



Academic Board Minutes

Academic Board Officer: Miss E R Ring

Secretariat, Main Quadrangle, A14

Phone: 9351 3305; Fax: 9351 3572

E-mail: E.Ring@secretariat.usyd.edu.au

Web site: <http://www.usyd.edu.au/su/ab/>

**Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board
held at 2 pm on Wednesday 10 February 1999 in the Professorial Board Room**

There were present: the Chair (Professor R Pesman) presiding, the Deputy Chairs (Associate Professor R Atherton and Professors D J H Cockayne, J Lawler and J Sachs), the Acting Vice-Chancellor (Professor K Eltis), Mr W T Arthur, Dr A E Brew, Professor B Cass, Associate Professor L Copeland, Professor R Dunn, Associate Professor C J Durrant, Dr A Fekete, Professors L D Field, M A Harris and R Hewitt, Associate Professor P Jones, Professors J F Kinnear and K Lester, Associate Professor A F Masters, Professors R McPhedran, D Nutbeam, S E Pretty and J Raper, Associate Professor A Reynolds, Ms P Reynolds, Professors R L Russell and V Spate, Associate Professor G M Stone, Mr D Trudinger, Ms G L Warnken, Professor J Webber, Messrs L Whittington and R Wilson and Professor P Wolnizer.

Present as observers were: Dr W Adams (Secretary of the Academic Board), Professors L M Koder and D Napper, Mr J Shipp and Professors D Siddle and J A Young.

Present by invitation were: Dr C Asmar, Dr D Cockrell, Ms O Cornelius, Ms N Downey, Ms P Kamvounias and Mrs L Rose.

In attendance: Miss E R Ring.

☆ **1. Apologies**

The Board noted that apologies had been received from: the Vice-Chancellor and Principal (Professor G Brown), Professor C Adam, Associate Professor D Dragovich, Dr D P Godden, Professors K Lee and S R Leeder, Dr P Phibbs, Professors R Rose, G P Steven and D Weisbrot.

(File 021/0005/00003)

2. Arrangement of Agenda

☆ **2.1 Starring of items**

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

The following additional items were starred: 12.1.2 and 13.1.2.

2.2 Adoption of unstarred items

Resolution 1/99

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

3. Minutes of previous meeting

Resolution 2/99

That the Academic Board adopt the minutes of the previous meeting held on 16 December 1998 as a true record.

(File 028/0030/00016)

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

5. Report of the Chair

5.1 Report on Senate matters

5.1.1 Report of the Senate meeting held on 1 February 1999

Resolution 3/99

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board on academic matters considered by Senate at its meeting on 1 February 1999.

(File 021/0006/00008)



5.2 General report

5.2.1 Alternative Chair

Resolution 4/99

That the Academic Board approve Professor David Cockayne as Alternative Chair of the Board, to hold office to 31 December 2000.

5.2.2 Reference from Senate: Undergraduate courses

The Chair reported as follows:

"As was reported to the December meeting of the Board, the Senate has requested that the Board consider the length of the generalist undergraduate degrees and the option of making all professional degrees graduate courses, and that the Board report back to the April meeting of Senate. December—January is not a good time to undertake a wide-ranging investigation, but some initial work has been done. Professor Lawler, Chair, Undergraduate Studies Committee, and I have held meetings with Natalie Downey and Charles Davidson who have been collecting data, and I have written to all Deans asking for their views. The Senate request will be discussed at the next meeting of the Undergraduate Studies Committee when the feasibility of setting up a working party will be explored. Already some interesting figures have emerged. For example, a move from three- to four-year degrees in the generalist faculties would have very considerable implications for admissions. Whereas at the moment the admission to Arts 1 is c.1400, if we introduce a four-year Arts degree, the first year intake in eight years' time would be reduced to c.800.

I would welcome submissions on the request from Senate from members of the Board."

Various members of the Board commented on the implications both for students and for the University of three-year generalist degrees being extended into four-year programs and of professional degrees becoming graduate programs. The Chair advised that the issues raised would be taken into consideration.

Resolution 5/99

That the Academic Board note the action taken by the Chair in response to a reference from Senate concerning undergraduate courses.

5.2.3 Other business

The Chair reported as follows:

5.2.3.1 Welcome to new members and observers

“I would very much like to welcome all new members of the Board, and in particular the new Dean of Economics, Professor Peter Wolnizer. I would ask that you all make your presence felt and your voice heard in our deliberations.

The participants in the 1998 Women and Leadership Programme have asked if they might observe the Academic Board during this year. I would like to welcome the first two observers from the programme to this Board meeting, Dr Christine Asmar from the Centre for Teaching and Learning and Ms Patty Kamvounias from the Faculty of Economics. I hope that they will not be too bemused by proceedings.”

5.2.3.2 Appreciation of Professor Anderson

“As there was no meeting of the Academic Board in January, the Board did not have the opportunity to express, before his retirement as Deputy Vice-Chancellor, its appreciation of the contribution that Derek Anderson has made to the Board's ongoing life and work. Thus today, on my own behalf and on that of the previous Chair, John Mack, the Deputy Chairs past and present, and all members of the Board, I would wish to make public acknowledgment of Derek Anderson's contribution to the academic life and values of this University.

Derek Anderson has always held very strong beliefs on the central importance of academic boards in universities. He came to us after five years as the presiding member of the equivalent body at the University of New South Wales, the Professorial and then Academic Senate, and with a long and impressive record of commitment to collegiality and to the essential role of academic boards in the maintenance of academic and scholarly values, procedures and courtesies. As the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Staffing), Derek Anderson had the particular responsibility of liaising with the Board, and he took that responsibility very seriously. He was acutely aware of the problems as well as the advantages created by the reduction in the size of the Board and was very wise and generous in his counsel on how the sometimes conflicting goals of effectiveness, academic leadership and wide consultation might best be met.

‘Gentleman and scholar’ might be a clichéd phrase but I can think of no other that so well sums up Derek Anderson, and

I use 'gentleman' in both senses of the word. His presence has done much to ensure that the University remains a place of civilisation and civility."

5.2.3.3 Appreciation of Professor Hewitt

"This is the last meeting of the Academic Board that Professor Bob Hewitt will attend as Dean of the Faculty of Science. Bob Hewitt became Dean of Science in 1988 and since then he has taken a very strong and effective leadership role in both his Faculty and in the University as a whole. The eleven-year period of his deanship was a time of enormous changes in higher education in Australia and of new pressures and demands on this University. His commitment to his Faculty was total and Bob Hewitt has worked assiduously to ensure that the Faculty of Science would keep abreast of and anticipate changes in demand and expectations. At the Academic Board, Bob Hewitt has defended the interests of his Faculty passionately and firmly but also always with integrity, courtesy and with sensitivity to the interests and views of other parts of the University community. Beyond attending to the interests of his Faculty at the Board, Bob Hewitt has vigorously defended academic traditions and values. We shall very much miss his presence and his conscience in our future deliberations. I speak on behalf of my predecessor, the Deputy Chairs and all members of the Board."

5.2.3.4 Flexible Learning

"Members of the Board will be aware of my commitment not to let the work of sub-committees and working parties of the Board fall into black holes. Thus I would like to bring the Board up to date on Flexible Learning. The Board was advised at the December meeting that the Working Party on Flexible Learning was developing a plan of action in the light of responses received from faculties on the draft paper on Flexible Learning. Among the issues identified by the Working Party was the need to bring about a broad cultural change in order to implement some of the recommendations in the paper. The responses from faculties indicated concern about the lack of resources to implement flexible learning and some uncertainty as to what was meant by flexible learning in the paper. Suggested mechanisms to kick-start cultural change included:

- staff development sessions to help staff understand what can be achieved on both the small and the large scale to implement flexible learning; and
- the production of an explanatory aid to flexible learning which could identify those innovations which were of little cost as well as those which were more resource and/or labour intensive.

I am pleased to report that the Centre for Teaching and Learning has created a one-year academic position in Staff Development in Educational Technology, with a particular emphasis on flexible learning. This is an initiative of the Centre which nicely dovetails with the priorities of the Board. It is intended that as soon as the position is filled, its occupant will meet with the Flexible Learning Working Party to discuss ways in which the relevant parts of the paper on flexible learning can be implemented.

I would also like to express the Board's appreciation of another initiative of the Centre for Teaching and Learning, and that is the creation of another one-year position, this time in the area of assessment to assist in the preparations for the implementation of the 1998 Board policy statement on assessment."

5.2.3.5 Examinations Working Party

"The first meeting of the Board's Working Party to explore options on cutting down the length of the examination periods was held last week and the Working Party will meet again next week. Despite the diversity of strongly-held opinion across the University, I believe that the Working Party may be able to make some recommendations that will both shorten the examining period and allow for a range of practices."

5.2.3.6 Language and International Committee

"One area where we are still lagging is in the setting up of the Language and International Committee of the Board. The membership is set out in the agenda papers today, and I would hope to establish the pattern of meetings for the year and hold the first meeting next month. Among the priority areas for the Committee I would signal an all-out attempt to place pressure on the government and bureaucracy to give much greater importance to the teaching of languages in schools and the consideration of ways and means by which a language component might be included in professional degree programmes."

5.2.3.7 Higher School Certificate

"Professor McPhedran has taken responsibility over the past two months for negotiations relating to the reform of the HSC. At the moment the main preoccupation is the close scrutiny of the new HSC Year 11 and Year 12 syllabi, and the universities have representatives on the review committees for each subject. The issue of access by HSC students to University courses is for the moment on the back-burner."

5.2.3.8 Young Australian of the Year

"On behalf of the Board, I would like to congratulate the 1999 Young Australian of the Year, Brian Gaensler, who completed his PhD in Physics at this University."

The Board endorsed the Chair's tribute to Professors Anderson and Hewitt with acclamation.

Abstudy

Professor Nutbeam referred to the discussion about Abstudy at the last Board meeting and asked that the Board agree to seek more information about it. The Chair undertook to do so and to report to the next Board meeting.

Note: Subsequent to the meeting, the Acting Vice-Chancellor confirmed that advice on Abstudy had been sent by the Registrar to Deans and College Principals, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and others including the Director of the Koori Centre, the Director of Yooroang Garang, the Presidents of the SRC and SUPRA, the Director, Student Services and the Director, Student Centre.

Resolution 6/99

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair on other business.

(Files 021/0006/00008, 035/0028/00003, 028/0002/00164, 135/0001/03775, 135/0001/02687, 028/0002/00304, 028/0002/00313, 028/0002/00311, 162/0001/06069, 104/0001/00014)

6. Report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal

6.1 Report on Senate matters

6.1.1 Report of the Senate meeting held on 1 February 1999

Resolution 7/99

That the Academic Board note the report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal on matters considered by Senate at its meeting on 1 February 1999.

(File 021/0006/00007)



6.2 General report

The Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Eltis, reported on the following matters:

6.2.1 Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Humanities and Social Sciences)

Professor David Weisbrot had resigned as Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Humanities and Social Sciences) and would be resuming a Chair in Law from 22 March; he was currently on sick-leave. Professor Bettina Cass was Acting Pro-Vice-Chancellor while Professor Weisbrot was on sick-leave. Professor Ros Pesman would take up the position of Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Humanities and Social Sciences) from 22 March for the remainder of Professor Weisbrot's term of office. The position would be advertised internally and externally.

6.2.2 1999 Admissions

The University had done very well in meeting its 1999 targets: it had met over 95% of its targets in the first round and had therefore been well-placed for the second round in which the UAI had been lifted in most cases.

At the end of the first round, 138 full-fee paying offers had been accepted, and it was expected that this number would rise after the second round acceptances. It was expected that the final enrolment figure would be much higher than in 1998.

At Senate a special vote of thanks had been recorded to Bill Adams and his staff, and to the Deans and others involved with the process; to this he wished to add his own personal thanks. The admissions process had been executed extremely well with a minimum of anxiety.

Consideration would need to be given to varying the approaches taken to attracting students into the University. Other universities had implemented bonus schemes, early offers and the like, and there was a general view that the University needed to address this matter. The Vice-Chancellor had asked for a paper to be prepared on the issue.

6.2.3 Senate matters

Finance Committee

Mr P Burrows had been elected as Chair of the Finance Committee, for a one-year term of office. Senate had elected Associate Professor R Armstrong, Mr D Hoare, Mrs R Kaldor, Professor S Leeder and Ms V Pratt to membership of the Finance Committee for a one-year term of office.

Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)

An offer of appointment to the position of Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) had been made.

Senate meetings

There had been discussion about the format of meetings during the year, especially that for the meeting scheduled for 6 April. It had been agreed that a normal, formal meeting would be held on that date, followed by a Forum with a dual focus: plans for the Sesquicentenary would be discussed; and there would also be discussion of a speech by Lord Dearing in October 1998 in Melbourne on what was required to belong to the group of the top 50 universities in the world.

Australian Graduate School of Management

The first meeting of the AGSM Board had been held the previous Friday when there had been a review of its budget, enrolments and future directions. Professor Dodd had been asked to prepare a vision statement to reflect the AGSM's goals.

Benchmarking

A benchmarking exercise involving 32 universities across Australia was being undertaken, with funding being provided by Professor Ken McKinnon with the support of the AVCC, DETYA and IDP. When the project had been developed, all universities would have the opportunity to participate in a trial project.

During the ensuing discussion, Associate Professor Atherton asked if any data were available on the progress of fee-paying students and the percentage that had succeeded in gaining HECS-liable places. The Acting Vice-Chancellor reported that this data could be extracted and made available to the Board.

Associate Professor Masters referred to the report at the last Board meeting on ARC and other major grants and suggested that a similar report in respect of teaching grants and awards would be of interest to the Board. The Chair responded that she concurred and would address the matter.

6.2.4 Resignation of Chair of the Board

The Chair reported that she would be resigning as Chair of the Board from 22 March 1999. As her resignation was taking place at the beginning of her second term of office, the rules required that an election be held to fill the position of Chair of the Board.

On Associate Professor Masters' motion, the Board resolved with acclamation as follows:

Resolution 8/99

That the Academic Board record its thanks to and appreciation of Professor Pesman during her chairmanship of the Board.

Resolution 9/99

That the Academic Board note the Acting Vice-Chancellor's general report.

(Files 021/0006/00007, 135/0001/01548, 135/0001/03026, 135/0001/03703,
151/0012/00051, 036/0006/00136, 071/0006/00128)

7. Reports of Faculties and Boards

7.1 Faculty of Architecture

7.1.1 Receipt of report

Resolution 10/99

That the Academic Board receive and note the report of the Faculty of Architecture.

7.1.2 Semesters 1999 and 2000

Resolution 11/99

That the Academic Board approve the proposed semester dates for the years 1999 and 2000 for the Faculty of Architecture as presented in the report.

(File 036/0006/00179)

8. Undergraduate Studies Committee

8.1 Report of the meeting held on 16 December 1998

8.1.1 Receipt of report

Resolution 12/99

That the Academic Board receive and note the report of the Undergraduate Studies Committee meeting held on 16 December 1998.

8.1.2 Approval in principle for a new degree/major changes to an existing degree

Faculty of Agriculture

8.1.2.1 Bachelor of Resource Economics

Resolution 13/99

That the Academic Board recommend that Senate approve in principle the proposal of the Faculty of Agriculture for the new degree of Bachelor of Resource Economics, for introduction in 2000, as set out in the report presented.

(File 003/0013/00022)

8.1.2.2 Bachelor of Land and Water Science

Resolution 14/99

That the Academic Board recommend that Senate approve in principle the proposal of the Faculty of Agriculture for the new degree of Bachelor of Land and Water Science, for introduction in 2000, as set out in the report presented.

(File 003/0013/00023)



8.2 Report of the Chair

Professor Lawler, Chair of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, reported as follows:

8.2.1 Credit point system

This year would see the completion of the implementation of the standard 48-unit credit point system for undergraduate courses.

8.2.2 Review of resolutions relating to undergraduate courses

She wished to thank those who had commented on the draft proposal for the revision of the resolutions relating to undergraduate courses on which Ms Downey had been working. Further consultations would be undertaken, and it was hoped to present a proposal to the Board that would be implemented in 2000. The Committee would be working on the delegations of authority associated with the revised resolutions during the year.

Resolution 15/99

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

(File 028/0002/00290)

9. Graduate Studies Committee

9.1 Receipt of report

Resolution 16/99

That the Academic Board note that the Graduate Studies Committee had not met since its last report to the Board.



9.2 Report of the Chair

No further report was presented at the meeting.

(File 028/0002/00291)

10. Teaching and Learning Committee

10.1 Receipt of report

Resolution 17/99

That the Academic Board note that the Teaching and Learning Committee had not met since its last report to the Board.



10.2 Report of the Chair

The Chair had no further report for the meeting.

(File 028/0025/00027)

11. Research Committee

11.1 Receipt of report

Resolution 18/99

That the Academic Board note that the Research Committee had not met since its last report to the Board.

- ☆ **11.2 Report of the Chair**
 The Chair had no further report for the meeting.

(File 028/0002/00019)

12. Library Committee

12.1 Report of the meeting held on 23 November 1998

12.1.1 Receipt of report

Resolution 19/99

That the Academic Board receive and note the report of the Library Committee meeting held on 23 November 1998.

- ☆ **12.1.2 Proceedings of the Committee**

Following a brief discussion, the Board resolved as follows:

Resolution 20/99

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the Library Committee meeting held on 23 November 1998 relating to the following matters:

- 1.01/98 Welcome
- 1.02/98 Terms of Reference and Membership
- 1.03/98 University Librarian's Report
- 1.04/98 1998 Serial Subscriptions Cancellations
- 1.05/98 Library Funding
- 1.06/98 1999 Collections and Access Budget
- 1.07/98 Collections and Access Allocation Proposals
- 1.08/98 Reciprocal Borrowing Scheme
- 1.09/98 Library Restructuring Programme
- 1.10/98 Schedule of Meetings
- 1.11/98 Other Business
 - 1.11.1/98 Flexible Learning
 - 1.11.2/98 Library Processes

- ☆ **12.2 Report of the Chair**
 The Chair had no further report for the meeting.

(File 028/0002/00321)

13. Academic and Staffing Committee

13.1 Second Report of the meeting held on 25 November 1998

13.1.1 Receipt of report

Resolution 21/99

That the Academic Board receive and note the second report of the Academic Staffing Committee meeting held on 25 November 1998.

- ☆ **13.1.2 Policy Document: The Appointment of all Categories of Academic Staff**
 The Chair of the Academic Staffing Committee, Associate Professor Atherton, spoke to the recommendation that the Board commend the amended "Policy Document - Appointment of all Categories of Academic Staff" to Senate for approval. Professor

Atherton reported that the existing policy had been due for review and that the proposed new policy addressed suggestions and comments made since the implementation of the existing policy and the Higher Education Contract of Employment (HECE) Award. There had been broad consultations with the Deans, Pro-Vice-Chancellors and Personnel staff during its development.

During the ensuing discussion, the following issues were raised:

- in respect of multi-level advertisements, it was not appropriate to fill a position between two levels, as sometimes occurred, but there was an on-going need to be able to advertise positions at two levels, for example, Level D or E, rather than to run two advertisements; guidelines were needed for those situations when positions were advertised at more than one level;
- the appropriateness of the inclusion of the nominee of the Academic Board amongst those who were to determine the level and step of the offer of appointment;
- personnel staff should check the advertisements and the selection criteria to ensure comparability; while the advertisement would take precedence, the two were not always the same;
- an extra departmental member on the committee would be useful;
- it was suggested that the requirement that interviews normally be held at the time of the selection committee meeting be abolished; it was also suggested that it was best practice that the interviews be held at the time of the meeting but that the inclusion of “normally” did allow for other practices; and
- in respect of the provision that an offer of appointment on nomination/fixed-term appointment lapse after two weeks, it was suggested that three weeks would be a more appropriate time-frame.

In response to comments by Professor Young, Professor Atherton agreed to take up the issue of the development of criteria for the award of Adjunct Titles.

Resolution 22/99

That the Academic Board commend to Senate the amended Policy Document - Appointment of all Categories of Academic Staff, subject to further consideration being given to the matters raised during the meeting.



13.2 Report of the Chair

The Chair had no further report for the meeting.

(Files 028/0002/00325, 122/0043/60007)

14. General Business

14.1 Membership of the Academic Board

14.1.1 1999 membership of the Board

Resolution 23/99

That the Academic Board note the 1999 membership of the Board.

14.1.2 Casual vacancies in Board membership

14.1.2.1 One academic staff member elected from the academic staff members of each Faculty

Resolution 24/99

That the Academic Board appoint the following persons to membership of the Board under Section 43.(4) of the Academic Governance Rules, to hold office for the periods indicated:

Professor P Springborg	10.2.99 to 31.12. 2000
Dr D Cockrell	10.2.99 to 31.12.2000
Professor M Jabri	10.2.99 to 31.12.99

14.1.2.2 Five persons who are heads of departments

Resolution 25/99

That the Academic Board appoint the following persons to membership of the Board under Section 43.(2) of the Academic Governance Rules, to hold office for the periods indicated:

Professor Sue Armitage	10.2.99 to 31.12.2000
Professor John Carter	10.2.99 to 31.12.99

14.1.2.3 Five persons who are non-professorial members of the academic staff

Resolution 26/99

That the Academic Board appoint Miss C Price to membership of the Board under Section 43.(2) of the Academic Governance Rules, to hold office from 10 February 1999 to 31 December 1999.

(File 021/0002/00001)

14.2 Academic Governance Rules relating to the Academic Board

Resolution 27/99

That the Academic Board note the Academic Governance Rules relating to the Board, consolidated to incorporate all changes approved by Senate up to and including 2 November 1998.

14.3 Membership of the Language and International Committee

Resolution 28/99

That the Academic Board note the membership of the Language and International Committee.

(File 028/0002/00328)

14.4 Report of the Promotions Committee for Professor

Resolution 29/99

That the Academic Board note the report on promotions to professor.

(File 028/0002/00329)



14.5 Notice of motion

Mr Trudinger had given notice that he would move three motions, as set out in the agenda. The University Librarian had provided written comments in respect of the proposed motions, also as set out in the agenda.

In addressing the motions previously circulated, Mr Trudinger made specific reference to Motions 1 and 2. He identified as an important issue in 1999 for students, academics and for universities across Australia the

question of the future for our libraries. Mr Trudinger thanked the University Librarian for his comments in respect of proposed Motion 1. He advised that this motion had become redundant in view of Mr Shipp's comments, but that he did have a number of points of difference: (i) for many postgraduates, reciprocal borrowing was not an add-on service but a necessity; (ii) that consultative mechanisms existed with student representative associations, and client surveying thus could have been done; and (iii) such usage fees did act as deterrents.

Mr Trudinger moved as follows:

That postgraduate students be exempted from payment of the reciprocal borrowing usage fee in 1999.

The motion was seconded and opened for discussion.

Professor Hewitt pointed out that the Academic Board was not empowered to direct the University Librarian on resource matters. It was also made clear that the reciprocal borrowing facility did not supersede the inter-library loan scheme.

After some discussion, the Board resolved as follows:

Resolution 30/99

That the Academic Board refer the issue back to the Library Committee and to the Graduate Studies Committee for consideration and advice to the Board.

(File 097/0024/00003)

The meeting closed at 3.30 pm.

Signed as a correct record

Chair

Date