



Academic Board Agenda

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SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA for the meeting on Wednesday 16 April 2008

Pages

- ★ 1. **Apologies**
Apologies have been received from:
Professors A Aspromourgos, M Behnia, C Benrimoj, S Clarke, A Coats, M Crossley, R Jeremy, S Kable, C Murphy, C Rhodes, G Triggs, K Trigwell, J White and P Wolnizer (Professor C Styles attending in his stead), Associate Professor R Ewing, Drs D Auld, J Callen, G Castillo, K Crameri, C Grupen, A Harvey, J Slapeta and C Taylor and Mr P Ball (Mr C Riley attending in his stead), Mr B Kotic, Mr M Lines, Ms J McKenzie, Ms J Mooney, Ms L-M Syron and Ms S Tolerton.
- ★ 6. **Report of the Chair**
- 6.1 **Report on Senate Matters**
- 6.1.1 **Report of the Senate meeting held on 17 March 2008** page 3
- 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 March 2008.
- 6.2 **Honours and Distinctions** page 4
- Recommendation**
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 **Academic Board Resolutions: Student appeals against academic decisions** pages 4-6
- Recommendation**
That the Academic Board:
- (1) *approve the amended Academic Board Resolutions relating to student appeals against academic decisions, and*
- (2) *approve the abolition of the Appeals Sub-Committee of the Research and Research Training Committee as set out in the report presented.*

6.3.2 Filling of Casual Vacancies in Academic Board Membership

6.3.2.1 Elected Academic Staff Members

page 5

Recommendation

That the Academic Board approve the appointment of:

- (1) Associate Professor Anne Twomey to fill the casual vacancy among elected academic staff members from the Faculty of Law; and*
 - (2) Associate Professor Lynne Harris to fill the casual vacancy among elected academic staff members from the Faculty of Health Sciences*
- for a term expiring 31 December 2009, as set out in the report presented.*

6.3.7 Academic Roles, Positions and Careers at the University of Sydney

pages 5, 7-8

Recommendation

That the Academic Board note the report on academic roles, positions and careers at the University of Sydney, 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 17 March 2008

page 9

Recommendation

That the Academic Board note the report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal on matters considered by Senate at its meeting held on 17 March 2008.

7.2 General report

Recommendation

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

AGENDA ITEM 6 Report of the Chair

6.1 Report on Senate Matters

6.1.1 Report on the Senate meeting held on 17 March 2008

Senate, at its meeting on 17 March 2008, on the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 27 February 2008:

- (1) approved the amendments to the **University of Sydney (Amendment Act) Rule 1999** (as amended), with effect from 1 January 2009, as set out in the report presented.
- (2) amended the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Constitution of the Faculty of Arts with effect from 1 January 2008, as set out in the report presented.
- (3) endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal from the **Faculty of Economics and Business** to introduce the Master of Marketing, approved the amendment of the Resolutions of Senate relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty and approved the introduction of Resolutions of Senate relating to the course, with effect from 1 January 2009, as set out in the report presented.
- (4) endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal to amend the Bachelor of Health Sciences and the Bachelor of Health Sciences (Honours) in the **Faculty of Health Sciences** and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to these courses, with effect from 1 January 2009, as set out in the report presented.
- (5) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the proposal from the **Faculty of Medicine** to amend the Master of Medical Education, Graduate Diploma in Medical Education and Graduate Certificate in Medical Education; endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal to amend the Master of Medicine (Clinical Epidemiology), Master of Science in Medicine (Clinical Epidemiology), Graduate Diploma in Medicine (Clinical Epidemiology), Graduate Diploma of Science in Medicine (Clinical Epidemiology) and Graduate Certificate in Medicine (Clinical Epidemiology); and endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal to amend the Master of Public Health and Graduate Diploma in Public Health, noting that there are no amendments to the Resolutions of Senate relating to the above courses, as set out in the report presented.
- (6) endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal from the **Faculty of Science** to delete the Bachelor of Science (Molecular Biotechnology) and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the list of degrees, diplomas and certificates in the Faculty, and the Bachelor of Science; and endorsed the Board's approval of the proposal to delete the Bachelor of Science (Marine Science) and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the list of degrees, diplomas and certificates in the Faculty, and the Bachelor of Science, with effect from 1 January 2009, as set out in the report presented.
- (7) noted the Report of the Chair of the Academic Board and other reports.

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 March 2008.

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:

Dr Patrick Tam, Children's Medical Research Institute

Elected as a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science.

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 Academic Board Resolutions: Student appeals against academic decisions

page 6

As outlined in the item on pages B2 and B5-B16 of the Report of the Chair, the Academic Board Resolutions relating to Student appeals against academic decisions has been amended in line with both the recommendations of the Student Appeals Review (the Topley Report) and the *University of Sydney (Student Appeals against Academic Decisions) Rule 2006*.

Some additional matters have arisen since the agenda was dispatched to members last week. The first, and relatively minor, issue is an amendment to the recommendation relating to this item to include the abolition of the Appeals Sub-Committee of the Research and Research Training Committee. This Sub-Committee, which was originally associated with the Academic Board's Graduate Studies Committee, was set up to deal with appeals from postgraduate research students. The revised Academic Board resolutions have deleted this section of the appeals process for postgraduate research students, with the process now being aligned with the process for coursework students. It is therefore recommended that the Academic Board abolish the Appeals Sub-Committee.

The second issue relates to the time limits for submission of appeals from students as outlined in clauses 5.1 and 6.1 of the revised resolutions. Both clauses currently state that students are to discuss their concerns or lodge an appeal within twenty working days. It is proposed that this be revised to fifteen working days.

The period of twenty working day was referenced from the ESOS National Code of Practice. Standard 13 (Deferring, Suspending or Cancelling the Student's Enrolment) states as follows:

Should a provider initiate the suspension or cancellation of a student's enrolment, it must notify the student of its intention and allow the student 20 working days to access the provider's internal complaints and appeals process, unless extenuating circumstances relating to the welfare of the student apply.

While it could be argued that it would be equitable to extend the 20 working days to cover all students, not just international students facing suspension, serious concerns have been raised regarding the potential for the overall time taken to resolve a student appeal to have a negative impact on the student's ability to continue their studies, e.g. where re-enrolment in a particular unit of study is contingent on the result of the appeal.

Members are asked to approve the proposed further amendment to the resolutions as outlined on the following page.

Recommendation

That the Academic Board:

- (1) *approve the amended Academic Board Resolutions relating to student appeals against academic decisions, and*
 - (2) *approve the abolition of the Appeals Sub-Committee of the Research and Research Training Committee*
- as set out in the report presented.*

6.3.2 Filling of Casual Vacancies in Academic Board Membership

6.3.2.1 Elected Academic Staff Members

Clause 35.1 of the *University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003* provides for the filling of a casual vacancy in elected academic staff members to the Academic Board.

Such a vacancy currently exists amongst the elected academic staff members from the Faculty of Law, and the Dean of the Faculty has nominated Associate Professor Anne Twomey to fill the vacancy.

In addition, Professor Lynne Harris has been nominated by the Faculty of Health Sciences to fill a casual vacancy.

Recommendation

That the Academic Board approve the appointment of:

- (1) *Associate Professor Anne Twomey to fill the casual vacancy among elected academic staff members from the Faculty of Law; and*
- (2) *Associate Professor Lynne Harris to fill the casual vacancy among elected academic staff members from the Faculty of Health Sciences*

for a term expiring 31 December 2009, as set out in the report presented.

6.3.7 Academic Roles, Positions and Careers at the University of Sydney *pages 7-8*

As outlined in item 14.2.1 (2) in the report of the Academic Staffing Committee, the Committee is currently discussing the concept of teaching-intensive, as well as research-intensive, positions at the University. The current discussion paper on this issue is attached for the information of members.

Recommendation

That the Academic Board note the report on academic roles, positions and careers at the University of Sydney, as set out in the report presented.

Principles that underpin these procedures

4. The following principles apply with respect to any dispute about an academic decision, whether dealt with formally or informally:
 - 4.1 **Timeliness.** *All disputes should, wherever possible feasible, be resolved as quickly as possible.* Timelines prescribed in these procedures should always be followed, unless there are exceptional circumstances. If the timeline is to be exceeded by staff, the student must always be informed of the length of, and the reason for, the delay. A student may request an extension to these timelines where they can provide good grounds for the granting of such an extension. Such requests are to be made in writing and, where possible, before the timeline expires. In assessing whether or not a student has submitted an appeal in a timely fashion, or whether an extension should be granted, faculties should give due regard to the circumstances surrounding the appeal and the personal circumstances of the student.

5. **Resolution with teacher**
 - 5.1 If a student is concerned about any academic decision, he or she should first discuss the issue with the relevant teacher or unit of study co-ordinator. Students are encouraged to take the earliest opportunity to discuss their concerns with relevant staff. This should normally be done within 15 ~~20~~ working days of the student being advised of the particular academic decision or, in the case of matters relating to a unit of study, within 15 ~~20~~ working days of the unit of study result being posted. During this time the student should attempt to resolve the matter with the relevant teacher or unit of study co-ordinator.

6. **Approach the Faculty**
 - 6.1 If the student's concerns cannot be resolved under paragraph 5, or because of an apparent failure to follow procedures, the student may then approach the Faculty. The student should put his or her concerns in writing within 15 ~~20~~ working days of the outcome of discussions under paragraph 5. The student will submit their written concerns to the office or staff member nominated by the Faculty to receive student appeals (this information is to be provided to students at the start of each Semester).

Academic Roles, Positions and Careers at the University of Sydney

The Academic Staffing Committee has been examining the stance the University should adopt to ensure that the University has the highest proportion of staff active in research; the highest proportion who are skilled and effective teachers; the lowest number of staff who are underperforming and systems for recruitment, confirmation and promotion that attract high quality staff and support their career development. Some of the issues on which we have reached broad consensus are summarized below.

1. Definition of academic staff

Each member of academic staff has responsibility for setting and maintaining high standards in respect of:

- Knowledge of their academic subject area;
- Contribution to teaching and learning;
- Contribution to research and scholarship;
- Service to their discipline, the community and the University.

The University of Sydney is a research-intensive comprehensive University. Consistent with the definition of a university, we recognise the mutual interaction of teaching, research and learning at all levels within the University. As a consequence, we expect that during their career all members of academic staff will be active in research, as well as committed to and participate in high quality, research-led teaching.

2. Research intensive and teaching intensive roles

We anticipate that a high proportion of staff will continue to be employed in roles that enable them both to teach and to undertake independent research. Individual members of academic staff could also be appointed to or be assigned to roles that would be either teaching intensive or research intensive, or in some deliberate balance between them. The relative balance in intensity could vary over an individual's career, and would depend upon the needs of the unit (Department/Faculty/Program) as determined by the manager, and the career development goals of the individual. These would be determined initially on appointment, and could be reviewed annually as a part of the PM&D process, or less frequently according to need.

It follows that most academic staff will continue to be employed in roles that enable them both to teach and to undertake independent research, but that some can be employed in roles described as "teaching intensive", or "research intensive" as follows:

- **Research-intensive:** staff fulfilling this role will devote most of their effort to research in their discipline. However, it is expected that research-intensive staff will participate in teaching through supervision and instruction of postgraduate students, interaction with Honours students or limited instruction to undergraduate students, recognising the inspirational influence of a profound research culture and philosophy on learning. Performance in research in any academic discipline is traditionally gauged by a range of parameters, including but not limited to quality and extent of peer-reviewed publication record, research income and impact of research. The "research intensive" descriptor would replace the "research only" descriptor that is in current use in the University.
- **Teaching-intensive:** staff fulfilling this role will be recognised by the excellence and contribution of their teaching, but would normally be expected to contribute to research in either their discipline or the pedagogy in their discipline. Teaching performance is judged primarily against its quality, influence and impact, assessed using both objective measures and the honest and informed opinion of colleagues, peers and students, gathered in a valid and reliable manner. Teaching performance will include not only effect on student learning, but also leadership and excellence in development of teaching practice and curricula.

Standards for national teaching awards may be a useful model for this. Teaching quantity alone is no proxy for teaching quality.

Such an approach will have implications for the recruitment, appointment, confirmation and promotion of academic staff. It not only reconfirms the value of research intensive roles within the University, but also allows for appointments into teaching intensive roles, assignment to teaching intensive roles, and would recognize a teaching intensive role (as defined above) for the purposes of promotion

3. Teaching Fellows

At the VCAC Forum in October 2007, the Chemistry School described a formal system of Teaching Fellowships for RHD students that provided genuine early career development and experience in teaching. Integrated with a revised idea of student experience for RHD students, we believe this concept has merit, is formally recognised as Postgraduate Teaching Fellowships and should be more widely employed across the University.

4. Professional and Ancillary teaching roles

The University needs to have are different way for attracting, recognizing and rewarding members of staff who contribute, often on a part time or a casual basis, to University teaching. These include, for example large numbers of experienced professionals who teach clinical skills in the health Faculties, and individuals who supervise practical activities but would not be readily identifiable as an academic staff member as defined above in (1). While these members of the academic community are distinguishable from academic staff, they fulfil an important role and their designation should recognize this in terms of title, levels and ultimately remuneration. We also believe that the boundary between these staff and academic staff should be permeable, so that staff on either side can, as their interests change, and dependent on unit needs, move across the boundary.

Bruce Sutton, Derrick Armstrong, Don Nutbeam. April 2008

AGENDA ITEM 7

Report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal

7.1 Report on Senate Matters

7.1.1 Report on the Senate meeting held on 17 March 2008

Senate, at its meeting held on 17 March 2008:

- (1) approved the naming of a laboratory within the Blackburn Building as The Microsearch Laboratory.
- (2) noted submissions to the Minister for Youth, Kate Ellis, on Services, Amenities and Representation for Australian University Students from the University, the Union, SRC, SUPRA and SUSF on the impact of VSU.
- (3) noted the following reports:
 - recent proposed amendments to the Higher Education Support Act have removed the obligations on the University to comply with the former Government's National Governance Protocols as a condition of Commonwealth funding for Universities.
 - the Australian Dental Council has accorded Full Accreditation for five years to the University's Bachelor of Oral Health program, following a review visit late last year.
 - University of Sydney researchers Dr Paulo Santos, Dr Shyamal Chowdhury and Professor Mark Stevenson have been very successful in attracting grants under the AusAID Australian Development Research Awards scheme for development projects in the SE Asian region.
 - the University of Sydney team was victorious in the Australian National Rounds of the Jessup International Law Moot in February 2008.
 - Sir William Tyree OBE accepted Senate's invitation to receive the honorary degree of Doctor of Engineering in 2008
- (4) noted that the Community and International reports.

Recommendation

The Academic Board note the report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal on matters considered by Senate at its meeting of 17 March 2008.