of the meeting.

2.2 Action Sheet

The action sheet was received. In regard to item no. 3 on orphan subjects, this item can now be removed as Professor Roush has clarified that his reference to 'orphan subjects' refers to breadth subjects.

In regard to item no. 9 on mid-year entry into the Bachelor of Biomedicine (BBIomed), Professor Tony Goodwin on behalf of the Chair of the BBIomed Course Standing Committee advised that it will not be possible to have mid-year entry in the BBIomed due to pre-requisites required for progression in the course, particularly in second year. Due to the necessary first year subjects not being available in Summer, mid-year entry will extend the length of the degree by one semester.

Items no. 10, 11 and 13 have now been completed and can, therefore, be removed from the Action Sheet.

3. Business Arising

3.1 Verbal Report From the Chair

The Chair advised members that Professor Warren Bebbington had attended a meeting of Course Standing Committee Chairs to clarify some matters regarding Open Day.

In regard to administrative responsibility for new generation degrees, the Chair noted that this matter will be determined at the June Planning and Budget Conference.

Issues regarding honours are still being resolved.

Members were reminded that the following documentation is required from Course Standing Committees (CSCs) for the 13 July meeting of the Board:

- Revised course proposals incorporating all changes since the previous versions which were approved by Council in March. Complete copies of the course proposals are required with any amendments or additions since the previously approved version to be indicated in **bold type** for clarity
- A summary sheet to accompany each revised course proposal briefly indicating where changes have been made since the previously approved version; this is to assist the Undergraduate Programs Committee (UGPC) shepherds
- Subject handbook entries for all proposed new or substantially revised subjects for the new generation degrees, regardless of their year level. That is, subject handbook entries are required for all proposed new or substantially revised subjects for the new generation degrees, not just those which are to be taught in 2008. It should be indicated for each subject whether or not it is being offered as breadth.

All of this documentation is required for Open Day, timetabling and handbook reasons. Executive Officers of CSCs have already been advised of these requirements.

3.1.1 Subject Handbook Entries Received for Approval

The Chair advised members that subject handbook entries for some University Breadth Subjects have been received for consideration but that all University Breadth Subjects will be considered together at the next meeting. In addition, the majority of new or substantially revised subjects for the Bachelor of Music (BMus) have been submitted for consideration.

The Chair noted that some of the BMus subjects have quotas applied due to limited facilities being available, and invited the Chair of the BMus CSC to comment on the subjects submitted for consideration.

Professor Cathy Falk made the following comments on these subjects:

- Prerequisites indicate whether or not the subject is available as breadth to students undertaking new generation undergraduate degrees other than the BMus. If a subject is available as breadth, the prerequisite is indicated as 'By permission of the coordinator' as the student's musical knowledge appropriate to the subject needs to be determined prior to the student being accepted into the subject
- A number of elective subjects are offered at both 300 and 400 level to avoid classes being too small, and this may require some reconsideration in terms of current proposals regarding intellectual demands, assessment and subject codes of subjects with multiple year levels
- Ensemble subjects are complicated as students in different years can be in an orchestra together in different sub-groups. Issues in regard to this are being discussed in order to resolve them. Ms Gillian Luck agreed to advise the new student system project group of this matter.

Members expressed some concerns in regard to class participation in assessment. It is difficult to mark and it cannot be second marked. It was queried whether there is a general principle to be applied in regard to the maximum assessment attributable to class participation; the Chair and President of Academic Board undertook to check University policy on this matter and advise members.

The Board approved the new and substantially revised subjects submitted for the BMus and will recommend them to UGPC for approval.

3.2 Breadth Subjects in the New Generation Degrees

To assist in estimating demand for breadth subjects next year, the Chair advised that it has been suggested that Kwong Lee Dow scholars be surveyed on one of their visits to the University as to their preferred breadth subjects, rather than surveying potential students on Open Day. Change of preferences day is also another opportunity to survey potential students as to their preferred breadth subjects.

It was noted that any questions posed in regard to breadth subject choice will need to be consistent with the breadth policy for the specific new generation degree the potential student is considering in order to provide any useful data.

The Chair advised members that, due to the deadline for timetabling data, all University-wide Breadth Subjects planned to be taught in 2008 will be timetabled prior to being approved by the Board and UGPC, and will subsequently be withdrawn from the timetable if not approved. Further, all University-wide Breadth Subjects will be timetabled at the same time so that students will only be able to take a maximum of one University-wide Breadth Subject in each semester.

It was queried whether there will be a sunset clause on breadth subjects for which demand is not sufficient to make them viable. The Chair undertook to follow up on this matter and report back to members.

3.3 Melbourne Adjusted Grade Point Average

Associate Professor Barry Hughes spoke to his paper and noted that different disciplines have different marking cultures and that, with the move to graduate programs attracting undergraduate students from different disciplines, it is necessary to determine a way in which marks can be 'standardised' to assist in selection to

graduate programs. The Melbourne Adjusted Grade Point Average (MAGPA) achieves this as it is based on statistically adjusted results.

Members made the following comments in regard to the paper:

- How will the marks of students who have undertaken subjects as study abroad be dealt with?
- Will the diversity of students transferring to the University of Melbourne from abroad or from other institutions diminish the usefulness of the MAGPA?
- Students will want to be informed as to how the MAGPA is calculated if it affects their chances of selection into graduate programs
- If the MAGPA mark is 'visible', it will become the de facto 'real' mark; if it is 'invisible', then there will be complaints that there is no transparency
- Some concern was expressed that a student who achieves a mark in the 50's, which is a pass, may end up with a MAGPA below 50, which is a fail, and this would not be acceptable; it should be clear that a mark of 50 or above will always result in a MAGPA of 50 or above
- There was concern that the results achieved by students who undertake a subject as breadth and may not have much expertise in the subject matter may be somewhat different to students who take the same subject as part of their major and have substantial expertise in it, and yet both groups of students will be subject to the same MAGPA
- It was expressed that a code of conduct may be required as to when/how MAGPA is to be applied
- The algorithm needs to be able to be understood by staff who may be required to explain it to students
- An internationally acceptable score would be useful
- Raw marks as well as MAGPA marks on student transcripts would be useful

Associate Professor Barry Hughes took these comments on board and sought endorsement from the Board to undertake a trial of MAGPA in 2008, whilst acknowledging that much of the detail is still to be determined. The Board endorsed the recommendations in Associate Professor Hughes's paper and expressed support for going ahead with a trial of MAGPA in 2008.

3.4 Proposal for an Implementation Working Group

Ms Barbara Hammond spoke to her background paper on 'Leadership, Involvement and Volunteer Experience – Unit (LIVE)' and advised members that there is currently no overarching coordinating framework in the University for 'the Melbourne Experience' for students. This view was supported by Professor Pip Pattison who reiterated that valuable work is being undertaken in different parts of the University and there is a clear need for coordination.

Professor Pattison indicated her endorsement for the proposal to form an overarching working group to ensure that high level information sharing coordination and reporting of activities is facilitated, and Professor Pattison is willing to chair such a group. The Chair also noted that Ms Linda O'Brien, Vice-Principal Information, has advised via email of her support for the proposal and would welcome representation

from Information Services (IS) on the working group given the role that IS has in academic enrichment through the libraries, including special and cultural collections, and other e-learning and e-research initiatives.

The Chair and Professor Pattison noted that the Knowledge Transfer champions in each CSC, as well as representatives from the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Innovation & Development), would also be ideal members of the working group.

The Board recommended that an Implementation Working Group on the Melbourne Model distinctive experience for students be formed and that Professor Pattison chair this group with membership yet to be finalised. It was noted that the governance of this Working Group will be determined after the Mt Eliza Planning and Budget Conference.

3.5 Student Cohort Experience

Professor Pip Pattison spoke to the paper on 'The Cohort Experience' by the Academic Connectedness Advisory Group and requested that members provide her with any good examples of cohort experience activities in practice. These would be used to assist those who are currently developing cohort experience activities. Professor Pattison encouraged members to contact her with any comments or queries regarding the paper.

Members noted that a starting point for examples of cohort experience activities is the section on cohort experience in each of the course proposals for the new generation undergraduate degrees, and that the Melbourne Experience Committee could also provide some examples in practice. The Chair also noted that Ms Linda O'Brien, Vice-Principal Information, has advised via email that there are a number of initiatives within IS with respect to building student cohorts and that a list of these is currently being compiled.

The Board endorsed support for the recommendation in the paper.

4. Reports of activities relating to the Interim BUGS

None.

5. For information

None.

6. Any Other Business

6.1 Deferment Policy

Professor Pip Pattison spoke to the two policy proposal documents from the Policy and Procedures Working Group, particularly the policy draft on Deferment. Members were requested to provide any feedback directly to the Project Officer, Ms Heather Thomas.

6.2 Subjects with Multiple Year Levels

Professor Pip Pattison spoke to the 'Discussion Paper: Subjects with Multiple Year Levels' and indicated that it is an academic discussion that should occur regardless of the new student system, and that the impact of any decision made needs to be carefully considered.

Members made the following comments on this matter:

- There is a relatively short time line to address a problem that was not previously foreseen

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- If subjects offered at multiple year levels are split into different subject codes for each year level, this may be an issue when audits of low enrolment subjects are undertaken
- Languages are particularly messy in regard to multiple year levels as students may be at levels from beginners to advanced. Professor Pattison advised that a five level system for languages can be managed in the new student system
- The Chair of the Arts CSC advised that the Faculty of Arts is working on reducing subjects with multiple year levels over time but that this cannot be completed by 2008, although it is feasible that it could be completed for 2009
- It was queried whether there is a student perspective on subjects with multiple year levels. Professor Pattison advised that there is not yet a student perspective but that this will be achieved through consultation at UGPC.

The Board endorsed support for the recommendation in the paper and noted that Option 1 is preferred. Those developing new subjects should assign a single year level with intellectual demands, including assessment requirements, appropriate to the year level.

Existing subjects with multiple year levels can be allocated multiple subject codes for 2008 pending review in accordance with the paper's recommendation.

7. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Interim Board of Undergraduate Studies will be held at 2.15pm, Friday 13th July 2007 in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics, University of Melbourne.

The meeting closed at 4.15pm

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
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

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Ms Carmel Murphy, Director of Academic Programs (Student Access) (observer)
Dr Pat McLean, Manager, Growing Esteem Strategy Office (observer)

For Information

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

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