

AGENDA ITEM 14**Report of the Academic Staffing Committee****14.2 Report of the Academic Staffing Committee meeting held on 12 March 2008**

The Committee met on 12 March 2008 when there were present: The Chair (Professor B Bennett) presiding, Professors D Armstrong, G Hancock, A McBratney, C Murphy, I Ramzan and B Sutton and Associate Professor P McCallum. Mr C Streeter, Mr S Malcolm and Ms L Wells were in attendance.

14.2.1 Proceedings of the Committee**(1) Use of consultants and independent contractors for teaching**

The Committee discussed the extent to which independent contractors were used for teaching across the University. Points raised in the discussion included:

- the goal of ensuring teaching quality;
- that professional faculties often use teachers from the professions using independent contractor arrangements;
- the relative financial costs of employing staff on a casual rather than permanent basis;
- that sub-contracting teaching could have an adverse effect on the collegial nature of the University;
- the need to ensure that the contribution to teaching made by independent contractors is included for the purposes of calculating performance measures such as staff/student ratios.

(2) Academic Career Paths – Teaching Intensive Staff

Professor Sutton introduced his paper as a summary of discussions that have taken place in previous meetings and invited discussion on the paper. Professor Sutton spoke of a continuum of academic practice ranging from research intensive through to teaching intensive. Professor Sutton also noted that the wording “research intensive” is preferable to “research only” as staff employed in “research only” positions are also generally involved in some teaching duties, particularly in terms of supervision of postgraduate research students. Points raised in the discussion included:

- The need to recognise that teaching quantity is not a proxy for teaching quality. There was discussion about the criteria for promotion for teaching-intensive staff in order to attain promotion to level E.
- Professor Armstrong suggested that the purpose of the exercise was to reward, support and encourage people who have roles predominately in teaching. Professor Armstrong spoke of movement throughout careers and the clear difference between teaching and research.
- The relevance of gender issues and the tendency for women to be in teaching-intensive career tracks was noted.
- Professor Armstrong spoke of four principles being at the essence of the issue of academic career paths at the University of Sydney
 - Support the highest proportion of staff who are meaningfully research active
 - Support the highest proportion of staff who are skilled (trained) and effective teachers
 - Lowest number of staff who are under-performing
 - Most flexible system of work allocation that allows for reward and career progression of staff who perform well.
- The Committee discussed whether the University should recognise other contributions from staff. For example, in addition to teaching and

research, should we recognise staff who are “leadership intensive” or “community engagement intensive”?

- The Committee discussed whether PM&D should be linked to the promotions process. It was suggested that this could allow a mutual agreement to be reached between parties as to the percentage of teaching and research forming the basis of review. There was discussion about the negotiation of workload at the Faculty level.
- The Committee discussed the best way of moving forward on this issue. It was agreed that academic career paths should be resolved by the end of first semester 2008 in order to allow time for the policy to be implemented in time for the 2009 promotion round.
- The Committee recognised the need to ensure that there is flexibility between the different careers paths as it may be difficult for people to plan their careers strategically, particularly women whose careers may be interrupted by child-rearing responsibilities. It was noted that the balance between teaching and research is a continual process of negotiation.
- Professor Sutton indicated that he would like to take a brief position paper to the Academic Board in order to get agreement on the principles. This would then allow for revision of the promotion policy.
- There was discussion of the nomenclature and the use of the terms “research intensive” and “teaching intensive.”
- There was discussion of the UNSW model for academic career paths as an example of different career paths for academic staff.
- There was also discussion of the 40:40:20 model of workload allocation. It was noted that the discussion of academic career paths would provide a good opportunity to rework a statement on academic work.
- There was discussion over the use of adjunct and honorary positions.

Professors Armstrong and Sutton agreed to work on a document of principles relating to academic career paths for teaching intensive staff and to circulate this to the Committee.

(3) Other Reports

The Committee also noted:

- that the wording of the Charter of Academic Freedom was being reviewed and that a revised version would be brought to the Committee's next meeting;
- that the Chair of the Academic Board is looking at broadening the definition of Academic Board nominees, and at a training package for nominees; and
- the reports of the Academic Board meetings of 21 November 2007, 12 December 2007 and 27 February 2008.