

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

MEETING 3/06

A meeting of the Academic Programs Committee was held on Thursday, 6 April 2006, at 3.15 pm in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Conference Centre, Old Physics Building.

Present: Professor J Borland (Chair), Ms L Bartolini, Mr A Eddy, Professor M Elgar, Professor A Freadman, Professor D Holm, Professor G Hutchinson, Associate Professor S James, Professor D Jamieson, Ms G Luck, Associate Professor R Misson (Deputy Chair), Ms C O'Dowd, Professor P Pattison, Mr D Rizzetti, Professor R Slocombe, Ms C Smith, Professor L Sterling, Dr G Webb, Mr A Williams

In attendance: Professor W Bebbington (for item 4.1), Associate Professor S Elliott (for item 4.2), Mr C Reid (Secretary), Mr R Hillbrich

BUSINESS

1 Formal Matters

1.1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Associate Professor C Brown, Professor G Bowes, Professor K Dovey, Associate Professor C Duffield, Associate Professor C Falk, Professor P McPhee, Professor L Skene, Dr J Stockdale, Professor R Strugnell, Associate Professor P Tregloan, and Professor H Watson.

2 Minutes

2.1 Minutes of meeting 2/06 (2 March 2006)

The minutes of meeting 2/06 of the Committee were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

2.2 Action Sheet 2/06

The Committee noted and reviewed the Action Sheet arising from meeting 2/06.

3 Matters Arising Not Dealt with Elsewhere

3.1 Unilodge International Accommodation Scholarship

The Committee noted that this scholarship proposal had been considered at its 11/05 meeting and that a copy of the standard residential tenancy agreement form had been sought. Ms Luck noted the concerns raised at that meeting about the scholarship proposal, including that it offers residency for a semester, which might be potentially disruptive to the recipient.

The Committee agreed that Ms Luck should discuss the proposal with Unilodge and invite modifications to the scholarship provisions.

4 Policy Issues

4.1 Knowledge Transfer – Revision of Course Proposal Form

The Assistant Vice-Chancellor (University Relations), Professor Warren Bebbington, was in attendance for this matter. He suggested that Knowledge Transfer, which is a central element of the Growing Esteem Strategy, needs to be embedded in teaching and learning, for example in work placements, research projects and other student community-related activities. The Knowledge Transfer Taskforce is presently considering a definition of Knowledge Transfer and criteria for its realisation. Professor Bebbington suggested that the University would be unlikely to give credit towards subject or degree completion for community-related activity but might acknowledge research-oriented Knowledge Transfer.

The Committee agreed to approve in principle the addition of a question concerning Knowledge Transfer to the course approval form. The Committee discussed whether the recording of Knowledge Transfer details in the student system should be at the level of course or subject. It also suggested that the University's statement of graduate attributes might be amended to make reference to Knowledge Transfer. Information submitted by faculties on the course approval form would need to make clear how Knowledge Transfer would function in the course and subjects concerned.

It was agreed that the inclusion on the course approval form of a question concerning Knowledge Transfer should be taken up in the review of the form and the associated course approval process, once the Curriculum Commission has completed its recommendations on implementing the Melbourne Model.

4.2 Guidelines for Alternative Examination Arrangements for Students with Disabilities

The Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Teaching, Learning and Equity), Associate Professor Sue Elliott, attended for this matter. The Committee received and noted the circulated draft Guidelines for Alternative Examination Arrangements for Students with Disabilities. She indicated that the process of faculty approval would ensure that academic integrity is retained in the assessment process, but that professional input would be better coordinated and there would be greater consistency of treatment. The Committee was advised that some 2000 – 3000 students are registered with the Disability Liaison Unit, and if they undertake multiple examinations, the total number of alternative examination arrangements to be managed is potentially very large. There was discussion of the need for an effective alerting system to notify examination supervisors of impending special examinations. The Committee also noted the issue of the different approval processes that apply to the respective categories of disability and Associate Professor Elliott agreed to check on whether it is necessary for the Faculty General Manager to give approval of special arrangements for students with permanent and non-changing disabilities.

The Committee agreed to endorse the proposed amendments to the Guidelines for Alternative Examination Arrangements for Students with Disabilities subject to Associate Professor Elliott's advice on the issues raised.

4.3 AUQA Audit Report – Business Case for Fee-Paying Postgraduate Courses

Ms Luck reported that the 2005 AUQA Audit Report on the University recommended that the University rigorously enforce the requirement that a business case for all new fee-paying postgraduate courses should be submitted for approval by the Vice-Principal and Academic Registrar. The Committee was advised that the University introduced the requirement for a business case to be made for the introduction of new fee-paying postgraduate courses in the 1990s, but that the process has not functioned effectively and that costing the operation of courses accurately is very difficult. It was suggested that the need for this process may have passed given that faculties now operate one-line budgets. The Committee agreed that Ms Luck should discuss with the Senior Vice-Principal whether the requirement for the submission of business cases should be retained, and should consider best practice as, for example, within the School of Enterprise.

4.4 Green Leaf Project

The Committee received the circulated paper recommending adoption of Green Leaf flagging in Merlin of all University subjects that address environmental sustainability. The Chair indicated his concern that a review of all subjects would be difficult at present given that faculties are heavily engaged in the review of the curriculum and the redesign of undergraduate and postgraduate courses. There is also the concern with the potentially wide range of flags that could be applied to subjects, including Knowledge Transfer, writing skills, research skills and cultural diversity, as well as Green Leaf. It was agreed that the issue of the flagging of subjects should be referred to the Curriculum Commission. It was also agreed that a decision on this recommendation should be deferred pending the report of the Curriculum Commission.

4.5 Action items being considered by Chair

This matter was deferred to the next meeting.

5 University Curriculum Project

5.1 Report on Curriculum Commission

The Director of the Curriculum Project, Dr Mary Emison, was in attendance to report on this matter. Dr Emison noted the following:

- The Commonwealth Minister for Education, Ms Bishop, has suggested that the Bologna Model needs to be considered Australia-wide.
- The University is finalising a proposal to DEST to move CSPs from undergraduate to postgraduate courses. A reply from DEST is expected after Easter.
- A statement to secondary schools is being prepared, but this will not be released until there is a reply from DEST on the transfer of CSPs.
- A draft list of new undergraduate courses for introduction in 2008 has been prepared, but this will not be finalised until a reply from DEST is received.

- The Vice-Principal (Marketing and Communication) is developing a marketing plan for the new curricula.

5.2 Timetable for APC Consideration of Implementation

The Committee received and noted Dr Emison's circulated draft timetable for approval and implementation of the new curriculum model. She noted that the timetable is still under development and changes will be made as the Curriculum Project unfolds. The question of the timing of the publication of new course brochures has arisen in relation to the notification of course pre-requisites. Faculties have been encouraged to publish existing pre-requisite requirements and indicate that updated information will be published as it becomes available. Professor Richard James and Dr Kerri-Lee Krause are looking into the question of principles for the design of the 75 points of content in the undergraduate degree that is to be drawn from a second faculty.

5.2.1 Redesign of Course Proposal Form

The Committee noted that the design of the course approval form will be reviewed in relation to the approval of the new curricula and matters raised under item 4.1 above.

6 Postgraduate Coursework Programs Sub-Committee Business

No PCPSC meeting was held in March.

7 Chairs' Reports

7.1 TALQAC Report

Professor Sterling reported on the change in TALQAC's program of activity for 2006 and noted that TALQAC is considering the question of graduate attributes. The course reviews for the undergraduate courses in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences and Faculty of Land and Food Resources would be deferred but the review of postgraduate coursework programs in the Faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning will go ahead. The committee is also considering the question of peer review as part of the evaluation of teaching.

7.2 TALMET Report

The Chair relayed an emailed report from the Chair of TALMET, Associate Professor Tregloan. He indicated that TALMET hosted a forum of LMS Coordinators on 28 March to plan semester 2 subject offerings through the LMS. Faculties are to submit lists of nominated subjects for the LMS Board meeting on April 21. Modeling for student enrolment numbers is to be completed by 2 May. Subject sites are expected to be in place by May 17, allowing time for academic staff to prepare content for their semester 2 subjects.

8 Student Members Reports

Mr Williams foreshadowed that the matter of privacy policy would be raised at the next meeting.

9 Working Group Reports

9.1 Assessment Implementation Working Group

The Committee noted Professor Pattison's letter to faculties asking them to review the assessment provisions in subjects in which examinations constitute 100% of the assessment. Faculties have been asked to submit to Academic Programs Committee by 31 July a justification for assessment entirely by examination in each subject concerned.

9.2 Working Group on Special Consideration

Professor Pattison reported that the Working Group held its first meeting on 4 April. It is gathering information on present practices in relation to the granting of special consideration.

9.2.1 Review of Special Consideration Processes and Systems

The Committee received the circulated paper from Ms Luck raising issues in relation to policy and practice in granting special consideration. Ms Luck indicated that these issues had arisen as a result of a grievance over privacy. The Committee was advised that these matters would be taken up by the Working Group on Special Consideration.

9.3 Working Party on Teaching in Languages other than English

Nil

10 New Courses

Nil

11 Course Changes

11.1 Cancellation of Courses

11.1.1 Cancellation of Bachelor of Rural Business

The Committee endorsed the recommendation to cancel the Bachelor of Rural Business and agreed to recommend to Academic Board the cancellation of the course, subject to clarification by the Faculty of Land and Food Resources of the arrangements by which La Trobe University will assist in the teaching-out of the course.

11.1.2 Cancellation of MBBS/BA Program

The Committee endorsed the cancellation of the Bachelor Medicine/Bachelor of Surgery and Bachelor of Arts combined program and agreed to recommend to Academic Board the cancellation of the program.

11.1.3 Cancellation of LLB/BPC

The Committee endorsed the cancellation of the Bachelor of Laws and Bachelor of Property and Construction combined program and agreed to recommend to Academic Board the cancellation of the program.

11.1.4 Cancellation of Bachelor of Geographical Information Technology

The Committee endorsed the cancellation of the Bachelor of Geographical Information Technology and agree to recommend to Academic Board the cancellation of the course.

12 Student Awards

12.1 New student awards

12.1.1 The Ian Paterson Scholarships

The Committee noted that the proposal for the establishment of the Ian Paterson Scholarships indicated that eligibility for the Scholarships is restricted to Australian citizens. It was noted that the donation of the scholarship funds is contingent on such a restriction of eligibility. The Committee noted that there are precedents for such a restriction and that other scholarships are available for non Australian citizens. The Committee agreed to endorse the establishment of the scholarship in the terms proposed and to recommend its approval by Academic Board. The Committee further agreed to develop guidelines for the eligibility provisions with regards to nationality for student awards.

12.1.2 The ExxonMobil Awards for Excellence

The Committee noted that the selection criteria proposed for this award left considerable discretion to the selection panel. It was also noted that University policy requires that the selection panel have a majority of University staff on it, and it was agreed that this aspect be referred back to the Faculty for further consideration and amendment as appropriate. Subject to an appropriate modification being made to the provisions for the selection panel, the Committee agreed to endorse the proposal and recommend its approval by Academic Board.

12.1.3 Sustainable Architecture Prize

The Committee endorsed the proposal to establish the award and recommended its approval by Academic Board.

12.1.4 KPMG Award for Environmental Economics

The Committee endorsed the proposal to establish the award and recommended its approval by Academic Board.

12.1.5 Quin Environmentals Agriculture and Clean Water Prize

The Committee noted the revised proposal as tabled, endorsed the proposal to establish the award and recommended its approval by Academic Board.

12.1.6 The Passionfoods Sustainable Food Systems Prize

The Committee noted the revised proposal as tabled, endorsed the proposal to establish the award and recommended its approval by Academic Board.

12.2 Major changes to existing awards

Nil

12.3 Minor changes to existing awards – for noting only

12.3.1 Australian Nursing Solutions Scholarship

The Committee noted the renewal of this award on an annual basis.

13 Quarterly Reports 4/05

13.1 Faculty of Engineering

The Committee noted the Faculty's undergraduate quarterly report and noted the shepherd's comments on it, particularly those concerning the inconsistencies in the assessment provisions between subjects. The Committee agreed to approve the Faculty of Engineering quarterly report as circulated, but with the proviso that the Faculty bring forward a plan to investigate and report on the issues raised in Professor Elgar's shepherd's report.

The Committee noted that the workload in some assessment exercises in the Faculty is stated in terms of the number of pages and the number of hours as well as the number of words. The Committee agreed that reference to the number of hours required to complete an assessment exercise is inappropriate but that the number of pages might be appropriate in situations in which tables and charts are required. It was agreed that the range of possible measures of workload should be considered in the redesign of the course and subject approval process and should be addressed in the Blue Book.

13.2 Faculty of Land and Food Resources

The Committee approved the Faculty of Land and Food Resources undergraduate and postgraduate quarterly reports as circulated. The Committee noted Associate Professor Brown's advice that 208-501 will be offered only in semester 1.

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

The Committee noted the matters approved by the Chair and/or the President of Academic Board since meeting 2/06:

Suspension/cancellation of subject offered in Semester 1, 2006:
730-211, 730-360, 730-461, 730-467, 730-391, 705-640, 702-670, 730-691

Suspension/cancellation of year-long subject for 2006:
705-601

Suspension/cancellation of subject offered in Semester 2, 2006:
126-211, 730-205, 730-405, 730-466, 705-317, 702-860, 702-882, 436-461, 136-420

Reschedule of subject from semester 1 to semester 2, 2006:
306-462, 306-762, 730-207, 333-715

Reschedule of subject from semester 2 to semester 1, 2006:
306-461, 306-761, 513-691

To be offered in semester 1, 2006:
730-222

To be offered in semester 2, 2006:
333-620

Change to assessment:
702-213, 702-813, 512-953, 730-530, 730-523, 730-518, 730-341, 730-212, 513-660,
740432, 740-507, 732-303, 730-526

Change to teaching period:
512-988, 512-989

Modification of subject content:
512-971

Establishment of New Student Awards:
Department of Economics Honours Prize for Econometric Techniques
Department of Economics Honours Prize for Macroeconomics
Department of Economics Honours Prize for Advanced Microeconomics
Commerce Alumni Final Year Scholarship
Goldman Sachs JB Were Scholarship

15 Any Other Business

Nil

16 Next Meeting

Thursday 4 May 2006 at 3.15 pm in Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics Building.

The meeting closed at 5.15 pm.