

**THE UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE**  
**COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION**

**MEETING 1/09**

**MINUTES**

A Meeting of the Committee of Convocation was held on Wednesday 23 March 2009 at 5.30pm in the Jim Potter Conference Room, University of Melbourne.

**Present**

Ms L Boston (Chair), Mr A Abbott, Ms A Ada, Ms L Adams, Mr E Bellchambers, Ms A Burgess, Ms B Chan, Dr C Close, Ms J Crowe, Mr BFB Dance, Mr B Fitt, Ms H Fitzpatrick, Dr J Flesch, Dr A Gibbs, Dr JK Harcourt, Mr G Israel, Ms I Jablonka, Dr R McMillan, Dr V McRae, Mr J Meehan, Mr C Middleton, Dr J Nelson, Dr D Parbery, Ms E Parker, Ms B Perry, Dr I Rechtman, Dr B-A Rodan, Dr L Simpson, Dr J Stillman, Mr M Warwick, Mr N Whiting

**In Attendance**

Mr Tony Crooks (Director International), Ms J White (University Secretary), Mr S Halliwell (Minute Secretary), and Ms Leonie Boxtel (General Manager, Alumni Relations)

**SECTION 1**

**1 Welcome, Apologies and Leave of Absence**

Ms Boston welcomed members to the meeting, in particular the five new members who were formally introduced to the Committee as follows.

Ms Lesley Ann Adams (Science) introduced by Dr V McRae  
Ms Anna Burgess (Science) introduced by Mr E Bellchambers  
Ms Bernice Chan (Science) introduced by Ms I Jablonka  
Mr Chris Middleton (Science) introduced by Dr D Parbery  
Ms Barbara Perry introduced by Dr J Flesch

Apologies were received from Ms C Cummins, Mr P Davies, Mr D Ford, Dr T Gould, Mr F Lees, Mr R McGauran, Mr L Rowe and Mr G Thomas.

Dr I Rechtman requested Leave of Absence for the May meeting, and Ms L Boston for the June meeting.

Ms Boston thanked Dr V McRae for organising the tour of the Chemistry School and apologised for being unable to attend due to an Honours Committee meeting.

**2 Returning Officer's Report**

Mr Halliwell reported on the results of the recent casual elections and reminded members that a call

for nominations had gone out, with a closing date of 1 April, for the casual vacancy in Architecture, Building and Planning. He spoke to the paper circulated under Item 2 outlining the vacancies to be advertised in the full elections to be held in the second half of 2009.

### **3 Starring of Additional Items**

Items 8.1 and 8.3 were starred.

Reports from the Arts faculty meeting, the Library and Information Access sub-committee meeting and the Strategic Plan sub-committee meeting will be emailed to the minute secretary for circulation.

### **4 Receipt of Unstarred Items**

The Committee received the unstarred items.

### **5 Minutes of Meeting 10/08 (17 December 2008)**

The minutes were approved.

### **6 Matters Arising**

#### **Review of University Acts**

Mr Meehan noted that the Committee had put a deal of work into preparing a submission to the State Government review of University Acts – submitted on 30 April 2008. As a key stakeholder, the Committee has received no feedback from the review. Ms White advised that the Government had issued a Statement of Intent in late 2008, but that even the University had not been provided with a formal copy. A copy of the Statement of Intent will be forwarded to members and the matter will be on the agenda for the meeting on 6 May.

#### **Vice-Chancellor's written responses to questions**

In response to a question, Mr Halliwell advised that a copy of the Vice-Chancellor's responses to the written questions submitted to him prior to his presentation to the November 2008 meeting had been circulated to members via email on 17 March.

#### **6.1 Action Sheet 10/08**

##### **6.1.1 Developments in respect of ANAM**

Ms White referred members to item 7 on page 4 of the Vice-Chancellor's report to Council (circulated under Item 10 of the meeting papers) for a detailed up-date in respect of ANAM. Dr McMillan confirmed that Mr Brett Dean is still Head of ANAM. She reported also that Professor Bebbington had written an article in a recent edition of "Voice"

(see <http://voice.unimelb.edu.au/view.php?articleID=5623>)

##### **6.1.2 Amend Standing Orders**

Mr Halliwell reported that the Standing Orders had been amended to incorporate changes in respect of casual elections agreed at the December 2008 meeting. The latest version of the Standing Orders is on the Convocation web site.

## 7 President's Report

Ms Boston reported on the following matters:

- New members are advised that meetings are scheduled for two hours, but the Committee might consider extending the time for meetings in light of the difficulties in covering the usually full and detailed agendas.
- No presentation is expected when sub-committee reports are presented, but there can be discussion of items in the reports. Any recommendations to the Committee should be included in the written report.
- It is very important to let Dr McMillan know if members intend to go to the post-meeting dinners. A permanent list for 2009 is being developed. Any member who withdraws after the deadline for catering numbers will be required to pay for their dinner.
- The Annual Ordinary Meeting will be on Thursday 23 April in the Matthaei Room at University House. The guest speaker will be the new Chancellor the Hon. Alex Chernov. He will speak on current issues for the University. The Chancellor will also attend the post-meeting dinner in December.
- Members will again be invited to the "Taking Stock" Council meeting on 10 August. This presents a good opportunity to liaise with members of Council.
- There has been contact from Alumni members from the universities of Sydney and Western Australia. Mr Meehan has also had contact with them, and one intends to visit Melbourne and may be able to attend a Committee meeting.
- Members have been informed of the resignation of Mr Peter Hirst – Architecture, Building and Planning representative. His dissatisfaction was with the faculty rather than with the workings of the Committee. He has written to the President and his letter will be discussed with a view to conveying his concerns to senior management. Mr Hirst's concerns highlight the need for faculty representatives to make known to deans what the Committee of Convocation's role and function are, and to raise key issues with the faculties.
- As is customary, the President was invited to the Council Planning Conference in February. Ms Boston reported that she had been impressed by the open and honest evaluation that occurred there. She noted that there is to be a review of Growing Esteem in 2009. The Senior Vice-Principal, Mr Ian Marshman, is undertaking a review of management and it is hoped that he will be available to attend a Committee meeting in the near future.
- In the current economic climate, finance remains a key concern for the University, particularly in light of the extensive building and maintenance costs and the requirement to write down considerable assets.
- The general message to emerge from the Planning Conference is that Council is working very well and the management of the University is very efficient. The University looks to further improve its performance in all areas.

In response to a question, Ms White reported that following the introduction of the Melbourne Model, the ENTER scores of new students are up; the University has met its Commonwealth targets; and international enrolments are up. Postgraduate enrolments are taking longer to catch up with the general trend. Ms White undertook to circulate a paper from Mr Ian Marshman on the matter of enrolments.

Mr Whiting noted that it was no longer possible for domestic students to undertake full-fee paying courses and questioned the University's advertising. Ms Boston suggested that questions in relation to the Melbourne Model and the issues it raises could be asked at the Taking Stock meeting in August. The Provost, Professor Peter McPhee, will be guest speaker at the meeting on 6 May.

Dr Rodan noted that the University is still in a transition phase and one of the clear intentions of the

model was to increase the proportion of postgraduate students. Mr Middleton noted that in order to make sense of enrolment figures, it is necessary to compare Schools rather than look at more gross figures.

In response to a question, Ms Boston advised that it is still the intention of the Committee to have a series of deans as guest speakers. The Provost will speak at the May meeting; Mr Marshman will be invited to the June meeting; and the Vice-Chancellor has already been invited to the November meeting. Deans will be invited for other meetings.

### **7.1 President's Advisory Group**

Ms Boston reported briefly on the President's Advisory Group meeting held on 9 March to which sub-committee conveners had also been invited. She proposed, and the Committee agreed, that there be an "extended meeting" along the lines of that held in August 2008.

Ms Fitzpatrick reported on discussions of the Strategic Plan sub-committee. It was recommended that there is a need to build up the role of the faculty representatives, and the sub-committee had developed a template letter for deans that will be circulated for discussion at the 6 May meeting.

### **7.2 Report to Council of Meeting 10/08**

The report was noted.

## **8 Reports from Sub-committees and Working Groups**

### **8.1 Library and Information Access**

Mr Israel reported that the sub-committee had met immediately before the Committee meeting. He emphasised the fact that new members can join any of the sub-committees and he encouraged them to consider doing so. The written responses from the Vice-Chancellor appeared not to have included a response to Question 1 submitted by the sub-committee. Ms Boston advised that the responses had been prepared by Library staff but that this matter would be taken up. Mr Israel requested that the new Librarian be invited as a guest speaker.

There was discussion of members' access rights to the library – particularly borrowing rights. In the past members of the Committee had been given automatic borrowing rights but that appeared not now to be the case. Mr Halliwell will email members about library access.

### **8.3 Membership**

Mr Dance spoke to the papers as tabled at the meeting, being two tables showing detail of the years of departure from the Committee of members. Members were asked to check their own details and to contact Mr Dance if there are any amendments to be made. New members were reminded that the Induction material is now on the web site but that they could request a CD version by emailing the minute secretary. Mr Dance also reported that he had had discussions with Ms Leonie Bostel, General Manager, Alumni Relations, about the services that might be available for members.

At this point in the meeting, Ms Boston introduced the guest speaker – Mr Tony Crooks, Director International.

## **15 Guest Speaker**

Mr Crooks thanked members for the opportunity to speak to the meeting. He delivered a detailed PowerPoint presentation highlighting key statistics related to International education, focussing in

particular on the significant increase over the last ten years. The presentation will be emailed to members.

Mr Crooks noted in particular:

- There has been a 15%pa growth rate in income from international students in the last ten years.
- Education is Australia's third largest export industry, and the largest in Victoria.
- Melbourne has the second largest number of international students of any city in the world (after London).
- The University of Melbourne ('UoM'), Monash and RMIT are all in the top ten most popular destinations for international students.
- In 2008, UoM had approximately 12,000 international students – the highest of any university in the world.
- UoM's fee revenue from international students was c\$250million in 2008 representing some 18% of total income.

In response to questions, Mr Crooks reported as follows.

- Universitas21('U21') is one of two global consortia that the University is a member of: the other is the Association of Pacific Rim Universities. U21 focusses more on operational matters such as student exchange and benchmarking.
- 850 UoM students will be going overseas in 2009. There are currently discussions taking place as to whether there is an alternative to spending a whole semester overseas as this kind of flexibility is required under the Melbourne Model.
- Over 50% of international students at UoM are enrolled in the faculty of Economics and Commerce.
- The "rationale" slide highlights the areas where there are advantages to international education: the downsides are that this may be a factor in the over-commercialisation of universities' focus. There are also issues, identified at UoM in the Provost's Symposium of 2008, with breaking down national cliques that can tend to form among international students.

Ms Boston thanked Mr Crooks for his presentation of interesting and at times startling figures. Mr Crooks said that he would email the presentation to the minute secretary for circulation to members.

## **9 Issues of Concern to Members**

### **9.1 Self-Evaluation Questionnaire**

Ms Boston drew members' attention to the collation of responses to the self-evaluation questionnaire that 19 members had completed in December 2008. It was agreed that the exercise would be carried out each year. Members were invited to send to the minute secretary any suggestions for other questions for the survey.

### **9.2 Annual Report 2008**

The Annual Report 2008 was approved by the Committee, subject to an amendment proposed by Dr McMillan.

### **9.3 Representatives on faculties and University committees**

Ms Boston reminded members that the positions on faculties and University committees were open to all eligible members and all members were encouraged to consider nominating.

Members were asked to email the minute secretary if they were interested in being a representative. Pending any changes to the list of representatives, the current members will attend. Mr Halliwell reminded members that representatives were needed for the vacant positions on the Architecture, Building and Planning, Science and Law faculties. Current representatives will send to the minute secretary schedules of faculty meetings as these are not set or compiled by the University Secretary's department.

The following resolutions were passed.

*That from December 2009, recommendations for Committee representatives on faculty advisory boards and University committees be made at the final meeting of the year to take effect from the start of the following year.*

*That from December 2009, the Committee recommend and nominate representatives on faculty advisory boards and University committees for two-year terms.*

*[At this point, the meeting accepted a ten-minute extension.]*

#### **10 Vice-Chancellor's Report to 16 March Council.**

Certain attachments to the Vice-Chancellor's report will in future be sent along with the papers, particularly if the attachments contain recommendations from reviews and so on. The University Secretary will exercise judgement in this matter. Members were reminded that they could request any particular attachment to the report which will then be emailed to them.

#### **11 Provost's Report to 16 March Council**

Ms Boston drew members' attention to Item 4 of the Provost's report on the progress made on the issue of the commemoration of traditional owners.

#### **12 Legislation and Trusts Report to 16 March Council**

Copies of particular pieces of legislation can also be provided to members on request.

#### **13 Academic Board Report to 16 March Council**

No matters were raised.

#### **14 Reports of Faculty and Committee meetings**

No reports were received. Dr Flesch will email the report of the Arts faculty meeting of 25 March to the minute secretary.

#### **16 Other Business**

##### **16.1 Membership sub-committee**

Mr Dance noted that there are no representatives from Architecture, Building and Planning, MDHS or Music and the VCA on the membership sub-committee and requested that the representatives get together to propose someone from each of these faculty groupings.

Meeting closed at 7-45pm.

Next Meeting is on Wednesday 6 May 2009 at 5-30pm in the Council Chambers.