

THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE
COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION

MEETING 10/2007

MINUTES

A Meeting of the Committee of Convocation was held on Wednesday 19 December 2007 at 5.30pm in the Jim Potter Conference Room, Old Physics Building, University of Melbourne.

PRESENT:

Ms L Boston (Chair), Mr AW Abbott, Ms A Ada, Mr ES Bellchambers, Dr CE Close, Mr R Cook, Mr M Corrigan, Ms JM Crowe, Mr BFB Dance, Mr DM Dodd, Mr A Douglas, Ms J Elton Brown, Dr B Fary, Ms HM Fitzpatrick, Mr A Gibbs, Mr MW Gorton, Mr AG Handberg, Dr JK Harcourt, Mr PR Hirst, Mr J Humphrey, Mr GLE Israel, Mr FAM Lees, Dr P Lowe, Dr R McMillan, Mr J Meehan, Dr JR Nelson, Mr JF Nicholas, Dr R Otzen, Dr DG Parbery, Ms E Parker, Dr I Rechtman, Dr B-A Rodan, Mr L Rowe, Ms AS Rusden, Dr S Sahhar, Dr L Simpson, Mr BN Southern, Ms MA Weston and Mr NJ Whiting.

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr I Renard (Chancellor), Dr T Latham (former President of Convocation), Dr R Condrón (former President of Convocation), Dr N Ramsey (former member of the Committee of Convocation), Ms JA White (University Secretary), Mr S Halliwell (incoming Minute Secretary), and Ms E Koch (Minute Secretary).

SECTION I

0. Preliminary Matters

The President opened the meeting and welcomed the Chancellor, Mr Ian Renard, former Presidents of Convocation, Dr Robin Condrón and Dr Tim Latham and a former member of the Committee of Convocation, Dr Noel Ramsey.

0.1 Presentation of Silver Medals

The Chancellor, Mr Ian Renard, presented University silver medals to two former and two current members of the Committee of Convocation – Dr Robin Condrón, Dr Tim Latham, Mr Allan Handberg and Mr John Nicholas – in recognition of their exceptional service to the University of Melbourne.

***1. Apologies and Leave of Absence**

Apologies were received from Dr Jenny Stillman.

At a previous meeting of the Committee, leave of absence for the December meeting was granted to Mr Robert McGauran and Mrs Marguerita Neal-Adam.

No further requests for leave of absence were received at this meeting.

***2. Report of Returning Officer**

The University Secretary reported that the following six vacancies on the Committee of Convocation were yet to be filled.

- Music and the VCA one 2-year term
- Economics and Commerce two 4-year terms
- Science one 4-year term and one 2-year term
- Education one 2-year term

The President informed the Committee that Dr Barbara Fary had tendered her resignation from the Committee, thus creating a casual vacancy for a representative of graduates in Arts for a term expiring in December 2009. The President thanked Dr Fary for her contribution to the Committee over the past two years.

The President informed members that the March meeting of the Committee of Convocation would be a special meeting for the purposes of electing new members to fill the casual vacancies outlined above.

In response to a question from Mr Meehan regarding the process for electing new members to fill casual vacancies, the University Secretary noted that the Melbourne University Act 1958 specified that 'the vacancy shall be filled by the election by a majority of the remaining members of the committee' and clarified that this meant that new members would be elected by current members of the Committee.

***3. Starring of Additional Items**

Items 6, 15.12.1, 15.12.2 and an additional item, 15.12.5, were starred.

***4. Receipt of Unstarred Items**

The Committee received the unstarred items.

***5. Minutes of Meeting No. 8/07 (17 October 2007)**

The minutes were received as a true and accurate record of the meeting subject to amendments to typographical errors and to note that the amendment to the motion discussed under Item 10 was in fact seconded by Mr Douglas.

6. Matters Arising

6.1 Recommendation to Council Concerning Management of the Bio21 Institute

The President read out a response from Council to the Committee of Convocation's recommendation to Council requesting that it reconsider legislation concerning the management of the Bio21 Institute. The paper, signed by the Deans of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, Land and Food Resources, Veterinary Science and Engineering, was tabled at the December meeting of Council. The President noted that the matter had received due consideration at Council.

In response to a question, the University Secretary advised that Monash University was a member of the Bio21 Institute through the Victorian College of Pharmacy. Mr Hirst

asked whether the donors who contributed funds to establish the Bio21 Institute had been given an opportunity to comment on the recent changes to legislation affecting the Institute. The President noted that the Bio21 Institute's mission remained unchanged and sought advice from the Chancellor. The Chancellor advised the Committee that he was unaware whether donors had been asked to comment and suggested that it would be advisable to ascertain that they had been notified.

***7. Action Sheet**

ACTION 2—Implementation of Melbourne Model

The President suggested that the Senior Vice-Principal, Mr Ian Marshman, be invited to provide the Committee with an update on the implementation of the Melbourne Model at the April 2008 meeting of the Committee.

ACTION 3—Arts Renewal Strategy

The President suggested that the Dean of Arts be invited to speak to the Committee at its May meeting.

ACTION 4—Report on Carbon Neutrality

The Report on Carbon Neutrality was circulated to Committee members with the papers of the December meeting (refer Item 7.1). The President advised members that carbon emission targets would be discussed by Council at a later date. She noted that the matter had initially been raised with the Committee by a graduate and undertook to provide a response to that graduate.

ACTION 5—SIFE Presentation

Committee members were informed that the Students in Free Enterprise (SIFE) team would be invited to address the Committee in 2008.

ACTION 6—ERC Redevelopment

Chair of the Libraries Subcommittee, Mr Israel, informed the Committee of Convocation that it had consulted with Professor Ridley and undertook to report on the matter at a later date.

ACTION 7—Knowledge Transfer Brochure

Completed: the brochure was circulated to Committee members shortly after the November Committee meeting.

ACTION 8—Volunteering Opportunities

Completed: a print out of the web site homepage was circulated to members with the meeting papers of the December meeting (refer item 7.2). Mr Handberg informed the Committee that he had approached the Alumni Office about forming an alumni group in the Corowa region and was awaiting a report.

ACTION 9—Photograph of Committee

Completed: photographs of the Committee were taken prior to the meeting.

ACTION 10—Silver Medal for Geoff Dawson

The letter of congratulations to Geoff Dawson on his receipt of a University silver medal would be sent shortly.

Secretarial note: the letter was sent on 21 December.

***8. Guest Speaker**

Nil.

***9. President's Report**

The President reported on the 6 December 2007 meeting of the President's Advisory Group.

9.1 Review of Implementation of Strategic Plan

The President informed members that the Committee would in May or June 2008 evaluate its overall effectiveness using the Council's Performance Review Framework.

The Committee would review the implementation of its strategic plan at a workshop scheduled for 5.00pm on Wednesday 5 March 2008.

9.2 Annual Ordinary Meeting

The President's Advisory Group agreed to invite an eminent member of Convocation to speak at the 2008 Annual Ordinary Meeting (AOM) of Convocation. The University Secretary had undertaken to investigate whether the University expected to have any appropriate prominent visitors in April, when the AOM was scheduled to be held. The President informed members that it had been suggested that Deputy Prime Minister Julia Gillard would be an appropriate speaker and invited other suggestions from members. She noted that the Alumni office would be approached in order to advertise the AOM to graduates.

9.3 Subcommittee and Working Group Reports

Conveners of subcommittees and working groups had submitted reports evaluating their effectiveness in 2007 (refer items 15.12.1–15.12.5). The President thanked conveners and subcommittee and working group members for their work during the year.

9.4 Induction and Orientation

The President informed the Committee that the Induction Subcommittee was preparing an induction manual for new Committee members, which would be circulated to both new and existing members in early 2008. The President invited members interested in joining the Induction Subcommittee to contact Mr Abbott.

New members would be invited to take part in an orientation program in March 2008.

9.5 Secretariat Support

The University Secretary had advised the President's Advisory Group that, due to increased pressures on the Secretariat, the amount of financial and administrative support it could offer the Committee of Convocation was under review. The President's Advisory Group was scheduled to meet with the University Secretary to discuss this matter at 3.00pm on 5 March 2008 and a report would be made on the outcome of the discussion.

9.6 Foundation Plate

The President invited members who had not yet had the opportunity, to contribute to the cost of producing the replica foundation plate and noted that donation forms were available at the meeting.

Dr Harcourt advised that members requiring a DVD of the foundation plate ceremony should contact him.

9.7 Committee Profile

Members were reminded that their attendance at graduation ceremonies helped to raise the profile of both Convocation and the Committee and were invited to attend graduations when possible.

The President's Advisory Group had agreed that the Committee should record in its minutes occasions when its members had spoken at events such as Rotary or Probus meetings. When provided by members this information would be captured in the Committee's annual report.

***10. Issues of Concern to Members**

10.1 The Rudd Revolution Publication in the Age Newspaper

The President advised Committee members that Dr Stillman, who was unable to attend the meeting, had raised two matters pertaining to a lift-out publication in the *Age* newspaper and displayed the publication in question. Dr Stillman's first concern related to the University of Melbourne advertisement on the back cover, which listed Veterinary Science among the University's graduate schools although the Faculty of Veterinary Science had not yet agreed to become a graduate school. The Committee agreed that clarification should be sought as to the accuracy of the advertisement.

Dr Stillman's second concern was that the lift-out was branded on the front cover with the University logo and contained party political comment from prominent University staff members. Committee members agreed to seek clarification as to the University's involvement in the production of the lift-out.

Members agreed that the matter should be discussed further at the March meeting when Dr Stillman would be present.

***11. Any Other Business**

Nil.

SECTION II

***12. Matters Arising from Council Meeting**

***12.1 Vice-Chancellor's Report**

The Committee noted the Vice-Chancellor's report.

12.2 Oral Report on Council Meeting

The President invited the Chancellor to report on the December meeting of Council.

12.2.1 Council Elections

The Chancellor informed the Committee that he had been re-elected to his position for another three-year term and Justice Chernov had been re-elected Deputy Chancellor. He also reported on the results of other elections to Council.

On behalf of the Committee, the President formally congratulated the Chancellor on his reappointment.

12.2.2 Charitable Benefits Working Party

The Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic.) would come into effect on 1 January 2008. The Act might prevent the University from exercising charitable benefits exemptions in other legislation in relation to University trusts and related funds offering scholarships and prizes. The Charitable Benefits Working Party was formed to consider the implications of the Act for the University and had recommended that the University seek a ruling from the Supreme Court of Victoria on the matter.

The Chancellor suggested that the Committee of Convocation may wish to seek representation on the Charitable Benefits Working Party if any further meetings were scheduled.

12.2.3 VCA Integration Committee

The VCA Integration Committee was established to advise University Council on the progress of the integration of the VCA with the University of Melbourne. The Chancellor suggested that the Committee of Convocation may wish to seek representation on the Committee.

12.2.4 Information Futures Commission

The University had formed an Information Futures Commission to consult widely and to produce an Information Futures Strategy for consideration by Council in relation to libraries and information services at the University.

12.2.5 Business@Melbourne

A long-standing agreement existed between the Faculty of Economics and Commerce and the Melbourne Business School (MBS) that MBS managed the University-branded MBA degree. The Faculty had recently established a Graduate School of Management and there had been consequent discussions around provision of the University of Melbourne MBA which were yet to be resolved between the two parties.

12.2.6 Hawthorn English Language Centre

The Hawthorn English Language Centre had been sold to an external education provider. The Committee noted that it would continue to utilise the University of Melbourne logo for a period of five years, and would continue to act as a feeder school to the University for international undergraduate students.

12.2.7 Elizabeth Towers

The University had recently acquired the Elizabeth Towers building, located on the corner of the Grattan St and Royal Parade. It would most likely become a research centre of the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences.

12.2.8 University Budget 2008–2009

Council approved the 2008–2009 budget.

12.2.9 Management of *Meanjin*

After an external review, *Meanjin* would now fall under Melbourne University Publishing, although it would retain its editorial independence.

12.2.10 Parking On Campus

Following approval of recent changes to signage, Council had approved in principle the implementation of a new parking infringement policy, similar to that employed by other universities. In the longer term, other changes would occur that were designed to restrict traffic flow and improve amenity.

12.2.11 Definition of Alumni

Council formally approved a revised definition of ‘alumni’ which included staff who had been employed for three or more years, either on a fractional or full-time basis, as members of the University alumni community.

12.2.12 Student Unionism

In response to a question from Mr Handberg regarding the issue of compulsory student union membership, the Chancellor informed the Committee that Council had discussed the matter. It seemed unlikely that the new federal government would reverse voluntary student unionism laws, although it would probably, through a means yet to be determined, look to ensure that adequate contributions were made to facilities applicable to all students.

13. Report to Council

13.1 Report to Council – Meeting 9/2007 (21 November 2007)

The Committee received the report for information.

***14. Legislation, Regulations and Standing Resolutions**

14.1 Legislation and Trusts Committee Report to Council – Meeting 7/07

The Committee received the report for information. Mr Nicholas noted that the proposed change to the method used for counting graduates for the purpose of determining representation on the Committee of Convocation may be advantageous to those faculties providing undergraduate degrees under the Melbourne Model, and disadvantage those former faculties which would now only offer postgraduate degrees. The proposed change to the method of counting graduates had not been formulated in consultation with the Committee of Convocation. The Committee resolved to discuss the matter further at its March 2008 meeting.

15. Reports of Committee Meetings and Faculty Meetings

15.1 Libraries Subcommittee Minutes – 21 November 2007

The Committee received the minutes for information. Mr Israel put forward the motion that the Committee of Convocation accept the proposed terms of reference of the Libraries Subcommittee. Dr Otzen seconded the motion, which was carried.

15.2 Theatre Board Minutes– Meeting 9/07

The Committee received the minutes for information.

15.3 Planning and Budget Committee – Meeting 7/07

The Committee received the report for information.

15.4 Building and Estates Committee – Meeting 6/07

The Committee received the report for information.

15.5 Finance Committee – Meeting 7/07

The Committee received the report for information.

15.6 Growing Esteem Implementation Update #27

The Committee received the update for information.

15.7 Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences Report – Meeting 29 November 2007

The Committee received the report for information.

15.8 Faculty of Veterinary Science – Report of Meeting 3/2007

The Committee received the report for information.

15.9 Strategic Plan Implementation Subcommittee Report – December 2007

The Committee received the report for information.

15.10 Planning and Budget Committee – Meeting 8/07

The Committee received the report for information.

15.11 Finance Committee Report – Meeting 8/07

The Committee received the report for information.

15.12 End of Year Committee of Convocation Subcommittee Reports

15.12.1 Strategic Plan Implementation Working Group

The Committee received the report for information. The President informed the Committee that Ms Fitzpatrick would take over as Chair of the Strategic Plan Implementation Working Group on Dr Lowe's retirement at the end of 2007.

15.12.2 Libraries Subcommittee Report

The Committee received the report for information.

15.12.3 Foundation Stone Working Group Report

The Committee received the report for information.

15.12.4 Induction Subcommittee Report

The Committee received the report for information.

15.12.5 Length of Service Subcommittee

The Committee received the report for information. Mr Dance thanked subcommittee members for their contribution during the year and noted that the subcommittee had achieved most of its goals in 2007. He informed the Committee that in 1938 the Committee of Convocation had established a policy governing the Committee's size, in an effort to ensure it remained effective and did not grow too large. This matter would be further considered in 2008.

16. Alumni Relations Report – November 2007

The Committee received the report for information. The President noted that Mr Bairstow had accepted a position as Dean and Deputy Warden at Trinity College and had resigned from the Alumni Office. She undertook to send him a letter of thanks on behalf of the Committee.

The President thanked all members of the Committee of Convocation for their participation, collegiality and support in 2007. She noted that a large number of members retired at the end of 2007 due to the 12-year rule; the contributions of these members would be formally recognised at the dinner following the meeting.

The President also thanked the Secretariat for its support of the Committee, namely Mr Len Currie, Ms Janet White and Ms Emma Koch. She welcomed Mr Steve Halliwell, who would take over from Ms Koch as Minute Secretary in 2008.

The President thanked the Chancellor for his attendance at the meeting and his ongoing interest in and support of the Committee.

The Chancellor noted that the Ms Boston effectively represented the Committee of Convocation at Council meetings and noted the importance of the link between the Committee of Convocation, the President of Convocation and Council.

The meeting was declared closed at 7.30pm after a 30-minute extension.

The next meeting of the Committee of Convocation was scheduled to be held on Wednesday 19 March 2008 from 5.30pm in the Jim Potter Conference Centre, Old Physics Building, University of Melbourne.