

**AGENDA ITEM 6  
Report of the Chair****6.1 Report on Senate Matters****6.1.1 Report on the Senate meeting held on 17 September 2007**

Senate, at its meeting on 17 September 2007, on the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 29 August 2007:

- (1) noted the Chair's presentation on the role, function and operation of the Academic Board.
- (2) approved amendments to the *University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003* relating to student membership, with an additional amendment to section 6.5.3 of the Rule, with immediate effect; the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Student Membership of the Faculties, College Board and Boards of Studies, with immediate effect; and the *University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003* relating to terms of membership, with effect from 1 January 2008, as set out in the report presented. (*Note: the amendment of the University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003 relating to student membership took effect on 21 September 2007, following publishing on official University noticeboards.*)
- (3) **Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning**  
as set out in the report:
  - amended the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Student Membership of the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning, with immediate effect.
  - endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty to rename existing streams in the Master of Architecture (stream), Graduate Diploma in Architecture (stream) and Graduate Certificate in Architecture (stream) to become the Master of Architecture (Architectural Design), Graduate Diploma in Architecture (Architectural Design), Graduate Certificate in Architecture (Architectural Design), Master of Architectural History, Theory and Criticism, Graduate Diploma in Architectural History, Theory and Criticism, Graduate Certificate in Architectural History, Theory and Criticism, Master of Urban Design (Architectural and Urban Design); and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty and relating to the courses, with effect from 1 January 2008.
- (4) **Faculty of Arts**  
as set out in the report and with effect from 1 January 2008:
  - endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal to transfer the Bachelor of Economic and Social Sciences, Bachelor of International Studies, Bachelor of Economic and Social Sciences/Bachelor of Laws, Bachelor of International Studies/Bachelor of Laws, the Master of Economics (Social Sciences), Master of Economics (Social Sciences) in Australian Political Economy, Master of International Studies, Master of Public Affairs, Master of Public Policy, Graduate Diploma in Economics (Social Sciences) in Australian Political Economy, Graduate Diploma in International Studies, Graduate Diploma in Public Affairs, Graduate Diploma in Public Policy, Graduate Certificate in Economics (Social Sciences) in Australian Political Economy, Graduate Certificate in International Studies, Graduate

Certificate in Public Affairs and Graduate Certificate in Public Policy, from the Faculty of Economics and Business to the Faculty of Arts; and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Arts, the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Economics and Business, and relating to the courses.

- endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty to transfer two majors from the Faculty of Economics and Business to the Faculty of Arts, and amend two existing majors in the Faculty of Arts.

(5) **Faculty of Economics and Business**

as set out in the report and with effect from 1 January 2008:

- endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty to introduce a major in Human Geography in the Bachelor of International Studies degree; and approved amendments to the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the course.
- approved the amendment of the existing Resolutions of the Senate relating to the postgraduate degrees, diplomas and certificates in the Faculty.

(6) **Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies**

as set out in the report and with effect from 1 January 2008:

- endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty to rename the Master of Engineering Studies to become the Master of Engineering and introduce the new stream of Power Engineering; approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty, and approved the new Resolutions of the Senate relating to the course.
- endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty to introduce the Master of Philosophy and delete the Master of Engineering (Research); approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty, approved the rescission of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Master of Engineering (Research); and approved the new Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Master of Philosophy.
- endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty to transfer the Master of Information Technology, Master of Information Technology Management, Master of Applied Information Technology, Graduate Diploma in Information Technology, Graduate Diploma in Applied Information Technology, Graduate Diploma in Computing, Graduate Certificate in Information Technology, Graduate Certificate in Information Technology Management and Graduate Certificate in Applied Information Technology, from the Faculty of Science to the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies; and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies, the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Science and relating to these courses.

(7) **Faculty of Law:**

- endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty to replace the existing Resolutions of the Senate relating to the

Doctor of Juridical Studies with Faculty Resolutions; approved the rescission of the existing Resolutions of the Senate relating to the course; and approved the new Resolutions of the Senate relating to the course, with effect from 1 January 2008, as set out in the report presented.

(8) **Faculty of Pharmacy:**

- endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty to replace the existing Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Master of Herbal Medicines, Graduate Diploma in Herbal Medicines and Graduate Certificate in Herbal Medicine with Faculty Resolutions developed in compliance with the *University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000*; approved the rescission of the existing Resolutions of the Senate relating to these courses; and approved the new Resolutions of the Senate relating to these courses, with effect from 1 January 2008, as set out in the report presented.

(9) **Faculty of Science:**

- endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty to replace the existing Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Master of Science, Master of Science (Microscopy and Microanalysis), Master of Applied Science, Graduate Diploma in Applied Science, Graduate Certificate in Applied Science, Master of Nutrition and Dietetics, Master of Environmental Science and Law, Master of Medical Physics, Graduate Diploma in Medical Physics, Doctor of Clinical Psychology/Master of Science, Graduate Diploma in Science, Graduate Diploma in Science (Microscopy and Microanalysis), Graduate Diploma in Psychology, Graduate Certificate in Science (History and Philosophy of Science) and Graduate Certificate in Science (Microscopy and Microanalysis) with Faculty Resolutions developed in compliance with the *University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000* as amended; approved the rescission of the existing Resolutions of the Senate relating to these courses; and approved the new Resolutions of the Senate relating to these courses, with effect from 1 January 2008, as set out in the report presented.

- (10) noted the reports on Minor course amendments, Amendments to policies and Other matters.

**Recommendation**

*The Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board on academic matters considered by Senate at its meeting of 17 September 2007.*

**6.2 Honours and Distinctions**

I am pleased to report the following honours and distinctions and recommend the Academic Board extend its congratulations to the recipients:

**Professor Ben Eggleton, Faculty of Science**

Winner of a 2007 Cosmos Bright Sparks award, which names the top 10 Australian scientists under 40 years of age.

**Professor Raina MacIntyre, Faculty of Medicine**

Awarded the 2007 Sir Henry Wellcome Medal and Prize from the Association of Military Surgeons of the US for developing the world's first system to comprehensively rank the different types of bioterrorism risks.

**Professor John Rasko, Faculty of Medicine**

Awarded the 2007 Roche Medal by the Australian Society for Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

**Professor Basil Roufogalis, Faculty of Pharmacy**

Invited to present the 5th Varro Tyler Memorial Lecture at the Annual Symposium on Complementary Health Care.

**Professor Peter Waterhouse, Faculty of Science**

Awarded the 2007 Prime Minister's Prize for Science.

**Professor Warwick Britton, Associate Professor Barbara Fazekas de St Groth and Professor John Rasko, Faculty of Medicine**

Awarded Centenary Institute certificates for their work in immunology, T Cell biology and gene therapy respectively.

**Dr Andrew Harris, Faculty of Engineering and Information Technologies**

Winner of a 2007 Cosmos Bright Sparks award, which names the top 10 Australian scientists under 40 years of age.

**Dr Bill Palmer, Faculty of Science**

Awarded the 2007 B H Neumann Award by the Australian Mathematics Trust.

**Mr George Zhong, Faculty of Science**

Awarded the 2007 Masson Memorial Scholarship Prize awarded by the Royal Australian Chemical Institute (the Masson is a National Prize for outstanding achievements by undergraduates in Chemistry who are also proceeding to Honours in Chemistry).

**Recommendation**

*That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board on the honours and distinctions and congratulate the recipients, as set out in the report presented.*

**6.3 General Report**

**6.3.1 Semester and Vacation Dates for 2011 and 2012**

*pages B6-B8*

The Board is asked to approve the proposed semester and vacation dates for the years 2011 to 2012 inclusive as set out below. The schedule has been prepared in consultation with the University's Student Centre and the Director of the Sydney Summer School.

Members are asked to note that, while Easter and AVCC Common Week dates have been confirmed for 2011 and 2012, some public holiday dates beyond 2005 have not yet been proclaimed and estimates have been used (indicated by a "?").

**Recommendation**

*That the Academic Board approve the semester and vacation dates for 2011 and 2012, as set out in the report presented.*

**6.3.2 Committee of Chairs of Academic Boards ACT & NSW**

The Committee of Chairs of Academic Boards ACT & NSW met at the University of Newcastle on 30 August 2007. The Chair will give a report on this meeting.

**Recommendation**

*That the Academic Board note the Chair's report on the August meeting of the Committee of Chairs of Academic Boards ACT & NSW.*

**6.3.3 Senate Focus Topic: Role and function of the Academic Board** B9-B20

At the Senate meeting of 17 September 2007, the Chair presented a focus topic on the role and function of the Academic Board, based on the paper enclosed. This paper, based on the document originally presented to the Academic Board at its meeting of 30 May 2007, has been revised to include a description of how the Academic Board conducts its business.

**Recommendation**

*That the Academic Board note the paper submitted by the Chair to Senate on the role and function of the Academic Board.*

**6.3.4 Actions taken on behalf of the Academic Board**

Under the authority delegated to him in the *University of Sydney (Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)) Rule 2004* (specifically clause 13.4.1 of that Rule), the Chair has approved a request from the Faculty of Medicine to allow the early submission of a PhD thesis. The Chair has approved that the thesis in question be submitted eleven months early.

**Recommendation**

*That the Academic Board note the Chair's approval of a request from the Faculty of Medicine to allow the early submission of a PhD thesis, as set out in the report presented.*



# The University of Sydney

## Semester and Vacation Dates

**Approved by:** Academic Board on 2 February 2005

**Amended by:** Academic Board on 10 October 2007

**Date of effect:** 11 October 2007

**Contact:** Executive Officer to the Academic Board

Further to Senate's adoption (in 1987) of a 13/14 week semester system, with effect from the 1989 Academic Year, the Academic Board resolved as follows in August 1993:

Both semesters should contain 14 teaching weeks and all classes should commence in the first week of the semester. The use of the fourteenth week of the semester should be a matter for faculties to determine. The fourteenth week in each case shall be followed by a clear stu-vac week. The nature of the mid-semester breaks would be better recognised if they were described as non-teaching weeks rather than as Easter or mid-semester recess.

### **Semester and Vacation Dates, 1998 - 2002**

The Academic Board, at its meetings in August 1993 and August and September 1994, prescribed semester and vacation dates for the years 1995-2002. The Second Semester dates for 1998 were amended in October 1995, and the Second Semester dates for 2000 were amended in October 1997.

To bring the University's 2000 semester and vacation dates into line with the recommendation from the AVCC that a four-week break be observed at the time of the Olympic Games, further amendments were made to semester and vacation dates, in April 1998.

At its meeting on 15 November 2000, the Academic Board approved the addition of Summer Session dates for the years 2001 and 2002.

### **Semester and Vacation Dates, 2003 - 2006**

On 15 November 2000, the Academic Board approved semester and vacation dates for the years 2003-2006. In determining the schedule, the Board considered the following factors:

- (1) The schedule reflects the resolution of the Academic Board, at its meeting in February 2000, that the Board work towards establishing an academic year comprising two semesters, each consisting of 13 weeks, followed by a one-week student study period and two weeks for formally scheduled examinations.
- (2) The extra two weeks provided by the reduction of the traditional 14-week teaching periods to 13 weeks have been utilised as follows:
  - (a) First Semester commences one week later than has been the tradition. (In accordance with the recommendation of the AVCC, First Semester has traditionally commenced on the Monday nearest to 1 March. The schedule has been prepared with First Semester commencing on the Monday one week later than the Monday nearest to 1 March.) This allows an extra week for Summer School activities.
  - (b) Second Semester ends one week earlier, which enables earlier processing of honours results and scholarships ranking.

- (3) The period of formal examinations has been reduced to two weeks from 2003. There are strong indications that the Academic Board's new examination policy, combined with a reduction in the number of units of study and changing assessment practice, will allow this reduction. If an extension of the allocated two weeks is required, this will be authorised by the Registrar in consultation with the Chair of the Academic Board.
- (4) The traditional three-week break has been retained between commencement of the AVCC Common Week at the end of First Semester and the commencement of Second Semester.

#### **Semester and Vacation Dates, 2007 - 2010**

On 2 February 2005, the Academic Board approved semester and vacation dates for the years 2007-2010. In determining the schedule, the Board considered the following factors:

- (1) The Easter holidays in 2008 fall between 21 and 24 March, which is earlier than for most years. Those Australian universities which have already published their semester dates for 2008 will be commencing Semester One on either 25 February or 3 March 2008. If Summer School is scheduled to run for nine weeks (including the examination period), this would result in Semester One commencing at the University of Sydney on 10 March, with the Easter holidays falling less than a fortnight later. With this in mind it is recommended that Semester One commence 3 March in 2008, although this will reduce the number of weeks available for the Summer School.
- (2) While Easter and AVCC Common Week dates have been confirmed for 2007-2010, some public holiday dates beyond 2002 have not been proclaimed and estimated have been used (indicated by a "?").

#### **Semester and Vacation Dates, 2011 - 2012**

On 10 October 2007, the Academic Board approved semester and vacation dates for the years 2011-2012. In determining the schedule, the Board noted that, while Easter and AVCC Common Week dates have been confirmed for 2011-2012, some public holiday dates beyond 2002 have not been proclaimed and estimated have been used (indicated by a "?").

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Summer Session</b>						
Summer School lectures begin	Tues 2 Jan	Mon 7 Jan	Mon 5 Jan	Mon 4 Jan	Tues 4 Jan	Tues 3 Jan
Summer School ends	Fri 2 Mar	Fri 29 Feb	Fri 27 Feb	Fri 26 Feb	Fri 25 Feb	Fri 2 Mar
<b>First Semester</b>						
Lectures begin	Mon 5 Mar	Mon 3 Mar	Mon 2 Mar	Mon 1 Mar	Mon 28 Feb	Mon 5 Mar
AVCC Common Week/non-teaching Easter period	Fri 6 Apr - Fri 13 Apr incl.	Fri 21 Mar - Fri 28 Mar incl.	Fri 10 Apr - Fri 17 Apr incl.	Fri 2 Apr - Fri 9 Apr incl.	Fri 22 Apr – Fri 29 Apr incl.	Fri 6 Apr – Fri 13 Apr incl.
Study Vacation	Mon 11 June - Fri 15 June incl.	Mon 9 June - Fri 13 June incl.	Mon 8 June - Fri 12 June incl.	Mon 7 June - Fri 11 June incl.	Mon 6 June – Fri 10 June incl.	Mon 11 June – Fri 15 June incl.
Examination period (2 weeks)	Mon 18 June - Sat 30 June incl.	Mon 16 June - Sat 28 June incl.	Mon 15 June - Sat 27 June incl.	Mon 14 June - Sat 26 June incl.	Mon 13 June – Sat 25 June incl.	Mon 18 June – Sat 30 June incl.
Semester ends	Sat 30 June	Sat 28 June	Sat 27 June	Sat 26 June	Sat 25 June	Sat 30 June
AVCC Common Week/non-teaching period	Mon 2 July - Fri 6 July incl.	Mon 7 July - Fri 11 July incl.	Mon 6 July - Fri 10 July incl.	Mon 5 July - Fri 9 July incl.	Mon 4 July – Fri 8 July incl.	Mon 2 July – Fri 6 July incl.
<b>Second Semester</b>						
Lectures begin	Mon 23 July	Mon 28 July	Mon 27 July	Mon 26 July	Mon 25 July	Mon 30 July
AVCC Common Week/non-teaching period	Mon 24 Sept - Fri 28 Sept incl.	Mon 29 Sept - Fri 3 Oct incl.	Mon 28 Sept - Fri 2 Oct incl.	Mon 27 Sept - Fri 1 Oct incl.	Mon 26 Sept – Fri 30 Sept incl.	Mon 24 Sept – Fri 28 Sept incl.
Study Vacation	Mon 29 Oct - Fri 2 Nov incl.	Mon 3 Nov - Fri 7 Nov incl.	Mon 2 Nov - Fri 6 Nov incl.	Mon 1 Nov - Fri 5 Nov incl.	Mon 31 Oct – Fri 4 Nov incl.	Mon 5 Nov – Fri 9 Nov incl.
Examination period (2 weeks)	Mon 5 Nov - Sat 17 Nov incl.	Mon 10 Nov - Sat 22 Nov incl.	Mon 9 Nov - Sat 21 Nov incl.	Mon 8 Nov - Sat 20 Nov	Mon 7 Nov – Sat 19 Nov	Mon 12 Nov – Sat 24 Nov incl.
Semester ends	Sat 17 Nov	Sat 22 Nov	Sat 21 Nov	Sat 20 Nov	Sat 19 Nov	Sat 24 Nov
<b>Public Holidays</b>						
Australia Day	Fri 26 Jan	Mon 28 Jan	Mon 26 Jan	Tues 26 Jan	Wed 26 Jan	Thur 26 Jan
Good Friday	Fri 6 Apr	Fri 21 Mar	Fri 10 Apr	Fri 2 Apr	Fri 22 Apr	Fri 6 Apr
Easter Monday	Mon 9 Apr	Mon 24 Mar	Mon 13 Apr	Mon 5 Apr	Mon 25 Apr	Mon 9 Apr
Anzac Day	Wed 25 Apr	Fri 25 Apr	Mon 27 Apr?	Mon 26 Apr?	Tue 26 Apr?	Wed 25 Apr
Queen's Birthday	Mon 11 June	Mon 9 June	Mon 8 June?	Mon 14 June?	Mon 13 June?	Mon 11 June?
Labour Day	Mon 1 Oct	Mon 6 Oct	Mon 5 Oct?	Mon 4 Oct?	Mon 3 Oct?	Mon 1 Oct?

## Role, function and operation of the Academic Board

The Academic Board of the University of Sydney is mandated in the University of Sydney Act 1989 (as amended) (S15), further defined in the University of Sydney By-law 1999 (as amended)(Chapter 6) and its functions and responsibilities are specified in the University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003 (as amended). In the current environment of scrutiny of academic and managerial governance of universities, it is timely to examine how these functions and responsibilities can be effectively discharged.

A recent article by David Woodhouse and Jeanette Baird of AUQA<sup>1</sup> offered some criticism of the structure and operation of Academic Boards in Australian universities. Their concluding remarks state “Conversely, rather than doing away with academic boards, can they be assisted to perform better? .....If the board's terms of reference are taken as the starting point, relevant questions are: what skills and expertise are needed to fulfil these functions? Who are the most appropriate academic leaders (not necessarily the managers) in the university and how can they be involved? A board made up of acknowledged experts and leaders could better discharge quality assurance functions and assist in holding others accountable for the achievement of the institution's strategies.”

The role of Academic Boards has been a matter of some interest for AUQA. Anthony Dooley has prepared an analysis of the attitude of AUQA to Academic Boards as evidenced by comments made during AUQA reviews<sup>2</sup>. Dooley's analysis is that AUQA has seen Boards as upholders of institutional standards, has critically examined their performance as part of a tripartite governance structure but has not focused on the role of the Board in involving “many academics in the process of collective, yet focused and strategic governance.”

This discussion paper aims to suggest a basis for developing the culture and processes by which our Academic Board can constructively encompass these roles, while serving its delegated functions. We begin, as one should, with the fundamentals.

### What is a University?

While there is a long and sometimes varying history of what constitutes a university, a contemporary and local perspective can be gained from the revised protocols for approval of Australian higher education providers<sup>3</sup>, effective from December 2007. These state, *inter alia*,

“Additional criteria for all Australian universities

4. In addition to meeting the nationally agreed general criteria for higher education delivery in Protocol A, an Australian university will meet the following criteria:

- D1. demonstrates a culture of sustained scholarship which informs teaching and learning in all fields in which courses are offered
- D2. undertakes research that leads to the creation of new knowledge and original creative endeavour at least in those fields in which Research Masters and PhDs or equivalent Research Doctorates are offered
- D3. demonstrates commitment of teachers, researchers, course designers and assessors to free inquiry and the systematic advancement of knowledge
- D4. demonstrates governance, procedural rules, organisational structure, admission policies, financial arrangements and quality assurance processes which are underpinned by the values and goals of universities and which ensure the integrity of the institution's academic programs.”

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<sup>1</sup> Woodhouse, D. and Baird, J. (2007). Academic Boards' role in quality and standards. Campus Review, 23 April 2007, p10.

<sup>2</sup> Dooley, A.H. (2007). The role of Academic Boards in university governance. Submitted to AUQA as an Occasional Publication, personal communication.

<sup>3</sup> Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs National Protocols for Higher Education Approval Processes, As approved 7 July 2006. Available online at <http://www.mceetya.edu.au/verve/resources/RevisedNationalProtocols20081.pdf> (22/05/2007).

These criteria include statements that encompass what many would accept as “academic values”.

Other statements of academic values appear in, as examples:

- Magna Charta Universitatum<sup>4</sup>
- American Council on Education Statement on Academic Rights and Responsibilities<sup>5</sup>
- Strategic Directions<sup>6</sup>.

For this paper, we take statements of academic values to embrace the essential nature of a university, compatible with the following definition:

“...the university... is an institution created or allowed by society and the State to participate in the development of knowledge and its dissemination through research and higher education for the welfare of mankind.”<sup>7</sup>

## How important are core values?

One of the major dilemmas facing modern universities has been clearly described by Ward (2007)<sup>8</sup>:

“Changes in higher education worldwide do seem to confront shared issues as well as those specific to distinctive national arrangements. The expansion of public expenditures in higher education has been associated with demands for enhanced accountability and effectiveness. These demands have required a more active managerial approach to the administration of universities and increased pressures for universities to seek revenues beyond those provided by public funding. These pressures sometimes conflict with the academic values that have inspired and sustained the university throughout its history. These values include academic freedom, intellectual integrity, moral and ethical probity as well as a commitment to ensure fairness in access and a commitment to respond to social concerns. Although universities have not always been true to these values and commitments, they remain the bedrock of higher education’s identity and institutions need to be alert to any pressures that diminish their influence. In addition, demands for narrowly construed outcomes combined with the market-related basis of new revenues may create incentives that distort the core missions of higher education institutions as purely utilitarian motives drive both curricula and research. “

There is a rich literature on this apparent conflict. Winter and Sarros (2002)<sup>9</sup>, for example, provide a cross-sector analysis of academics’ responses to corporate reforms in Australian universities. Sheehan et al (1996)<sup>10</sup> paint a similar picture of disenchantment of academics with increasing management pressure apparently alienating them from their core purpose.

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.unibo.it/PortaleEn/University/Our+History/The+University+Today.htm>

<sup>5</sup>

[http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Search&section=Statements\\_and\\_Testimony1&template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentFileID=2078](http://www.acenet.edu/AM/Template.cfm?Section=Search&section=Statements_and_Testimony1&template=/CM/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentFileID=2078)

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.usyd.edu.au/about/publication/strategic/2006/index.shtml>

<sup>7</sup> Thorens, J. (2006). Liberties, freedom and autonomy: a few reflections on academia’s estate. Higher Education Policy, 19: 87-110. Available on Unikey login (when off-campus) at

<http://proquest.umi.com.ezproxy1.library.usyd.edu.au/pqdweb?did=999806651&sid=1&Fmt=1&clientId=16331&RQT=309&VName=PQD>

<sup>8</sup> Ward, D. (2007). Academic values, institutional management and public policies. Higher Education Management and Policy, 19: 1-12. Available on Unikey login (when off-campus) at

<http://ezproxy.library.usyd.edu.au/login?url=http://www.sourceoecd.org/vl=3518119/cl=12/nw=1/rpsv/~6141/v19n2/s1/p1> (22/05/2007).

<sup>9</sup> Winter, R. and Sarros, J. (2002). Corporate reforms to Australian universities: views from the academic heartland. J. Institutional Research, 11(2). Available online at <http://www.aair.org.au/jir/Oct02/Winter.pdf> (21/05/2007).

<sup>10</sup> Sheehan, B.A., Welch, A.R. and Lacy, F.J. (1996). The academic profession in Australia. EIP paper 96/1. Available online at <http://www.dest.gov.au/archive/highered/eippubs/eip9601.htm> (22/05/2007).

The negative effects of separation of management direction from organizational core purpose are not restricted to universities. The major thrust of Collins and Porras (1994)<sup>11</sup> is to demonstrate the long-term inferior performance of organizations that failed to develop a strong and enduring core ideology, which they defined as core values + purpose. Enduring, visionary corporations (up to 1994, at least) were based on core ideologies that emerged early in the corporation's life and were used as constant reference points across decades of externally-induced change.

### **Core values are important to modern universities**

In the last decade, while there has been disquiet at the increasing demands for and of efficient management, there has also been a call for universities to maintain and affirm core academic values, for example, in a policy statement by the Business/Higher Education Round Table<sup>12</sup>, although, interestingly, this had disappeared from their subsequent paper with the same title in 2002.

In 2000, Alan Gilbert, in the Bert Kelly lecture series, included in his lecture<sup>13</sup>

“No one, presumably, believes that wealth is a sufficient condition of institutional success. Unless driven by a profound commitment to core academic values and principles, a rich university might be of only marginally greater value than a profitable circus. Yet the truth remains that genteel poverty is not a sound basis for preserving the core academic values and principles. The very people who equate concern to secure and strengthen the resource base of the University with corporatism or economic rationalism, frequently draw another breath and demand to know why the Administration is letting research infrastructure run down, or not supplementing research-only staff salaries, or being niggardly in providing faculties and departments with adequate budgets. “

Lauchlan Chipman, in the same series, concluded his lecture<sup>14</sup> with the words:

“I hope in what I have said to have convinced you that Australian universities need to be managed as never before if they are to triumph on behalf of their constituencies within the industrial revolution now taking place worldwide in the higher education industry. At the same time, the cherished values that are vital for a flourishing, creative, independent, and far-sighted university need not be compromised by a more effective management structure; on the contrary, that structure should exist to make them, and all other things that are important to the university, robust as never before.”

Note here the duality of a modern university like Sydney. Academic standards, a manifestation of academic values, provide the basis for our business success, but efficient management of the business is necessary to ensure the supply of resources that underpin our ability to maintain high academic standards.

### **How do organizations preserve and apply their core values?**

- Some, like Johnson&Johnson, have a long-established credo to which management refers<sup>15</sup>.
- IBM used IT to engage its communities in a company-wide debate on core values<sup>16</sup>
- A European model, exemplified by Roche, is to have an independent organ within the company that “develops and coordinates the Group’s strategy for sustainable development”<sup>17</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> Collins, J.C. and Porras, J.I. (1994). “Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies”. Century, Random House.

<sup>12</sup> Business/Higher Education Round Table. (1998). Higher Education in Australia: the Global Imperative. A Policy Statement. B-HERT Position Paper No. 1. Available online at <http://www.bhert.com/Docs/policy1.rtf> (22/05/2007).

<sup>13</sup> Gilbert, A. (2000). The idea of a university beyond 2000. Available on-line at <http://www.cis.org.au/events/bertkelly/bk300.htm> (21/05/2007).

<sup>14</sup> Chipman, L. (2000). Academic freedom and the well-managed university. Available on-line at <http://www.cis.org.au/events/bertkelly/bk400.htm> (21/05/2007).

<sup>15</sup> [http://www.jnj.com/our\\_company/our\\_credo/index.htm](http://www.jnj.com/our_company/our_credo/index.htm)

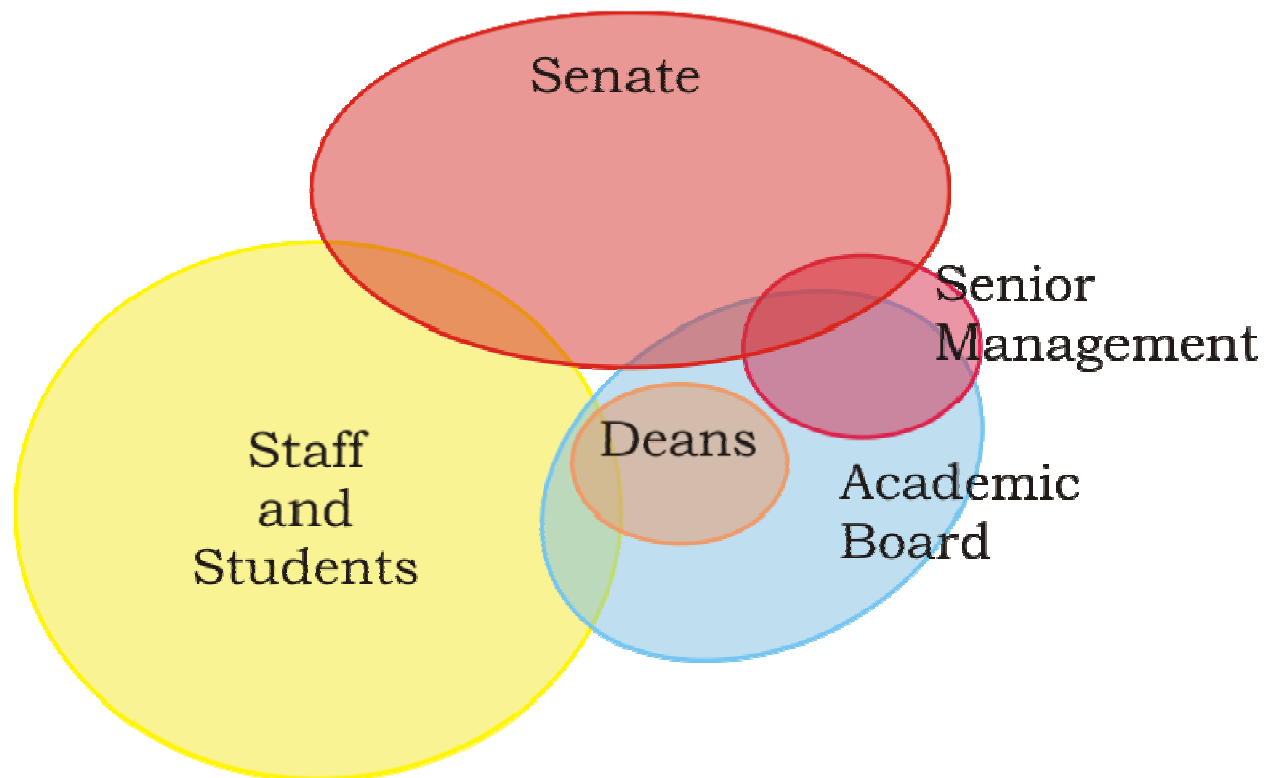
<sup>16</sup> <http://www.ibm.com/ibm/values/us/>

## How does this relate to the Academic Board?

The Academic Governance Rule provides clear specification of the responsibilities and functions of the Board. These are compatible with a view that the Board also has an important role in preserving the core values and purpose of the institution.

However, a traditional approach would suggest that the Board cannot fulfill its responsibilities without management capability. Is this necessary, as the Board specifically does not have this capability?

The answer, perhaps, lies in appreciation of the positioning of the Board within the University. A traditional organizational chart offers little information, but a mapping of academic communities within the university shows a rich structure (Figure 1). The important feature is that membership of the Board includes and overlaps with membership of other key communities. Thus, for instance, senior management has a separate identity, responsibilities and authority in its own right, but also joins with other members of the university to form the Academic Board, where the Board has separate but complementary responsibilities.



**Figure 1 Academic communities within the university. The intent is to describe the role of communities with respect to the Academic Board. As an example, all Deans are members of the Academic Board, but are only members of Senate if they are elected as staff representatives. However, Deans also have a role in the university outside their membership of the Academic Board.**

As indicated in Figure 2, management conversations occur among academic communities outside the Board. The value of the Board must therefore lie in the capabilities that arise when the communities that are represented within it come together. The core values and purpose of the institution then

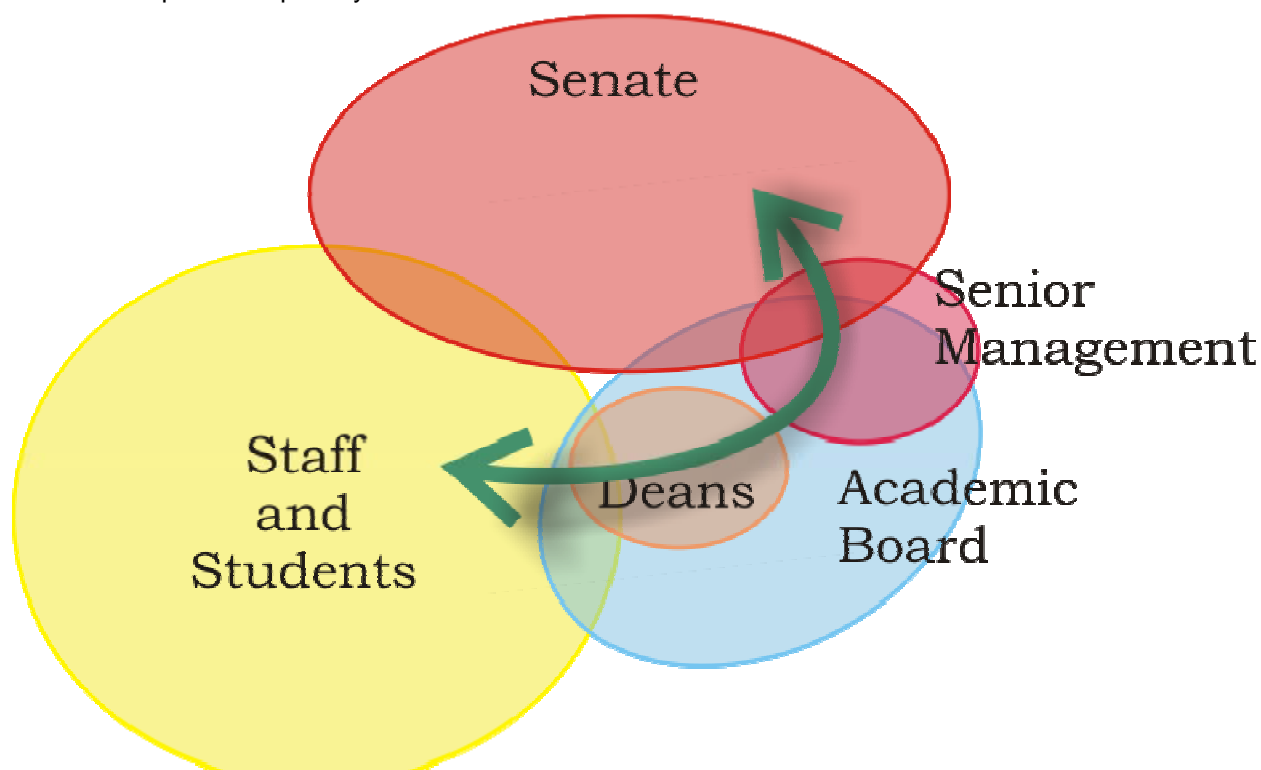
<sup>17</sup> [http://www.roche.com/home/sustainability/sus\\_prin/sus\\_prin-scom.htm](http://www.roche.com/home/sustainability/sus_prin/sus_prin-scom.htm)

constitute a *lingua franca* that allows different communities to engage, in common, with the responsibilities of the Board. The Board also provides a common ground where individuals with interests in the institution's core values, e.g., Vice Chancellor, Deans, staff and students, can examine and re-affirm these propositions.

Potentially, the Board could provide the environment in which strategic and operational initiatives are tested for and achieve alignment with the core values of the university. This should happen in a way that does not impede but, in fact, supports and enhances management portfolios.

### How would this work?

An almost inescapable consequence is that there should be a culture of the Board and management working in partnership, as required, each concentrating on their own responsibilities, but supporting the other. These partnerships may take a number of forms.



**Figure 2 Management conversations (green arrow) occur among communities, but in their roles outside the Board**

- The Board, in meeting its responsibilities, already forms partnerships with appropriate management portfolios. For example, with respect to reviews, the partnership includes the offices of the PVC L&T, PVC Strategic Planning and Deans. Core values and principles are implicit in defining academic standards and academic culture and processes within the faculties.
- In the formation of Board working parties to develop and review policies, relevant management representatives are included to ensure that the policies align well with operational requirements of the university, while also aligning with academic values and principles.
- There is growing inclusion of a Board voice in working parties formed by management, so that the Board can contribute relevant academic perspectives to the conversation. The key word

here is “contribute” rather than “control”. The composition of the Provost’s working parties on academic program reform is a recent example of this.

- The Board meetings should provide the opportunity for management and staff to discuss issues of common interest, especially from a perspective of alignment of the issues with core values and principles. The Board is evolving a culture, processes and behaviour to ensure such meetings are valuable for all to attend, respect the diversity of interests and responsibilities present and achieve significant outcomes.

### **Will this approach yield benefits?**

Corporate experience suggests that enduring visionary organizations have a culture that “Preserves the core and stimulates progress”<sup>18</sup>. Collins and Porras suggest such a culture allows, and perhaps encourages, innovation in strategy and operations without loss of adherence to the core values and purpose of the organization. Ryan and Eckersley (2005)<sup>19</sup> report that reaffirmation of core values was an essential part of the recovery of the University of Newcastle from the plagiarism scandals.

Clark (2001)<sup>20</sup> proposes that the universities that prosper in the coming years will be autonomous, entrepreneurial, able to generate sufficient independent income to relieve dependence on government funding, collegial and with a strengthened steering core that embraces both managerial groups and academics.

In this light, the exercise of the Board’s responsibilities seems natural and constructive. Management retains the responsibility to take the lead in institutional strategy and operational issues, for which the Board provides constructive criticism, development support and quality assurance. With the core institutional values and purpose the basis for the Board’s actions, the university should be able to mutually enhance the complementarity of academic excellence and a strong, agile business.

### **The structure of the Academic Board**

In 2006, the structure of Standing Committees of the Academic Board was reviewed and refined to align with the functionality demanded by the revised University structure and to improve workflow. A brief summary of the major functions of the committees is given below.

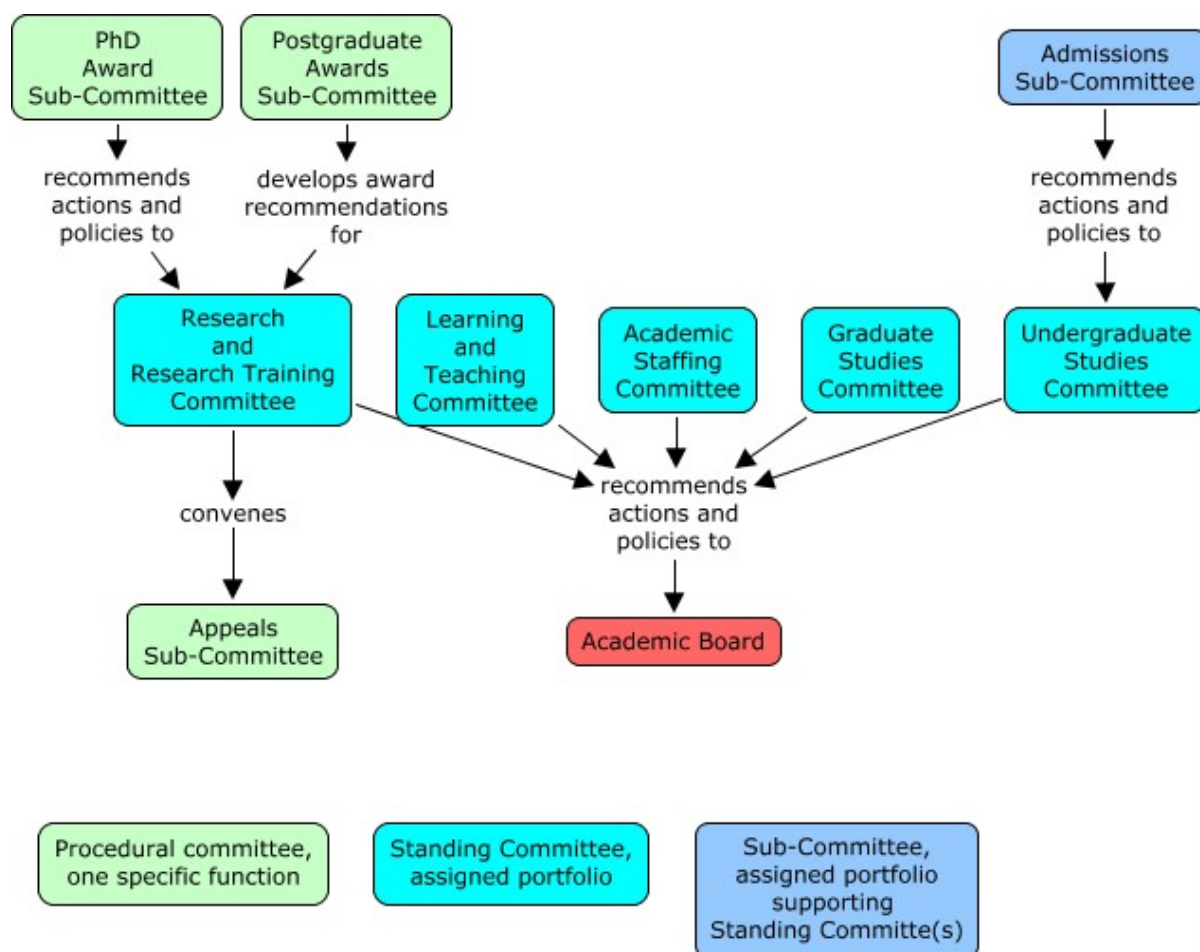
- The Academic Staffing Committee advises the Academic Board and the Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Vice-Chancellor on academic aspects of staffing policies which will support the attraction, retention and promotion of outstanding academic staff and monitors issues relating to quality in relation to academic staffing;

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<sup>18</sup> Collins, J.C. and Porras, J.I. (1994). “Built to Last: Successful Habits of Visionary Companies”. Century, Random House.

<sup>19</sup> Ryan, S. and Eckersley, C. (2005). Reconceptualising quality in the revival of academic values. Proc. Of the 2005 Australian Universities Quality Forum. AUQA Occasional Publications, No. 5, pp151-6. Available online at [http://auqa.edu.au/auqf/2005/proceedings/full\\_proceedings.pdf](http://auqa.edu.au/auqf/2005/proceedings/full_proceedings.pdf) (22/05/2007).

<sup>20</sup> Clark, B. (2001). The entrepreneurial university: new foundations for collegiality, autonomy and achievement. Higher Education Management 13:9-24. Available with Unikey login (when off-campus) at <http://ezproxy.library.usyd.edu.au/login?url=http://www.sourceoecd.org/v1=1442801/cl=16/nw=1/rpsv/ij/oecdjournals/16823451/v13n2/s1/p1> (22/05/2007).



**Figure 3 Committee structure in the Academic Board.**

- The Learning and Teaching Committee advises the Academic Board about resolutions, policy and procedures relating to the effective learning, teaching, examination and assessment processes within the University and works with the faculties and other organisational units in fostering a strong and dynamic learning and teaching culture across the University's spectrum of undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing education courses.
- The Graduate Studies Committee advises the Academic Board on resolutions, policy and procedures relating to all postgraduate coursework courses. As well, this committee reviews all proposals for creation, deletion and modification of postgraduate coursework courses.
- The Undergraduate Studies Committee is the counterpart to the Graduate Studies Committee, with matching responsibilities, but towards undergraduate study.
- The Admissions Sub-Committee advises the Undergraduate Studies Committee about resolutions, policy and procedures relating to admissions to undergraduate award courses including issues such as:

- English language requirements for admission to undergraduate award courses;
  - recognition of institutions, programs and courses for the purposes of admission;
  - approval of admissions criteria in addition to the UAI;
  - approval of preparatory programs of study in prior learning;
  - approval of special admission schemes;
  - confirmation of academic selection criteria for international students set by Deans; and
  - University-wide Credit Transfer Policy for undergraduate courses.
- The Research and Research Training Committee advises the Academic Board about resolutions, policy and procedures relating to research and research training at the University. In the latter area, it has responsibility for policies relating to
    - the creation of postgraduate research courses, including higher doctorates
    - admission, supervision and examination of students in these degrees.
  - The Postgraduate Awards Sub-Committee primarily advises the Research and Research Training Committee about policy and procedures relating to the award of Australian Postgraduate Awards and University of Sydney Postgraduate Awards
  - The PhD Award Sub-Committee advises the Research and Research Training Committee about resolutions, policy and procedures relating to the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and takes decisions in accordance with the resolutions of the Senate and the Academic Board relating to the examination process for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.
  - The Appeals Committee of the Research and Research Training Committee determines matters relating to appeals from postgraduate research candidates.

### **Annual work program: highlights**

A full report of the Board's activities for 2006 was presented to the Senate meeting on 7 May 2007. In 2006, the Academic Board recommended approval of 77 new courses, reviewed and amended 121 and deleted 26. The balance for 2007 currently stands at 40 new courses approved, 164 reviewed and amended and 41 deleted.

During 2006, the faculties and the PhD Award Sub-committee awarded 417 PhD degrees.

New academic policies approved in 2006 included:

- Research-enhanced Learning and Teaching
- Identifying and Supporting Students at Risk
- Research Principles
- Out of Round Promotion Procedures

Existing policies amended in 2006 were:

- Academic Honesty in Coursework (aligned with the policy on Student Plagiarism)
- Admission to Undergraduate Courses
- Creation, Variation and Deletion of Award Courses and Units of Study
- Postgraduate English Language Requirements
- PhD: Guidelines for Examiners of Doctor of Philosophy Theses
- Academic Board Resolutions: Student Appeals Against Academic Decisions

Various policies were also amended following the disestablishment of the Colleges and the restructuring of the Academic Board's committees.

Reviews and working parties initiated in 2006:

- Australian Certificate of Education;
- Student Appeals;

- • Award of Honours at the University of Sydney;
- • Detection of Plagiarism; and
- • Charter of Academic Freedom

The policies under review or consideration in 2007 include:

- Creation, Variation and Deletion of Award Courses and Units of Study
- Assessment and Examination of Coursework
- Research higher degree policies (multiple)
- Award of Merit Degrees
- Postgraduate coursework policies (multiple)
- English Language Competency
- Reporting requirements in Board policies
- Review of student membership of the Academic Board
- Evaluation of admission policies
- Advanced Standing, Credit and Exemption

In addition, the Chair of the Academic Board acts *ex-officio*, in a number of capacities, for example:

- Level E and above recruitment committees (38 in 2006, 21 to date in 2007)
- Student Appeals panels (63 to date in 2007).

### **An example of Board operations: Academic quality**

Senate has delegated to the Board responsibility for academic quality: in the Academic Governance Rule we find:

“General functions.....the Academic Board has principal responsibility:

- (a) to maintain the highest standards in teaching, scholarship and research and, in that process, to safeguard the academic freedom of the University;”

and

“Specific functions.....the functions of the Academic Board are to:

- (g) play an active role in assuring the quality of teaching, scholarship and research in the University and co-ordinate and maintain an overview of the academic activities of Faculties, colleges and boards of studies and similar organisational units;”

It is obvious that in fulfilling these functions, the Board must interact with academic management portfolios. Such interaction must, as we observed earlier, be constructive and complementary. Two other specific functions set out in the Academic Governance Rule provide a measure of direction as to how this can be achieved:

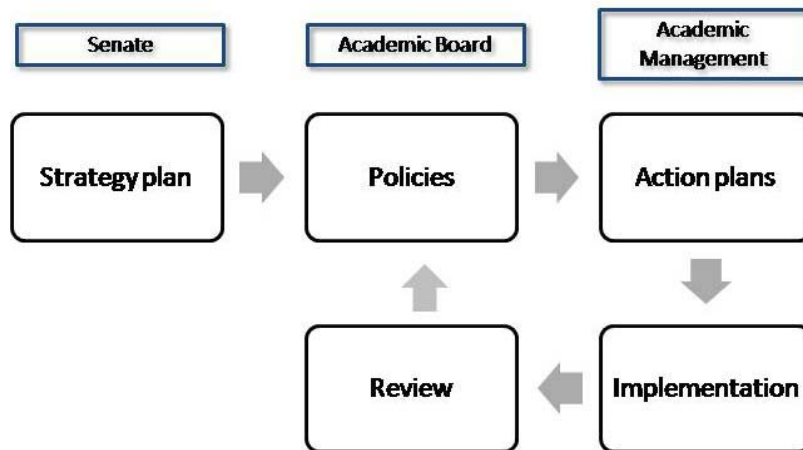
“(d) formulate and review policies, guidelines and procedures in relation to academic matters;”

and

“(h) initiate and oversee a formal and regular program of review of academic activities of Faculties, colleges and boards of studies, and similar organisational units;”

One interpretation of the above is the interacting roles shown in Figure 4. (Recall that persons who occupy academic management roles are also members of the Academic Board.) This provides two distinct perspectives from which the Board and management can scrutinize the same element of the university. On the one hand, management is keen to see that actions result in desired outcomes, while the Board has a primary interest in ensuring that the policy framework that supports action is appropriate for the strategy.

**Figure 4 Functional roles of key university agencies responsible for academic matters.**



A simplified depiction of the involvement of the Academic Board with quality of coursework is given in Figure 5. There are a number of key points regarding this figure:

- Policy, applicable across the University, provides an environment that encourages faculties to use best practice to recruit talented staff and students, develop and deliver their curricula and provide, for society, graduates of high standing. The policies, while encouraging excellence in performance by both staff and students, must also allow for the diversity and innovation that is the hall mark of a comprehensive university.
- The Board and its committees should be proactive and innovative in exploring ways in which both policy and practice can be improved. This is an area in which fruitful and constructive interaction is occurring between the Academic Board and the Provost's office. There is a diversity of ways in which discussions and initiatives that lead to this outcome can be introduced. The Provost and the COO have provided significant material support to the Board in this.
- There is a great deal of functionality in the coursework standing committees in scrutinizing proposals for creation, modification and deletion of courses. While there is no *a priori* guarantee of academic quality and success, the committees aim to ensure that the construction of the courses maximizes the chance of achieving those outcomes.
- There is additional functionality that the university must provide to ensure that quality assurance built in to the course approval is not lost. This is an exercise in partnership between management and the Academic Board. Examples of this include:
  - All the resolutions pertaining to approved courses have been assembled as a single, verifiable, electronic master copy in CMS. This allows for tracing of changes, verification of approval, accurate publication of information in handbooks, web sites etc and encourages and facilitates revision and upgrading of resolutions.
  - The Board is working with ICT and three faculties to pilot a single database of units of study and courses and a web-based development site that, again, encourages and facilitates innovation, refinement and maintenance of teaching programs, collaboration across faculties and elimination of undesirable duplication in teaching.
- The Academic Board review of faculties is a key quality assurance operation. This year, the Board has initiated a new cycle and based this on the Baldrige National Quality Program from the US. A number of benefits flow from this:
  - The review process is now operating with world's best practice protocols;

- The review process will be extended across non-academic elements of the university, so that there is a common culture of quality improvement;
- The reviews are based on self-evaluation and focus on the culture and processes in each unit that underpin sustainable achievement of desirable outcomes. In this way, the reviews provide a key link between core institutional values and principles, on one hand, and aspirational outcomes, on the other.

*Bruce Sutton,  
Chair, Academic Board,  
September 2007*

**Overleaf: Figure 5 Key aspects of the role of the Academic Board in academic quality assurance in coursework.**

### Academic Policies

