

Confirmed

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
POSTGRADUATE COURSEWORK PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

MEETING 1/08

Meeting 1/08 of the Postgraduate Coursework Programs Committee was held on Friday 15 February 2008 at 10.00 am in Moot Court, Old Quad.

Present: Ms S Beattie, Professor A Christie, Professor M Elgar, Mr R Hillbrich, Associate Professor R Misson (Chair), Associate Professor A O'Brien, Professor R Pettman, Mr A Scott, Professor G Stevens

In attendance: Ms K Cairns, Mr M Coyle (for item 4), Professor R James, Mr C Reid (Secretary)

BUSINESS

1 Formal Matters

1.1 Welcome to New Members

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed new members to the Committee.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Professor L Hawthorne, Professor B Lukas, Professor N Olekalns, Professor P Pattison, Professor R Slocombe, Professor R Speed and Ms T Tjia.

1.3 Terms of Reference of PCPC

The Committee noted the circulated statement of its terms of reference.

1.4 2008 Meeting Schedule

The Committee noted the meeting schedule for 2008, as circulated.

1.5 Appointment of Shepherds for 2008

The Committee noted the role of shepherds in providing advice to it on proposals submitted to it and advising faculties on the development of proposals. The Committee also noted that the statement would need to be updated to take account of the recently amended course approval processes. It was agreed that a draft allocation of shepherding responsibilities would be prepared in consultation with the Chair and circulated to members for approval.

1.6 Nominations to Committees

The Committee appointed the following nominees to University committees:

- Selection Procedures Committee – Professor Stevens
- Student Entry Pathways Sub-Committee – Professor Pettman
- Undergraduate Programs Committee – Professor Stevens

1.7 Electronic Distribution of Committee Meeting Papers

The Committee was advised that agenda papers would in future be made available electronically. Members could request printed copies to be circulated to them if they chose. It was anticipated that members could bring lap-top computers to meetings in the Jim Potter Meeting Room and view papers by this means.

2 Minutes

2.1 Minutes of meeting 13/07 (7 December 2007)

The Committee noted that the minutes of meeting 13/07 should indicate that Professor Elgar was present, item 6 of the minutes should refer to the Council of Australian Postgraduate Associations, and the minutes of meeting 12/07 should indicate that Ms Beattie had submitted an apology. With these notes, the minutes of meeting 13/07 were confirmed.

2.2 PCPC Action Sheet 13/07

The Committee noted the action sheet arising from the previous meeting. The following points were noted:

- The Chair indicated that he was following up item 8 concerning assessment in the School of Enterprise.
- In relation to the review of policies for group work in teaching and assessment, the Chair reported that the CSHE web-page has extensive advice on the use of group work. It was suggested that reference to the material on the CSHE web-page should be included in induction and orientation sessions for teaching staff. It was agreed to ask TALDEC to propose appropriate principles for the use of group work in teaching and assessment. A set of principles should address the provision of advice to staff on managing group work and the expectations of students undertaking group work. Faculties might be invited to submit a summary of their practices in relation to the use of group work in teaching and assessment. Ms Beattie indicated that she was willing to participate in the development of principles for group work in teaching and assessment.

3 Matters Arising Not Dealt with Elsewhere

3.1 Progress Rules for Students Undertaking Minor Theses

The Committee suggested that the matter of progress rules for students undertaking minor theses should be taken up by the Policy and Procedures Working Group.

4 Policy Issues

Mr Michael Coyle was in attendance for this item and he introduced the draft policies, indicating the matters that had been raised at UGPC and the amendments that had been made as a result. The Committee received the policy drafts listed below and made the comments indicated.

4.1 Leave of Absence Policy

In discussion, the following points were made:

- The lack of clarity of definitions, raised at UGPC, has been addressed.

- While the entitlement to leave should apply to all students, there may be some exceptions.
- The reference to ‘the relevant Student Centre or Graduate School’ should be rephrased as ‘the relevant faculty or graduate school student centre’.

The Committee asked members to submit any further comments directly to Mr Coyle.

4.2 Course Duration Policy

The Committee noted that the policy might prevent part-time students from undertaking a course over an extended period, even if they were successful in the completion of their studies, as they might exceed the time limit specified for its completion. This might unduly restrict the study opportunities of postgraduate students who often must juggle work and family commitments with study. The need for a time limit was argued on the basis that the effectiveness of a program might be diminished if the period of its completion were overly protracted. It was noted that, following a review of their case, a student could be given an extension of time. Grievance procedures could also be invoked. It was noted that the proposal would not apply to research degrees, for which a separate policy provides.

The Committee resolved to approve the policy and recommend approval by Academic Board, with Ms Beattie and Mr Scott voting against, and Associate Professor O’Brien noting her abstention.

4.3 Unsatisfactory Progress Policy

The Committee noted that it was important that students at risk should receive early advice about their enrolment. It was suggested that Unsatisfactory Progress Committees should be able to require students at unsatisfactory progress level 1 and 2 to discuss their enrolment with a student advisor before re-enrolment. The provisions for notification to students of their at-risk status should be amended accordingly. With these amendments, the policy was approved.

4.4 Subject Variation Dates Policy

It was noted that, to accommodate enrolment in subjects taught intensively, the policy should allow for withdrawal on the first day of teaching in such subjects. With this amendment, the policy was approved.

4.5 Policy for Supervision and Assessment of Minor Theses and Honours Theses Establishment of Working Group

The Chair proposed that the Committee establish a working group to review present provisions for the supervision of minor theses and research projects and their assessment, and to propose to it a policy governing the operation of minor theses and research projects in postgraduate coursework programs. It was agreed that the group should include the Chair, Ms Beattie, Professor Pettman, Associate Professor O’Brien and Mr Coyle.

5 Chairs’ Reports

5.1 UGPC Report

The Chair reported on UGPC's first meeting. He noted that UGPC had considered a draft policy for the design and delivery of concurrent diplomas and that the policy suggested that concurrent diplomas might be taken end-on to undergraduate degrees. The policy therefore needed to be considered in relation to provisions for postgraduate programs, and it was agreed that the policy should be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of PCPC.

5.2 TALQAC Report

The Committee was advised that TALQAC is considering issues that have arisen from the survey conducted into the Melbourne Experience.

5.3 Teaching and Learning Development Committee

The Committee was advised that TALDEC would be considering a range of matters in relation to teaching, including group work, e-portfolios, best practice in the use of the LMS, and the Information Futures Commission. TALDEC had also considered the proposal for the National Diploma Supplement, an extended transcript that provides information on students' activities as well as academic performance, although it was considered that this was an administrative matter rather than a committee matter.

The Committee was advised that TALDEC would be proactive in identifying issues for resolution and would invite discussion papers on important matters.

6 Student Members' Reports

Nil

7 Working Group Reports

7.1 Academic Programs Approval Process Working Group

The Committee received the report of the Academic Programs Approval Process Working Group and noted the revised guidelines and approval pathways for the consideration of courses proposals in the University. The Committee noted the new forms to be completed for new and revised courses and subjects, and the requirements of business planning and the new student management system.

8 Course Proposals

8.1 Approval Process and Timetable – Postgraduate Courses to be offered from 2009

The Committee noted the timetable for the approval of any new courses that might be proposed for introduction in 2009 and also noted Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations reporting requirements and CRICOS registration requirements.

8.2 Discontinuation of Graduate Diploma in Education

The Committee approved the proposal for the discontinuation of the Graduate Diploma in Education, subject to receipt of satisfactory Shepherd's report.

8.3 Discontinuation of Bachelor of Teaching

The Committee approved the proposal for the discontinuation of the Graduate Bachelor of Teaching,, subject to receipt of satisfactory Shepherd's report.

9 Student Awards

9.1 New Student Awards

9.1.1 Proposal for Student Award – John and Alison Kearney Overseas Scholarship

The Committee noted that UGPC had sought clarification of the selection criteria for the award. It was agreed to recommend approval of the award by Academic Board subject to receipt of the Shepherd's report and subject to resolution of this matter to the satisfaction of the Chair.

9.1.2 The Denise Spencer Prize

The Committee noted that the provisions for the award indicated the GPA would be the criterion and therefore that the award might need to split between joint winners. It was agreed to approve the award subject to resolution of this matter.

9.1.3 Olive Battersby Scholarship

The Committee agreed to approve the award subject to receipt of a satisfactory shepherd's report and to the drafting of an appropriate trust regulation by Legal Services.

9.2 Major Changes to Student Awards

Nil

9.3 Minor Changes to Student Awards

Nil

10 Quarterly Reports

10.1 Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry & Health Sciences Quarterly Report 4/07

The Committee adopted the circulated report, noting that some of the changes listed should have been submitted for approval as late changes.

10.2 Melbourne Law School

The Committee noted the nil report for the Juris Doctor.

11 Matters dealt with by the Chair and/or President, Academic Board

The Committee noted the following matter:

Offer subject additionally in semester 2, 2008: 108-542

12 Any Other Business

Nil

13 Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Friday 14 March 2008 at 10.00 am in The Jim Potter Meeting Room, Old Physics Conference centre.

The meeting closed at 12.00pm.