



Academic Board Minutes

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Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held at 2 pm on Wednesday 12 December 2007 in the Professorial Board Room

There were present: the Chair (Professor B Sutton) presiding, the Vice-Chancellor and Principal (Professor G Brown), the Chairs of the Standing Committees (Professor C Murphy, Associate Professors S Kable, P McCallum and G Ryan), Professors C Armour, D Armstrong, M Behnia, A Brewer, L Copeland, M Crossley, D Day, S Garton, G Hancock, J Lawler, G Llewellyn, R Mason, G Murray, D Nutbeam, I Ramzan and K Trigwell, Associate Professors B Buckley, E Cowley, R Drynan, R Ewing, W Julian, A F Masters, C Roberts and A Rubbo, Drs M Boughton, J Cox, S Cumming, M Edmond, J Hughes, K Jolliffe, A Molev, K Nelson, M-A Schnabel, J Shaw and K-C Wong, Mr P Ball, Ms K Barnsley, Ms L Brown, Mr J Clegg, Ms J Henderson, Ms C Jarrett, Ms R Santos and Mr J Shipp.

Also present: Secretary of the Academic Board (Dr W A Adams) and Ms M Kemmis (Executive Officer to the Academic Board).

Present as observers: Ms A Griffiths and Ms J Russell (Secretariat).

The Registrar took the opportunity to congratulate the Chair on his recent re-election for a further term.

★ **1. Apologies**

The Board noted that apologies had been received from: Professors T Aspromourgos, A Boyd, C Mellis, P Gay, D Grant, R Overall, E Schwarz, J Trehwella, G Triggs, K Walker and P Wolnizer, Associate Professors B Bennett, T Gerzina, H Irving, R Magnusson, R Taylor, S West and P Wynn, Drs T Anthony, M Collier, A Dong, I Maxwell and R Stanton, and Mr B Kotic and Mr C Ritchie.

★ **2. Arrangement of agenda**

★ **2.1 Starring of items**

Members of the Board were invited to star for discussion any unstarred items.

No additional items were starred.

At this point the Chair advised members that he was withdrawing item 6.3.8 (Guidelines for the Academic Board Phase 3 Faculty Reviews). He advised that a revised version of the guidelines would be submitted for the formal approval of the Academic Board at the Board's next meeting.

2.2 Adoption of unstarred items

Resolution 304/07

That the Academic Board resolve as recommended with respect to all unstarred items.

3. Minutes of previous meeting

3.1 Meeting of 21 November 2007

Resolution 305/07

That the Academic Board adopt the minutes of the previous meeting held on 21 November 2007, as a true record.

4. Business arising from Minutes (not dealt with elsewhere in the Agenda)

There was no business arising from the minutes.

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5. Focus Topics

5.1 The College, Sydney Project

The Chair invited Professor Brewer to speak to the Academic Board on this topic. He noted that, following Professor Brewer's general presentation at the Board's last meeting, he had asked Professor Brewer to provide a more detailed presentation on one aspect of the College's operations.

Professor Brewer advised members that the handout circulated at the meeting provided a summary of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) strategy for the college. She noted that SydneyLearning Pty Ltd, a component of the College Project, would be responsible for the CPD programs. The University's Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) had been responding for many years to the demand from employers and employees for continued learning in professional areas, and a number of faculties were also offering CPD courses. The college would expand on the work of the CCE, particularly in the area of customised programs, and it was envisaged that a range of qualifications could be offered from Certificate III through to Advanced Diploma.

Professor Brewer pointed out the examples given in the handout using career and CPD pathways associated with the Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources. She noted this was only one example from one sector, but was an indication of the demand for continued learning in professional and vocational areas. There was also potential for courses leading to admission to the University, courses involving travel components (using some of the CCE's current courses as a model), as well as non-award modules. Professor Brewer concluded by reaffirming that CPD was a high-growth market generating considerable interest from industry and government.

The Chair invited Professor Copeland to comment on the examples given in the handout. Professor Copeland agreed that there was a large demand for CPD, and that his Faculty had received numerous approaches from industry groups to provide this sort of training which they were unable to fulfil. He also pointed out that CPD was one way of developing closer links to industry groups which could provide opportunities for research and mature-age student entry.

Associate Professor Roberts advised that the Faculty of Medicine had also investigated the possibility of offering CPD courses, but there were issues associated with infrastructure, support and risk management which added significant costs for the Faculty. There were also doubts regarding the sustainability of the market and the role of other competitors. Associate Professor Rubbo advised that the Faculty of Architecture, Design and Planning was already involved in offering CPD courses. She pointed out the potential for cross-over and multi-disciplinary courses via a structure such as the proposed college.

Other comments and queries raised in discussion included:

- whether or not the college would be in competition with TAFE in offering CPD courses – Professor Brewer advised that TAFE was unable to meet demand for CPD training and also noted that CPD training attracted a different type of student to the average TAFE student. CPD students were usually mature-aged with a fair bit of work experience;
- how would the college assess the merit of various CPD proposals and how this would be reported – Professor Brewer advised that every proposal would be vetted by a course requirement committee, as well as the college's Academic Board, which in turn would report to the University's Academic Board;
- in terms of the customised courses currently offered by CCE, this model involves the employer inviting CCE to tender to provide training in a specific professional skills area. CCE's current open-enrolment courses would also be evaluated for alignment with the key curriculum areas previously identified by the college (i.e. arts, science, health science and business). Professor Brewer emphasised that the CPD courses would not duplicate the University's current offerings; and
- would CPD interact with a foundation program – Professor Brewer advised that CPD and foundation studies involved two very different groups of student, with foundation studies aimed at young international students.

The Chair thanked Professor Brewer for her presentation.

Resolution 306/07

That the Academic Board note the report on the College, Sydney Project.

★ 6. **Report of the Chair**

6.1 **General Report**

6.1.1 **Report of the Senate meeting held on 3 December 2007**

The Chair asked that members note this report.

Resolution 307/07

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board on academic matters considered by Senate at its meeting held on 3 December 2007.

Before proceeding to the next item, the Chair noted that it would be the last Academic Board meeting attended by Professor Les Copeland and Professor Jocalyn Lawler in their roles as Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources and Dean of the Faculty of Nursing and Midwifery

respectively. He asked members to join with him in thanking Professors Copeland and Lawler for many years of work for the Academic Board.

6.2 Honours and Distinctions

The Board noted and congratulated by acclamation the recipients of honours and distinctions, as set out in the agenda.

Resolution 308/07

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.

Action: Chair of the Academic Board to write to recipients congratulating them on their honours and distinctions.

6.3 General Report

6.3.1 Candidates for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The Chair advised members that SUPRA had sent a notice of motion on this issue. He noted that more detail was required, as the motion as currently worded would be difficult to put into effect and could have unintended consequences. He invited Ms Barnsley to speak to the Board regarding the motion.

Ms Barnsley advised members that SUPRA had forwarded the motion to address the issue of PhD candidates who, after submission of their thesis, are no longer considered students and thus lose their access to the University Library, work space, email and IT support, etc. She pointed out that it was rare for students to be awarded the degree without having to make some corrections or emendations to their thesis, and argued that such candidates should be deemed to be students until they receive the final advice as to whether or not they would receive the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

The University Librarian, Mr Shipp, pointed out that the issue of access to the Library had been dealt with some time ago, and that candidates had continued access to the Library beyond the point of submitting their thesis. The Chair noted that it would also be within the University's gift to offer continued IT support and email access.

The Registrar advised that he would be reluctant to support the motion as the consequences could be far-reaching, e.g. if international students were deemed to still be students past the point of submitting a thesis, they could be liable for further fees. He recommended that SUPRA itemise the benefits that should be extended to candidates following submission of a thesis, and that work be done to identify how those benefits could be offered.

Professor Hancock expressed some support for the motion, particularly in terms of clarifying the status of candidates during the examination period, but also agreed with the comments made by the Registrar. Professor Copeland pointed out that the current definition of candidature deemed that it ended at the point when the thesis was submitted. Professor Behnia confirmed that this was the definition in DEST's guidelines. He advised that he had spoken to ICT regarding the provision of

email and other IT facilities to candidates under examination and that they were willing to provide such access. He had also written to deans on the issue of providing work space to candidates. The Chair thanked him for these efforts and expressed support for the idea of looking in more detail at specific types of support that could be provided to candidates during the examination period.

Ms Barnsley argued that this did not address the philosophical point of view that students should remain part of the University community until such time as they received their degree. She also expressed concern that it the onus could be placed on each candidate to arrange continued support and services during the examination period. However she agreed to provide details and information to assist further discussion of this issue. Professor Behnia stated that he would be happy to speak further with SUPRA on these issues, and the Chair asked that he be included in these discussions.

Mr Clegg urged the Academic Board to continue discussions on this matter at future meetings, but agreed that it could be a complicated matter. The Chair advised that he supported the concept behind the motion but wanted greater clarity and precision before the Academic Board gave its approval. He agreed that the issue should be included on the agenda for the Board's meeting of either February or April.

6.3.2 Academic Board Membership for 2008

The Chair advised members that the elections for members of the Academic Board had been conducted over the last couple of months. Where vacancies had occurred due to a shortfall in nominations, deans had been asked to nominate appropriate people to fill such vacancies. He asked the Academic Board to note those members elected and to approve those members nominated by their relevant deans. The Board approved the nominations.

The Chair also advised that he was nominating Professor Kevin Parton for co-option to the Academic Board. Professor Parton was previously the Dean of the Faculty of Rural Management at the University of Sydney, and continued to be responsible for the remaining University of Sydney students finishing their degrees with the faculty at Charles Sturt University. The Board approved the co-opting of Professor Parton.

Resolution 309/07

That the Academic Board:

- (1) note the report on the membership of the Academic Board for 2008;
- (2) approve the nominated academic staff and student members from the faculties, and
- (3) approve the co-opting of Professor Kevin Parton to membership of the Academic Board for a period from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2009

as set out in the report presented.

6.3.3 Authority of the Chair of the Academic Board

The Academic Board approved the request to authorise the Chair to act on its behalf in respect of any urgent matters that may arise between the Board meeting on 12 December 2007 and the first 2008 Academic Board meeting.

Resolution 310/07

That the Academic Board authorise its Chair to act on its behalf in respect of any urgent matters that may arise between the Board meeting on 12 December 2007 and the first 2008 Academic Board meeting, as set out in the report presented.

6.3.4 Christmas Party

The Chair took the opportunity to thank the members of the Academic Board for their efforts over the past two years, noting that many would not be returning to the Board in 2008.

Resolution 311/07

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair on the Academic Board Christmas Party, as set out in the report presented.

The Chair advised members that he was seeking to fill the position of Deputy Chair, and noted that the Deputy Chair was required to be a chair of one of the Board's standing committees. He nominated Professor Peter McCallum to be both the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee and the Deputy Chair of the Academic Board, advising that Professor McCallum had been elected to serve on the Academic Board for 2008 and 2009. He took the opportunity to thank Professor McCallum for his work as a highly valued member of the Board.

Associate Professor Drynan queried the process for appointing Associate Professor McCallum to these positions (noting that he had no objection to the nomination of Professor McCallum *per se*). He pointed out that the new Academic Board would come into effect from 1 January 2008 and argued that it was more appropriate for the new Board to ratify these appointments, rather than the existing Board. He moved that the recommendation be amended to appoint Associate Professor McCallum for a period expiring at the meeting of the Academic Board on 27 February 2008. The motion was seconded.

The motion to amend the recommendation was put to the vote and was approved by a majority of Academic Board members. The amended recommendation was also approved by the Academic Board.

The Chair noted that there were separate recommendations for the appointment of Associate Professor McCallum as Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee and as Deputy Chair and clarified that the motion of amendment applied to both recommendations. He also asked whether Associate Professor Drynan's amendment to continue the appointment of Associate Professor McCallum as Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee should apply to all the Chairs of the Board's Standing Committees who were continuing as members in 2008. The Academic Board approved the motion of amendment applying to both recommendations, and approved both recommendations as amended.

6.3.5 Chairs of the Graduate Studies Committee and the Learning and Teaching Committee

Resolution 312/07

That in accordance with the University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003 and on the nomination of the Chair of the Academic Board, the Academic Board appoint Associate Professor Peter McCallum to continue as Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee and appoint Associate Professor Greg Ryan to continue as Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee until the Academic Board's meeting of 27 February 2008, as set out in the report presented.

6.3.6 Appointment of Deputy Chair

Resolution 313/07

That in accordance with the University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003 and on the nomination of the Chair of the Academic Board, the Academic Board appoint Associate Professor Peter McCallum as Deputy Chair of the Academic Board, until the Academic Board's meeting of 27 February 2008, as set out in the report presented.

6.3.7 Action taken on behalf of the Academic Board

The Chair has approved a request from the Faculty of Science to allow the early submission of a thesis for the Doctor of Philosophy. The thesis in question is being submitted one semester earlier than the minimum time limit for the degree and the application has been approved on the basis that the candidate has shown exceptional progress in the degree.

Resolution 314/07

That the Academic Board note the Chair's approval of the early submission of a PhD thesis, as set out in the report presented.

★ 7. Report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal

7.1 Report on Senate Matters

7.1.1 Report of the Senate meeting held on 3 December 2007

The Vice-Chancellor asked members to note the report of the Senate meeting on 3 December 2007.

Resolution 315/07

That the Academic Board note the report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal on matters considered by Senate at its meeting held on 3 December 2007.

7.2 General report

The Vice-Chancellor advised that he had no matters on which to report but took the opportunity to thank the members of the Academic Board for their efforts during 2007.

Resolution 316/07

That the Academic Board note the general report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal.

★ 8. **Question time**

Associate Professor Drynan asked the Vice-Chancellor to comment on the newly-elected federal government's position on full fee-paying positions at universities, noting that there seemed to be a different policy for public and private institutions. He also asked the Vice-Chancellor to comment on the implications for tertiary students at the University's proposed college of the shift in policy.

The Vice-Chancellor advised members that the Rudd Government was committed to abolishing domestic full-fee places from 2009. He noted that there had been talk of universities being compensated for the loss of these places, with some suggestion that each university would be allocated additional HECS places to match the number of full-fee places being lost. However there were no details available as yet as to how the change in policy would be implemented, or what compensation would be offered. The Vice-Chancellor advised that suggestions that the abolition of full-fee places would apply to postgraduate coursework degrees had been refuted by the Government.

He noted that the proposed changes were likely to allow private providers access to FEE HELP, as well as the option of offering full-fee places, which would have a significant impact on all providers in the sector. It would also have implications for the proposed private college, e.g. the business models developed for the college were based on the policy environment created by the previous government and would need to be reassessed.

Associate Professor Masters noted that the Phase 3 Faculty Review guidelines would be resubmitted in February 2008, and asked that the amended version indicate where changes had occurred. He also noted that the policy on early submission of PhD theses had now been in operation for a few years, and suggested that the Research and Research Training Committee should review the number of submissions received to date, and possibly review the policy itself. The Chair advised that the full suite of PhD resolutions and policies were currently under review and that this matter would be included.

Resolution 317/07

That the Academic Board note the questions and responses provided.

9. **Reports of Faculties and Boards**

9.1 **Report of the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies**

9.1.1 **Constitution**

Resolution 318/07

That the Academic Board recommend that Senate approve the amendments to the Constitution of the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies, as set out in the report presented.

Action: The Chair to recommend that Senate approve the amendments to the Resolutions of Senate relating to the Constitution of the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies.

The Chair and Faculty Manager of the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies to note the Academic Board's approval of the amendments to the Board's Constitution.

File No. (2002/5211)

9.2 Report of the Faculty of Education and Social Work

9.2.1 Constitution

Resolution 319/07

That the Academic Board recommend that Senate approve the amendments to the Constitution of the Faculty of Education and Social Work, as set out in the report presented.

Action: The Chair to recommend that Senate approve the amendments to the Resolutions of Senate relating to the Constitution of the Faculty of Education and Social Work.

The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Education and Social Work to note the Academic Board's approval of the amendments to the Faculty's Constitution.

File No. (2000/4046)

9.3 Report of the Faculty of Science

9.3.1 Constitution

Resolution 320/07

That the Academic Board recommend that Senate approve the amendments to the Constitution of the Faculty of Science, as set out in the report presented.

Action: The Chair to recommend that Senate approve the amendments to the Resolutions of Senate relating to the Constitution of the Faculty of Science.

The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Faculty of Science to note the Academic Board's approval of the amendments to the Faculty's Constitution.

File No. (036/0006/00158)

9.4 Report of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music

9.4.1 Semester and Vacation Dates 2008

Resolution 321/07

That the Academic Board approve the semester and vacation dates for the Sydney Conservatorium of Music for the year 2008, as set out in the report presented.

Action: The Dean and Faculty Manager of the Sydney Conservatorium of Music to note the Academic Board's approval of the semester and vacation dates for the Faculty for the year 2008.

File No. (2001/29)

10. Report of the Graduate Studies Committee
(Associate Professor Peter McCallum)

★ **10.1 Oral report of the Chair**

Associate Professor McCallum advised the Academic Board that the Postgraduate Coursework Working Group (established by the Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor) had produced a discussion paper, which would be circulated to faculties for comment. He further advised that faculties would be asked to comment on any perceived difficulties with implementing the recommendations in the paper.

Resolution 322/07

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee.

10.2 Proceedings of the Committee

Resolution 323/07

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the Graduate Studies Committee meeting held on 27 November 2007, as set out in the report presented.

11. Report of the Learning and Teaching Committee
(Associate Professor Greg Ryan)

★ **11.1 Oral report of the Chair**

Associate Professor Ryan advised that he had nothing to add to the report in the agenda.

Resolution 324/07

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

★ **11.2 Item held over from previous Academic Board meeting**

11.2.1 Annual Reports

The Chair noted that Associate Professor Masters had starred these items for discussion at the Academic Board's last meeting. Professor Masters advised that he did not recall his reason for starring the items.

11.2.1.1 Learning Centre Annual Report 2006

Resolution 325/07

That the Academic Board note the report on the Learning Centre Annual Report 2006.

11.2.1.2 Mathematics Learning Centre Annual Report 2006

Resolution 326/07

That the Academic Board note the report on the Mathematics Learning Centre Annual Report 2006.

11.3 Report of the meeting held on 27 November 2007
11.3.1 Proceedings of the Committee

Resolution 327/07

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the Learning and Teaching Committee meeting held on 27 November 2007, as set out in the report presented.

12. General Business

12.1 Academic Staff Promotions

12.1.1 Academic Staff Promotions to Level B in 2007

Resolution 328/07

That the Academic Board note the report on the promotion of academic staff to Level B in 2007, as set out in the report presented.

12.1.2 Academic Staff Promotions to Level C in 2007

Resolution 329/07

That the Academic Board note the report on the promotion of academic staff to Level C in 2007, as set out in the report presented.

12.1.3 Academic Staff Promotions to Level D in 2007

Resolution 330/07

That the Academic Board note the report on the promotion of academic staff to Level D in 2007, as set out in the report presented.

12.1.4 Academic Staff Promotions to Level E in 2007

Resolution 331/07

That the Academic Board note the report on the promotion of academic staff to Level E in 2007, as set out in the report presented.

12.2 2008 Meeting Dates

Resolution 332/07

That the Academic Board note the schedule of meeting dates for 2008, as set out in the report presented.

The meeting closed at 3:17 p.m.

Signed as a correct record

Chair

Date