

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE

MEETING 5/05

A meeting of the Academic Programs Committee was held on Thursday, 2 June 2005 at 2.15 pm in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics Building.

Present: Professor M Bryan (in the Chair)

Mr P Donegan, Dr M Emison, Associate Professor C Falk, Professor A Freadman, Professor D Holm, Professor G Hutchinson, Professor D Jamieson, Associate Professor N Low, Professor E Mackie, Mr D McDonald, Associate Professor A McDougall, Professor P McPhee, Associate Professor R Misson, Professor P Pattison, Professor L Skene, Professor R Slocombe, Professor P Taylor, Professor H Watson, Mr W Watson.

In attendance: Dr A Grigg, Mr R Hillbrich and the Academic Secretary (Mr I L L Powell).

BUSINESS

1. Formal Matters

1.1 Visitors

The Chair welcomed to the meeting Dr Kerri-Lee Harris (CSHE) and Ms Jacyl Shaw (Asia Link) who had been invited for discussion of items 5.0 and 7.2, respectively.

1.2 Apologies

Apologies were received from Professor G Bowes, Associate Professor S Elliott, Dr S James, Professor D Merrett, Ms J Reese, Mr R Reid, Ms C Smith, Professor L Sterling and Associate Professor P Tregloan.

1.3 Rearrangement of Agenda

At the request of the Chair, the Committee agreed to take agenda items 5.0 and 7.2 immediately following item 4 so as not to unduly inconvenience Dr Harris and Ms Shaw.

2. Postgraduate Coursework Programs Sub-Committee Business

2.1 Meeting 2/05

The Committee received and noted the unconfirmed minutes of meeting 2/05 of the Postgraduate Coursework Programs Sub-Committee held on 27 May 2005.

2.2 Sub-Committee Recommendations

The Committee adopted the Sub-Committee's recommendations on the following course proposals considered at meeting 2/05:

- (a) New course - Postgraduate Diploma in Music
- (b) New course - Graduate Certificate in Visual Art
- (c) Major change - Graduate Certificate in Arts (Development Studies)
- (d) Major change - Graduate Diploma in Arts (Chinese Studies)

- (e) Major change - Graduate Diploma in Arts (Development Studies)
- (f) Major change - Postgraduate Diploma in Arts (Gender Studies)
- (g) Major change - Postgraduate Diploma in Arts (HPS)
- (h) Major change - Postgraduate Diploma in Arts Management - CONDITIONAL
- (i) Major change - Master of Arts (Asian Societies) - CONDITIONAL
- (j) Cancellation of Master of Gender Studies (Gender and Development) and introduction of Gender and Development stream of Master of Arts
- (k) Suspension of Master of Arts (Islamic Studies) coursework and minor thesis by distance education for 2006
- (l) Major change - Master of Arts (Science Communication and Society)
- (m) Major change - Master of Arts Management - CONDITIONAL
- (n) Major change - Master of Contemporary Asian Analysis
- (o) Major change - Master of Development Studies coursework and minor thesis
- (p) Cancellation of International Masters (Asia)
- (q) Major change - Master of Agribusiness (coursework) - CONDITIONAL
- (r) Major change - Graduate Diploma in Visual Art
- (s) Suspension of Postgraduate Diploma in Public Art, Master of Public Art (by coursework), Graduate Diploma in Improvisation for indefinite period.

2.3 Multiple Qualifications for Students Undertaking a Nested Postgraduate Program

The Committee received a draft entry for section 6.4 (Guidelines for Higher Degrees) of the Guidelines for Submission of Course Proposals.

The Chair of PCPSC said that the draft entry was the outcome of discussions on nested Masters programs that both committees had held at recent meetings. It attempted to resolve the three elements in the discussions - articulation, carry forward of qualifications and credit.

Associate Professor Misson, who had drafted the entry for section 6.4, took the Committee through the document explaining his reasoning for particular provisions.

Professor Pattison commented that the credit situation was complicated and under the present credit statute it would be possible for students to be treated differentially for credit in a second articulated qualification depending on whether or not the first qualification had been taken out. She indicated that it would be desirable to review the Credit statute to ensure equitable treatment between different categories of student..

Commenting on this issue, Associate Professor Misson said that, in his opinion, a change to the statute would not be desirable as it would be hypothetically possible, under a more generous credit policy, for a student to emerge with a Masters degree after less than five years of tertiary study and this would be contrary to current Academic Board policy.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) advised that he was sponsoring a review in the International Office of faculty website entries relating to credit. It was hoped that the review would bring about more lucid and comprehensive entries about credit and this, in turn, might make any amendment to the credit statute unnecessary.

Noting Associate Professor Misson's comment, the Academic Board President indicated that she would, herself, review the credit statute and perhaps bring forward an amendment which added clarity to the intention of the present wording. This

might include a statement that a student may not be granted credit for a completed award which is a prerequisite for entry to another award.

In expressing its thanks to Associate Professor Misson for his work on Masters degrees, the Committee noted that he was also reviewing issues surrounding Professional Doctorates for the next meeting of PCPSC. In response to a comment made by Associate Professor Misson, the Committee agreed that an out-of-date policy document on Professional Doctorates be withdrawn from the Academic Board policy website.

3. Minutes

3.1 Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes of meeting 4/05 held on 5 May 2005 were confirmed.

3.2 Action Sheet 4/05

Members noted the action sheet from meeting 4/05.

4. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Nil

5. Policy Matters

5.0 Assessment Review Tool

The Committee received a draft document *Assessment Review Tool* prepared by Dr Kerri-Lee Harris from the CSHE.

Dr Harris explained that ART was intended to be a checklist for the 16 Indicators of Effective Assessment in Higher Education which the CSHE had developed as part of a project for the Australian Universities Teaching Committee. Dr Harris said that the document was intended to guide and assist rather than prescribe.

The following points were made in discussion:

- There was a risk of confusion between Themes 1 and 2 with the former stating that assessment must be linked to subject/course objectives while the latter seemingly indicated that students must be offered assessment options
- Choice in assessment was valid where there were different ways of demonstrating understanding in line with subject objectives although equity considerations always needed to be borne in mind
- The statement in Theme 2 that assessment should increase in complexity in later year subjects was to be applauded
- It needed to be recognised that students with widely differing English language skills could express full understanding in quite diverse ways. Therefore, lack of sophistication in the use of English should not be penalised.
- The document was both long and complex and there was a risk that it would not receive the attention it warranted in busy academic offices. A mapping of the process would be useful.
- It was not intended that the document include any advice on what is an appropriate level of assessment for a 12.5 point subject.

5.1 Semesterization

The Committee noted that the expected revised paper from Student Administrative Services would now be presented at a later meeting.

Noting that the Academic Board President had indicated, at the last Academic Board meeting, that she would be writing to all faculties in the near future for a progress report on semesterization of year-long subjects, the Committee agreed to defer consideration of reports on this matter from the VCA and Science, which had been circulated, until all faculties had responded.

5.2 Audit of Off-Shore Programs – Matter referred by TALQAC meeting 4/05

The Committee noted that the suggestion by TALQAC that the Course Proposal Form be amended to seek more information about off-shore programs had arisen from the decision that AUQA's brief also extended to the audit of offshore programs.

The Chair undertook to review the questions in Appendix 4 (Distance education proposals) and bring forward recommendations in due course.

The Committee noted the suggestion that it would be timely for the 1999 Academic Board document *Protocols for Approval of Distance Education Courses* to be reviewed and updated.

5.3 Proposal for Additional Question on Course Proposal Form

The Committee declined to approve a request from the Central Secretariat officer responsible for maintaining the University Calendar list of academic awards and their abbreviations for a question to be added to the Course Proposal Form for faculties proposing new awards to indicate their preferred abbreviation for that award. The Committee felt that this information which was not vital to the Committee's deliberation of new course proposals should be captured by some other means.

6. Chair's Report

6.1 Action Taken by Chair

Nil

6.2 Teaching and Learning Quality Assurance Committee Report

In the absence of Professor Sterling, the Chair provided a brief overview of matters discussed at the mid-May meeting. These included a final report on the trial of Turnitin (plagiarism detection software) and a progress report from the Minor Thesis Working Group.

6.3 Teaching and Learning (Multimedia and Educational Technologies) Committee

There was no report in the absence of Associate Professor Tregloan.

7. Working Group Reports

7.1 Implementation of Review of Assessment – Convenor Professor Pattison

Professor Pattison reported that the Working Group was making good progress in implementing recommendations from the June 2004 review of assessment. A memorandum had recently been sent to all heads and associate deans (academic) providing a status report on each of the 20 plus recommendations in the report as well as requesting departments to closely monitor particular activities and processes applying at faculty and departmental level.

It was noted that revised assessment details would need to be approved in time for inclusion in the 2006 Handbook and there might be considerable demands placed on shepherds for subject changes which were not allowed under delegated faculty authority.

7.2 Cultural Diversity in Curriculum – Convenor Professor Holm

Professor Holm tabled a draft copy of the report of the Working Group which included appendices dealing with suggested guidelines for implementation of the University's cultural diversity policy, details of Working Group consultations with students and staff, a checklist for good practice in teaching, learning and assessment, and current examples of best practice across the University. He acknowledged the support given to the Working Group by Ms Jacyl Shaw from Asia Link.

The Committee agreed to the Chair's suggestion that there be a discussion of the draft at the meeting and that Professor Holm present a final report at the next meeting.

The following points were made in discussion:

- Some disciplines were less amenable than others to a culturally inclusive approach
- Appendix 3, the checklist for good practice in teaching, learning and assessment, was particularly valuable
- Although the draft report itself acknowledged the breadth of the University's cultural diversity policy, it in fact focussed mainly on ethnic issues to the exclusion of issues such as educational background and socio-economic status
- The suggestion that selected information on the Web be available in a variety of languages was welcomed but some members commented that the ready availability of effective translating programs on the Web for many groups of languages suggested that the University should not move too far in that direction
- The reception given the report by the academic community was likely to be more positive if the report encouraged rather than mandated change
- Given the poor financial outlook for the University over the next few years, it was unlikely that additional funding could be provided as suggested in the report.

8. New Courses Nil

9. Course Changes

9.1 Faculty of Arts

9.1.1 BA major in Chinese Studies

The Committee approved changes to the Chinese Studies major in the Bachelor of Arts.

9.1.2 BA major in History and Philosophy of Science

The Committee approved changes to the History and Philosophy of Science major in the Bachelor of Arts.

9.1.3 BA major in Development Studies

The Committee approved changes to the Development Studies major in the Bachelor of Arts.

9.1.4 BA (Honours) in Gender Studies

The Committee approved changes to the Gender Studies stream of the Bachelor of Arts (Honours).

9.1.5 BA (Honours) in History and Philosophy of Science

The Committee approved changes to the History and Philosophy of Science stream of the Bachelor of Arts (Honours).

9.1.6 BA major in Spanish

The Committee approved changes to the Spanish major in the Bachelor of Arts.

9.1.7 Diploma in Modern Languages in Spanish

The Committee approved changes to the Spanish specialisation in the major in the Diploma in Modern Languages.

9.2 Faculty of Engineering

9.2.1 BE major in Civil and Environmental Engineering

The Committee approved changes to the Civil and Environmental Engineering stream of the Bachelor of Engineering.

The Committee noted that as the changes involved the jointly badged Bachelor of Engineering degree approved by the Academic Board the previously day, the agreement of the National University of Singapore to the changes would also need to be obtained.

9.2.2 BGeomatic Engineering/ BGeographic Information Technology

The Committee approved changes to the Bachelor of Geomatic Engineering, the Bachelor of Geographic Information Technology and associated combined courses subject to clarification of the effects, if any, on combined courses.

The Committee noted that the reference in the proposal to the Bachelor of Science (Environmental Science) referred to the Environmental Science speciality in the BSc and not the temporary, and now cancelled, Bachelor of Science (Environmental Science) degree of a few years earlier.

9.3 Victorian College of the Arts

9.3.1 Extended Bachelor of Fine Art/Extended Bachelor of Dance

The Committee approved the suspension of the Extended Bachelor of Fine Art course and the Extended Bachelor of Dance course for an indefinite period.

9.4 Faculty of Land and Food Resources

9.4.1 General Assessment Issue

After noting comments from the shepherd in relation to his review of the Bachelor of Agriculture and Bachelor of Rural Business proposals, below, the Committee agreed that the Faculty should undertake a comprehensive review of assessment burdens for all 12.5 point subjects to ensure that they are in line with University norms.

9.4.2 Bachelor of Agriculture

The Committee gave conditional approval to changes to the Bachelor of Agriculture subject to the following:

- Provision of details of transition arrangements for current students
- Justification for not semesterising the year- long subject 202-307 Industry Project.

9.4.3 Bachelor of Rural Business

The Committee gave conditional approval to changes to the Bachelor of Rural Business subject to the following:

- Provision of details of transition arrangements for current students
- Justification for not semesterising the year- long subject 202-005 Industry Placement.

9.4.4 Advanced Diploma in Agriculture/Associate Degree in Agriculture

The Committee gave conditional approval for the conversion of the Advanced Diploma in Agriculture to an Associate Degree in Agriculture subject to:

- provision of a detailed statement of the articulation process for moving from the Associate Degree in Agriculture to the Bachelor of Agriculture including any credit issues where the Associate Degree in Agriculture has been conferred
- referral of a revised proposal to Selection Procedures Committee.

10. Student Awards

10.1 New Awards

10.1.1 Faculty of Arts

The Committee approved the Michael Clyne Honours Prize.

10.2 Changes to Existing Awards

10.2.1 Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences

The Committee approved changes to the Smith and Nephew Prize in Surgery.

10.2.2 Faculty of Science

The Committee approved changes to the Baldwin Spencer Prizes.

11. Quarterly Reports

11.1 Faculty of Engineering

The Committee approved the Faculty of Engineering undergraduate quarterly report 1/05.

12. Matters Dealt with by the Shepherd and the Chair

The Committee endorsed action taken by the Chair and/or Shepherd in approving the following urgent changes. The Committee noted that the President of the Academic Board had subsequently approved these changes on behalf of the Academic Board, as set out below:

Change to assessment (whole course) Master of Veterinary Studies (Veterinary Pathology)

Change to subject description and assessment 740-105

Change to subject assessment 730-115

Suspension for semester 2 - 436-461

13. Any Other Business

13.1 Faculty of Science – Request for variation to academic year for honours programs

The Committee agreed to a request for a variation to the academic year for 38 Bachelor of Science honours programs. Approval was given on a continuing basis subject to the Faculty providing specific start and finish dates for each program.

14. Next meeting

Thursday, 30 June at 2.15 pm in the Jim Potter Conference Room.

The meeting closed at 4.30 pm

