

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION

MEETING 6/08

MINUTES

A Meeting of the Committee of Convocation was held on Wednesday 20 August 2008 at 5.30pm in the Council Chambers, University of Melbourne.

Present

Ms L Boston (Chair), Mr A Abbott, Ms Anne Ada, Mr E Bellchambers, Dr C Close, Ms Clare Cummins, Mr BFB Dance, Mr P Davies, Mr B Fitt, Ms H Fitzpatrick, Dr J Flesch, Dr A Gibbs, Dr T Gould, Dr JK Harcourt, Mr G Israel, Ms I Jablonka, Mr F Lees, Mr R McGauran, Dr R McMillan, Dr V McRae, Mr J Meehan, Dr Ros Otzen, Dr D Parbery, Dr I Rechtman, Mr L Rowe, Dr L Simpson, Dr J Stillman, Mr G Thomas, Mr M Warwick and Mr N Whiting

In Attendance

Ms J White (University Secretary) [for Item 10.5], Mr J Green (Deputy University Secretary), Mr S Halliwell (Minute Secretary) Professor Tom Kvan (Dean of Architecture, Building and Planning) – for Item 7

SECTION 1

1 Welcome, Apologies and Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from Ms M Weston and Mr M Corrigan

Mr D Ford, Dr J Nelson, Ms E Parker and Ms J Crowe were on Leave of Absence.

Leave of absence requests were granted for the September meeting from Ms E Parker, Ms J Crowe, Mr N Whiting, Dr R Otzen, Ms A Ada and Mr E Bellchambers and for the October meeting from Mr E Bellchambers

2 Returning Officer's Report

There was no report.

3 Starring of Additional Items

The following items were starred: 6.1.2 and 15.5 (the latter to be an item related to the faculty of Economics and Commerce)

4 Receipt of Unstarred Items

The Committee received the unstarred items.

5 Minutes of Meeting 5/08 (20 July 2008)

The minutes were approved.

6 Matters Arising

6.1 Action Sheet 5/08

6.1.1 Summary of Enrolments

A summary of University income sources was circulated for information. A summary of enrolments by faculty and student type was provided at the meeting.

6.1.2 Review of Advertising requirements

The matter is on hold pending the outcome of the University Acts review. No advertising is required in relation to the AOM or the elections until March 2009. Mr Hirst requested that details be provided on progress on the current review of University legislation being undertaken by Len Currie. The minute secretary will report to the next meeting.

6.1.3 Condolence Card for the Tibbits Family

The card from Ms Boston on behalf of the Committee was sent on 17 August.

6.1.4 Submission to University Acts Review to be Made Public

The Project Officer (Mr Larry Isaac) was informed on 21 August.

6.1.5 Questions re Information Futures Commission Report

Members were emailed on 21 July asking that further questions be sent directly to Mr Israel. A set of questions was then emailed to members on 18 August. The questions were endorsed by the Committee with no further additions or amendments. Ms Linda O'Brien will be invited to the October meeting of the Committee.

6.1.6 Details of University Committees to be sent to Strategic Plan Subcommittee Convener

This action is complete. Dr Otzen questioned whether the list on the University Secretary's web site (<http://www.unimelb.edu.au/unisec/comlist.html>) is comprehensive. The secretary said that it was in respect of University committees although it did not list all faculty committees that may have been established under the provisions of Statute 5.1.

6.1.7 Open Day Timings

Various Open Day details were sent to members on 5 August and again on 11 August.

6.1.8 Appendix B of the VC's Report to July Council (re Scholarships)

This was sent to members via email on 24 July.

6.1.9 Representative on Legislation and Trusts Committee

At meeting 5/08 (see minute 17.1) the Committee was advised that Mr J Meehan had advised the President that he wished to cease as representative on the Legislation and Trusts Committee ('L & T'). His view was that the Committee would be better served if a Law graduate were the representative. The minute secretary contacted the Law representatives on 25 July but received no expressions of interest. Ms Weston expressed an interest but is unable to attend the August or November meetings of L & T. At the meeting of L & T on 18 August, Mr Meehan outlined the actions above. The Chair of L & T, Ms Melanie Sloss SC, requested that Mr Meehan remain the Committee of Convocation representative for the remainder of 2008.

7 Guest Speaker

Ms Boston welcomed Professor Tom Kvan, Dean of the faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning.

Professor Kvan began by explaining that he has been at the University for only 18 months or so, and is very excited by what the faculty and the University are involved in. The faculty of Architecture, Building and Planning ('ABP') is at the forefront of implementing the Melbourne Model degrees. It is "custodial faculty" for the new Bachelor of Environments ('BEnv') and it has established a graduate school (the Graduate School of Design) for all its postgraduate degrees. The first semester of the BEnv has been completed with several subjects delivered by ABP, and students seem appreciative of the new approach.

Establishing the new degree structure has required a new intellectual framework and all staff as well as student representatives and societies have been involved in this. As well as a new graduate school, ABP has established "travelling studios" in Chile, China, India and Italy and students will be able to visit two of these every two years. There are also ad hoc studios one of which, for example, will soon be visiting Thailand to study contemporary Thai building techniques.

Professor Kvan acknowledged the hard work of both academic and professional staff in the wholesale revamp of the curriculum that had been required to move to the Melbourne Model.

Professor Kvan said that research was also central to the faculty's work. For the first time in 2007, the faculty had over 100 Research Higher Degree students.

The faculty has been restructured so that it is now a one-department faculty, and there are better career pathways for academics. Unfortunately, because the University of Melbourne is recognised as the best, staff are also "poached" by other institutions.

As to the future, Professor Kvan reported that a new building is needed. Currently, ABP is split across three buildings and the infrastructure is creaking. There is insufficient teaching space, particularly for the graduate school, and although the faculty operating finances are robust, a significant amount of capital needs to be raised for any new building. The University wants to excel in sustainability, energy and water research, and Professor Kvan has also suggested urban research be added to this list.

In short, it has been a fascinating eighteen months. Professor Kvan is convinced of the excellence of the University, and continues to be excited and enthused by the developments in the faculty.

In response to questions, Professor Kvan made the following points:

- Staff poaching is to an extent counteracted by recruiting the faculty's PhD students and by aggressive recruiting in overseas markets such as the UK and Singapore, although academic recruitment is difficult throughout the world
- Noting that the Quality of Teaching ('QOT') scores for ABP had increased, the scores are partly subjective, but also partly objective in that there is a significant sample and it is possible to gauge change over time in that the same questions are repeated
- The suggestion to visit Angkor Wat is a good one; the four sites for the travelling studios were chosen because of the universities in those locations

Ms Boston thanked Professor Kvan for a very informative and positive presentation and noted that excitement and enthusiasm are infectious.

8 President's Report

Ms Boston noted that members had been provided with the "Taking Stock" briefing from the Vice-Chancellor and also some members had attended the "Taking Stock" Council meeting on 11 August.

Ms Boston thanked all those who attended the extended meeting on 9 August, particularly Mr Abbott for organising the event. In respect of the extended meeting, reports provided for the Committee for meeting 6/08 are not intended for public scrutiny. They represent a preliminary summary of a deal of discussion and although they contain some recommendations, they will be discussed first by the President's Advisory Group which will report back to the full Committee with recommendations as appropriate. In the meantime, members who were unable to attend the extended meeting should contact the minute secretary if they wish to add further comments.

Ms Boston again conveyed the thanks of Ms Leonie Boxtel (General Manager, Alumni Relations) to those who helped out on the recent Open Day and reminded members of the invitation to the meeting on 16 September. Ms Boston advised that there had been a recent meeting between herself, Ms Boxtel and the minute secretary to discuss up-dating the Committee's message(s) in GradNet. Ms Boxtel has also raised the possibility of establishing a "family connect" system for international students in which members might wish to become involved. Ms Boxtel will say more at the September meeting.

Ms Boston advised that Ms Crowe and Ms Parker are both seriously ill and they will be on leave of absence from the Committee until further notice.

Dr Simpson advised that a meeting with the Provost, Professor Peter McPhee, has been arranged for Friday 29 August at 12-00pm at which all are welcome.

9 Reports from Sub-committees and Working Groups

The Committee noted the report from the Libraries and Information Access sub-committee.

10 Issues of Concern to Members

10.1 Raising the Effectiveness of the Committee

Preliminary reports from discussion groups at the extended meeting of August 9 were referred to in the President's Report at Item 8.

10.2 Members' Photographs on the Web Site

In the absence of Mr Corrigan who raised this matter, the item was deferred until the next meeting.

10.3 Support for University Giving Program

The Committee noted the paper from Mr Israel as circulated. Ms Boston invited Mr Israel to speak to the paper, but advised that no decision is to be made at this meeting. Mr Israel advised that:

- The trust as outlined would need a minimum of \$20,000 to initiate
- It would need the support of the whole Committee
- Individual contributions would be confidential
- The University would be the trustees
- There had been discussion about the idea with the Advancement Office
- It is intended that the income only of any trust be used.

He also agreed that the proposal needed to sit on the table and a decision taken at a later meeting. Members also suggested that the trust purposes probably need to be more precise, but that in principle it was a good idea and should help to raise the profile of the Committee. Mr Israel will provide a more detailed paper.

10.4 University Management Structure

Mr Meehan requested that in light of the Taking Responsibility for Making Melbourne Manageable ('TRMMM') projects that have resulted in the disestablishment of some committees, a copy of the current University management structure be provided to the Committee. Mr Green undertook to provide this for the next meeting.

10.5 VCA and Music

The University Secretary, Ms White, tabled a paper concerning the proposed new faculty of the VCA and Music. The paper contained details of proposed changes to the *Melbourne University Act 1958* to accommodate the new faculty which is planned to come into effect in April 2009, and the details are provided as required by Council Standing Resolution 4.1. The proposed changes are to section 29A of the Act only, and are essentially to accommodate the new faculty name and to ensure that the section is correct in respect of the management of relevant trusts. Ms White explained that there is some urgency given the proposed date that the new faculty is to take effect. The VCA Integration Committee will be considering the proposed changes in a circular resolution in the week beginning 25 August and comments are to be sent to the secretary by the end of Monday 25 August. In response to comments and questions, Ms White explained:

- Proposal (a) is in such a form so that the name of the faculty can be changed in the future without changing the Act
- Only the VCA and Melbourne School of Land and Environment have actual faculty “boards” although many faculties refer to their meetings as meetings of the “board”
- The current project being undertaken by Len Currie in the office of the Vice-Principal and General Counsel is looking at potential amendments to the relevant statutes, inter alia, to define faculties and their “boards” in different ways
- Although there is no specific objective in relation to diversity in the proposed changes, the objectives can be added to at a later date
- Statute 5.1 establishes faculties and includes a provision for Council to appoint to faculties a member of the Committee of Convocation; Regulation 5.1.R1 lists the current membership of faculties. No changes to these pieces of internal University legislation are proposed in the tabled paper
- The University Secretary’s Department can advise only on the process of legislative review (see minute 6.1.2 above); any concerns with perceived diminution in the Committee’s representation need to be referred to Council.

Discussion turned to the recent changes to the composition of the Building and Estates Committee (‘B & E’). The Committee no longer has representation on B & E. Ms White explained that the changes to B & E terms of reference and membership were proposed by Council Nominations and Governance Committee (‘CNGC’). They were discussed at a CNGC meeting on 24 April and were recommended to Council in May. Mr McGauran advised that as the Committee’s representative on B & E, he had been advised of the change only when he asked for the papers for the August meeting. Mr McGauran further advised that a new B & E sub-committee – the Building and Design Review sub-committee - had been established but that there are no terms of reference.

On this matter, the Committee passed a resolution that:

- The Committee was concerned about the lack of consultation in respect of changes to committee membership;
- That proposed changes to committee membership be provided in advance;
- That the rationale for any such changes be provided;
- That membership of the Building and Estates Committee be reinstated; and
- That terms of reference of the Building and Design Review sub-committee be provided

[Minute secretary’s note: the membership and terms of reference for B & E and all its sub-committees, including Building Design Review, can be found at the following url:

<http://www.unimelb.edu.au/unisec/Srvol1/sr3-con.html>]

The Committee discussed further the issue of representation on faculties and faculty committees. The minute secretary advised that under Statute 5.1, faculties are empowered to set up committees to assist with the day-to-day management of the faculty. Ms White advised that the question of representation on faculties and faculty committee needs to be taken up with faculties themselves. Ms White further

advised that general concerns about Committee representation should be included in the Committee's report to Council and the President can ask to have the matter starred for discussion at the 1 September meeting.

11 Vice-Chancellor's Report to 14 July Council.

No further matters were raised.

12 Legislation and Trusts Committee Report to 14 July Council

No further matters were raised.

13 Building and Estates Committee Report to 14 July Council

There was no report.

14 Academic Board Report to 14 July Council

No further matters were raised.

15 Reports of Faculty and Committee meetings

The Committee noted reports from the faculties of Arts, Engineering and Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences and a report from the School of Dental Science. In relation to the faculty of Economics and Commerce, Mr Meehan reported on the new Graduate School of Management and proposed that its Director, Ms Brooke Young, be invited as a guest speaker. He also proposed a tour of the new graduate school.

[Minute secretary's note: Professor Rick Roush, Dean of Melbourne School of Land and Environment, is the guest speaker for September; Ms O'Brien is to be invited for October and the VC has been invited for November. In further discussion following the meeting, Ms Cummins and Dr McRae were asked to liaise on the matter of approaching Ms Young for a tour and for her to address the group.]

16 Other Business

16.1 Traditional Owners

Ms Jablonka raised the matter of the traditional opening ceremony that the University uses at conferences and the like, and the fact that there appears to be no permanent commemorative plaque or display to recognise the traditional owners of the land on which the University is built. The document from which Ms Jablonka read will be circulated as a paper for the next meeting and the matter will be discussed further at that meeting.

Meeting closed at 7-30pm.