



The University of Sydney

Academic Board Minutes

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Minutes of the meeting of the Academic Board held at 2 pm on Wednesday 13 March 2002 in the Professorial Board Room

There were present: the Chair (Professor J Sachs) presiding, the Deputy Chairs (Associate Professors P McCallum, A Reynolds and R T Ross), the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Professor K Eltis), Professors S I Benrimoj, R Y Ebied, B Hesketh, H Kendig, S R Leeder, D B Melrose, R Newman, K Parton, S E Pretty, J Raper and G Sherington, Associate Professors R Drynan, C B Gillies, A F Masters, P Phibbs, C Russell, L Tong, N C Weber and S West, Mr K Barlow, Ms P Kamvounias, Mrs M McKerchar and Ms G Wong.

Also present: Secretary of the Academic Board (Dr M Edmond, Acting Registrar).

Present as observers: Professors A Brewer, L Field and P Ramsden.

Present by invitation: Professor G Gill.

In attendance: Miss K Neveldsen.

★ 1. Apologies

The Board noted that apologies had been received from: the Vice-Chancellor and Principal (Professor G Brown), Professors C Adam, S Armitage, S Chapman, L Copeland, J Lawler, K Lester, D Napper, R Pesman, B Roufogalis, J Webber, P Wolnizer and J A Young, Associate Professors W M C Maxwell and G Murray, Drs A Brew, L Carson, M O'Loughlin, M Torode and B Winter and Mr J Shipp.

(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.

No additional items were starred.

2.2 Adoption of unstarred items

Resolution 34/02

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

3. Minutes of previous meeting

Resolution 35/02

That the Academic Board adopt the minutes of the previous meeting held on 13 February 2002 as a true record.

(File 2002/309)

4. Business arising from the minutes

There was no business arising from the previous minutes.

★ 5. Report of the Chair

5.1 Report on Senate matters

5.1.1 Report of the Senate meeting held on 3 March 2002

Resolution 36/02

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 March 2002.

Action: No further action required.

5.2 General report

5.2.1 Review of the Academic Board and the Academic Forum

The Chair reported that Senate had considered the Final Report to Senate of the Review of the Academic Board and the Academic Forum at its meeting of Sunday 3 March 2002.

The Chair had delivered a presentation outlining the history of the Academic Board at the University of Sydney and comparing the functions of Academic Boards at similar institutions. The second part of the presentation provided Senate with an overview of the Final Report and detail regarding the recommendations.

It was recommended that Senate:

1. note the Final Report to Senate of the Review of the Academic Board and the Academic Forum;
2. adopt as a principle:
That, subject to the authority of Senate, the Academic Board is the principal academic decision-making body within the University of Sydney, with responsibility for maintaining the highest standards in teaching, scholarship and research and for safeguarding the academic freedom of the University.
3. disestablish the Academic Forum;
4. amend the University of Sydney By-law 1999;
5. amend the University of Sydney (Amendment Act) Rule 1999;
6. rescind the existing Academic Governance Rules relating to the Academic Board; and
7. adopt new Academic Governance Rules relating to the Academic Board.

The Chair reported that Senate adopted the recommendations as proposed, except that Senate:

- amended the academic governance principle; and
- adopted, in principle, recommendation 7 with the exception of the proposed terms of reference and the election process relating to the election of faculty representatives which it referred to the Academic Board for further consideration.

(a) Academic governance principle

The academic governance principle adopted by Senate:

That, subject to the governing authority and powers of Senate and to the powers of the Vice-Chancellor, the Academic Board has principal responsibility to:

- (1) maintain the highest standards in teaching, scholarship and research safeguarding the academic freedom of the University;
- (2) oversee and monitor the development of all academic activities of the University; and
- (3) communicate with the academic community through the faculties, colleges and boards of studies and similar organisational units.

was discussed by the Board.

It was noted that the purpose of the principle was to recognise the role of the Academic Board and to ensure that Senate was not abdicating its duties to the Board. The principle adopted by Senate had been drafted to ensure that Senate maintained ultimate responsibility for academic governance.

It was also noted that the powers of the Vice-Chancellor had been incorporated as these were specified in the University of Sydney Act.

During discussion it was agreed that the principle would be incorporated into the Rules that would govern the Board and the principle would be enacted through the detailed terms of reference.

The Board noted that Senate had not intended to undermine the capacity of the Academic Board to give advice, by amending the principle, but had proposed the amendment due to concerns relating to the legal implications of the proposed wording.

It was also noted that the use of the words "principal", "primary" and "paramount" had been discussed extensively and the final term would likely be set when the Rules were finalised by the University's solicitors.

There was some concern expressed about the ambiguous wording of the principle, especially in relation to the Board's role in safeguarding the academic freedom of the University. It was agreed that this needed to be clarified so as not to limit

either the role of the Academic Board or Senate in relation to this issue.

The Board resolved to adopt the principle with the following amendments (additions indicated by underline, deletions indicated by strikethrough):

That, subject to the governing authority and powers of Senate and to the powers of the Vice-Chancellor, the Academic Board has principal responsibility ~~to~~:

- (1) to maintain the highest standards in teaching, scholarship and research and to safeguarding the academic freedom of the University;
- (2) to oversee and monitor the development of all academic activities of the University; and
- (3) to communicate with the academic community through the faculties, colleges and boards of studies and similar organisational units.

(b) Proposed terms of reference of the Academic Board

The Board discussed the proposed terms of reference noting its particular disappointment with Senate's amendment to proposed term of reference (3)(a). Members expressed concern that the rewording did not address the Board's desire to streamline the approval process but that the proposal maintained the current processes, although this appeared unclear due to the phrasing of the term of reference.

It was noted that the term of reference reinforced the current process and the Board could monitor the process for a period of time and should any concerns be identified, develop a proposal for Senate to consider at a later date.

Members noted that term of reference (3)(b) complemented (3)(a) and provided the Board with authority to oversee all other aspects of courses.

Term of reference (2)(a) was also discussed with concern expressed about the replacement of the word "all" with "academic" and the implication that this reduced the Board's ability to provide advice on the academic implications of non-academic decisions such as resourcing. It was noted that term of reference (2)(d) would provide opportunity for the provision of such advice.

Clarification was sought in relation to the ability of the Board to establish committees to perform some of its functions and it was noted that this is a current provision in relation to some of the committees of the Board.

Members agreed with the amendments made with one exception.

(c) **Election procedure for membership of the Academic Board**

The Chair advised members that Senate had expressed concern that the election of faculty representatives by the Dean's Advisory Committee (or equivalent) was too managerial and limited the ability of faculty members to participate.

The Board was asked to consider options including supporting its original recommendation, maintaining a model similar to the current processes, or delegating the responsibility for establishing the electoral college to the faculties.

Members were reminded that the reason for providing for faculty representatives to be elected by the Dean's Advisory Committee was to provide a link between management and academic concerns at the faculty and Board level and to allow for participation by all members of the faculties.

Some members of the Board felt that this method did not provide for election of representatives who would provide University-wide academic leadership, nor would it improve the current perception of the Academic Board as having a too managerial focus.

The Board focussed discussion on the implications of faculties determining eligibility in relation to the elections and concern was expressed about the potential for variances across faculties.

Members expressed a desire for elections that provided a balance of providing opportunity for participation, transparency and practicality.

The Board agreed that faculties would be required to define the electoral college, within guidelines set by the Board, for approval by the Board. The President of SUPRA wished it recorded that SUPRA opposed the proposal.

Resolution 37/02

That the Academic Board:

- (1) note the amended academic governance principle;
- (2) endorse the proposed terms of reference of the Academic Board; and
- (3) amend the election procedure in relation to faculty representatives to provide for faculties to define the electoral college, within guidelines set by the Board, for approval by the Board.

Action: Chair of the Board to refer matters relating to the Review of the Academic Board and the Academic Forum to Senate for approval.

(File 2001/3342)

5.2.2 Strategies for the Academic Board to Review its Performance

The Chair noted that at the last meeting, the Board had been advised of her attendance at the National Chairs of Academic Boards Conference which had discussed a number of issues, particularly relating to quality assurance. The Chair had signalled the start of consideration of ways in which the performance of the Academic Board could be monitored and assessed.

The Board noted that the issue of the Academic Board's accountability, and processes by which this was to be measured, was also raised at the Senate meeting.

The Chair advised members that preliminary discussions with the Chair of the Academic Board at the University of New South Wales and the University of Queensland, potential benchmarking institutions, had commenced. The Board noted that the Chair was developing strategies for the Academic Board to review its performance and would bring further information to a future meeting of the Board.

Resolution 38/02

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board relating to Strategies for the Academic Board to Review its Performance, as set out in the report presented.

Action: Chair of the Academic Board to develop strategies for the Academic Board to review its performance and bring to a future meeting of the Board.

(File 2001/3342)

★ 6. Report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal

6.1 Report on Senate matters

6.1.1 Report of the Senate meeting held on 3 March 2002

In the absence of the Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Resources), Professor K Eltis, highlighted items in the report of the Senate meeting, noting that the Vice-Chancellor had delivered a presentation on his perspectives for 2002 raising three areas for priority including development, international matters and quality issues.

In response to a query raised in relation to the proposed development of a Senate/Sports Liaison Committee, outlined in the tabled report, the Board agreed to recommend that Senate consider incorporating into the terms of reference of the Committee provision for the Committee to monitor academic opportunities and progress particularly for students undertaking study on sporting scholarships.

Resolution 39/02

That the Academic Board note the report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, and the additional comments of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Resources), on matters considered by Senate at its meeting held on 3 March 2002.

Action: Chair of the Academic Board to recommend that Senate incorporate provision for the Senate/Sports Liaison Committee to monitor academic opportunities and progress particularly for students undertaking study on sporting scholarships.

6.2 General report

In the absence of the Vice-Chancellor, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Planning and Resources), Professor K Eltis advised members of the Board of significant items of interest. This included that the University had submitted draft Guidelines to the Minister for Education and Training in accordance with the requirements of the new legislation concerning the commercial activities of universities. It was noted that the Guidelines provided were to be the subject of further discussion at Finance Committee and Senate.

The Board noted that while the University was not scheduled to be audited by the Australian Universities Quality Agency (AUQA) in 2003, quality assurance remained a high priority.

It was noted that an agenda was being prepared for the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Committee Forum in April at which it was expected there would be detailed consideration of issues raised by the Vice-Chancellor in his presentation at the Senate Colloquium in March.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor advised the Board that the development of the Centre for Regional Education, Orange (CREO) was progressing well with positive co-operation from the Department of Education and Training.

Resolution 40/02

That the Academic Board note the report of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

(File 021/0006/00007)

7. Report of the Academic Forum

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7.1 Oral report of the Chair

The Chair of the Academic Forum, Associate Professor A F Masters, noted there was nothing further to report.

Resolution 41/02

That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Forum.

Action: No further action required.

7.2 Report of the meeting held on 25 February 2002

7.2.1 Receipt of report

Resolution 42/02

That the Academic Board receive and note the report of the Academic Forum meeting held on 25 February 2002.

Action: No further action required.

7.2.2 Forum focus: Academic Board Faculty Review Visits

Resolution 43/02

That the Academic Board note the Forum Focus of the Academic Forum meeting held on 25 February 2002.

Action: No further action required.

7.2.3 Proceedings of the Forum

Resolution 44/02

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the Academic Forum meeting held on 25 February 2002, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

(File 028/0039/00002)

8. Reports of Faculties and Boards

8.1 Report of the Faculty of Architecture

8.1.1 Receipt of report

Resolution 45/02

That the Academic Board receive and note the report of the Faculty of Architecture meeting held on 12 December 2001.

Action: No further action required.

8.1.2 Amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate: Constitution of the Faculty of Architecture

Resolution 46/02

That the Academic Board recommend that Senate amend the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Constitution of the Faculty of Architecture, with immediate effect, as set out in the report presented.

Action: Chair of the Board to recommend that Senate amend the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Constitution of the Faculty of Architecture.

8.1.3 Semester and vacation dates 2002

Resolution 47/02

That the Academic Board note the amendment of the semester and vacation dates for the Faculty of Architecture for the year 2002, as set out in the report presented.

Action: Dean and Faculty Manager, Faculty of Architecture to note that the Board approved the semester and vacation dates for the Faculty for the year 2002.

(File 036/0006/00179)

★ 9. Report of the Graduate Studies Committee

9.1 Oral report of the Chair

The Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee, Associate Professor R Ross, drew the attention of the Board to the item in the report relating to deferment of public availability of theses, noting that the issue of confidential material needed to be addressed as soon as it was identified rather than when a thesis was submitted for examination.

The Board also noted that the Committee had again expressed concern about the length of time taken in examination of PhD theses and noted that the Chair of the Committee would again contact Deans regarding this.

In response to a question relating to the deferment of public availability of theses, it was agreed that discussion with the Business Liaison Office was required due to the nature of the issues involved including intellectual property and commercial agreements.

Resolution 48/02

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

Action: Chair of the Graduate Studies Committee to discuss the issue of deferment of public availability of theses with the Business Liaison Office.

9.2 Report of the meeting held by circulation in February 2002

9.2.1 Receipt of report

Resolution 49/02

That the Academic Board receive and note the report of the Graduate Studies Committee meeting by circulation in February 2002.

Action: No further action required.

9.2.2 Proceedings of the Committee

(1) **Membership of the PhD Award Sub-Committee**

The Committee re-appointed Associate Professor A F Masters as the Chair of the PhD Award Sub-Committee and appointed Dr M Boughton, Faculty of Nursing, Professor A Brewer, Faculty of Economics and Business and Associate Professor Brian James, Faculty of Science, to membership of the Sub-Committee.

(File 028/0002/00308)

(2) **Membership of the Coursework Sub-Committee**

The Committee appointed Professor A Brewer, Faculty of Economics and Business, as the Chair of the Coursework Sub-Committee.

(File 2002/809)

(3) **Reports from Faculties**

(a) **Faculty of Medicine**

On the recommendation of the Combined Board of Postgraduate Studies of the Faculties of Dentistry, Medicine and Pharmacy, the Committee approved the introduction of a new two credit point unit of study only available for the Clinical Epidemiology courses in the Faculty of Medicine.

(File 2000/3844, 2000/3847, 003/0020/00022, 003/0020/00023)

(b) **Faculty of Law**

In accordance with the Academic Board Resolutions: *Creation, Variation and Deletion of Award Courses and Unit of Study*, the Committee noted the minor amendments to the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Master's Degrees and Graduate Diplomas in the Faculty of Law.

(File 003/0010/00005, 003/0019/00003,
003/0019/00004, 003/0019/00005,
003/0019/00006, 003/0019/00007,
003/0019/00008, 003/0019/00009,
003/0019/00010, 003/0019/00011,
003/0019/00013, 003/0019/00014,
003/0019/00015, 003/0019/00017,
003/0019/00018, 2000/3486, 2000/3487,
2000/4532, 2002/1057, 2002/1058,
2002/1059, 2002/1060, 2002/1061,
2002/1062, 2002/1063, 2002/1064)

Resolution 50/02

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the Graduate Studies Committee meeting held by circulation in February 2002, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

9.3 Report of the meeting held on 4 March 2002

9.3.1 Receipt of report

Resolution 51/02

That the Academic Board receive and note the report of the Graduate Studies Committee meeting held on 4 March 2002.

Action: No further action required.

9.3.2 Proposals for new and amended courses

(1) Faculty of Economics and Business: Master of Business, Graduate Diploma in Business and Graduate Certificate in Business

Resolution 52/02

That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend through the Academic Board that Senate approve:

- (1) the proposal from the Faculty of Economics and Business for the introduction in 2003 of the new course, the Graduate Diploma in Business,
- (2) the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Degree, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Economics and Business with effect from 1 January 2003; and
- (3) the adoption of the new Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Master of Business, Graduate Diploma in Business and Graduate Certificate in Business, with effect from 1 January 2003,

as set out in the report presented.

Action: Chair of the Board to recommend that Senate approve the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Master of Business, Graduate Diploma in Business and Graduate Certificate in Business.

(File 2001/5124, 2001/5130, 2001/5885)

(2) Faculty of Law and Faculty of Economics and Business: Master of International Business and Law

Resolution 53/02

That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend through the Academic Board that Senate approve:

- (1) the proposal from the Faculty of Law and Faculty of Economics and Business for the introduction in 2002 of the new course, Master of International Business and Law;
- (2) the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Economics and Business, with effect from 1 July 2002;
- (3) the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Degrees and Graduate Diplomas in the Faculty of Law, with effect from 1 July 2002;
- (4) the adoption of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Master of International Business and Law, with effect from 1 July 2002; and
- (5) the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Master's Degrees and Graduate Diplomas in the Faculty of Law, with effect from 1 July 2002,

as set out in the report presented.

Action: Chair of the Board to recommend that Senate approve the new course, Master of International Business and Law, together with amendments to and adoption of related Resolutions of the Senate.

(File 2001/5887)

(3) Faculty of Science: Master of Applied Science, Graduate Diploma in Applied Science and Graduate Certificate in Applied Science

Resolution 54/02

That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board approve:

- (1) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Science for the introduction in 2002 of the new subject areas, 'Bioinformatics' and 'Microscopy and Microanalysis', for the Master of Applied Science, Graduate Diploma in Applied Science and Graduate Certificate in Applied Science; and
- (2) approve the proposal from the Faculty of Science for the introduction in 2002 of the new subject area, Psychology of Coaching, for the Graduate Diploma in Applied Science; and
- (3) recommend that Senate approve:
 - (a) the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to Degrees, Graduate Diplomas and Graduate Certificates in the Faculty of Science, with effect from 1 July 2002; and
 - (b) recommend that Senate approve the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Master of Applied Science, Graduate Diploma in Applied Science and Graduate Certificate in Applied Science with effect from 1 July 2002,

as set out in the report presented.

Action: Chair of the Board to recommend that Senate amend the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Master of Applied Science, Graduate Diploma in Applied Science and Graduate Certificate in Applied Science.

(File 003/0021/00028, 003/0021/00027, 003/0021/00026, 003/0021/00004, 003/0021/00008, 003/0021/00009)

9.3.3 Proceedings of the Committee

Resolution 55/02

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the Graduate Studies Committee meeting held on 4 March 2002, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

(File 2001/1770)

★ **10. Report of the Teaching and Learning Committee**

10.1 Oral report of the Chair

The Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee, Professor J Sachs, drew the attention of the Board to the item relating to the Online Reading Service and noted that the Committee's working parties had commenced consideration of a variety of issues and would be providing updates to the next meeting of the Committee.

Resolution 56/02

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

Action: No further action required.

10.2 Report of the meeting held on 21 February 2002

10.2.1 Receipt of report

Resolution 57/02

That the Academic Board receive and note the report of the Teaching and Learning Committee meeting held on 21 February 2002.

Action: No further action required.

10.2.2 Proceedings of the Committee

Resolution 58/02

That the Academic Board note the proceedings of the Teaching and Learning Committee meeting held on 21 February 2002, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

(File 028/0025/00029)

11. General Business

11.1 Appointment of members of the Advisory Committee for the Centre for Continuing Education

Resolution 59/02

That the Academic Board nominate Associate Professor A F Masters and Dr S MacAlister for appointment to the Advisory Committee for the Centre for Continuing Education for a term of office of one year, as set out in the report presented.

Action: Chair of the Board to recommend that Senate appoint Associate Professor A F Masters and Dr S MacAlister to membership of the Advisory Committee for the Centre for Continuing Education.

(File 2002/1493)

11.2 Membership of the Academic Board

11.2.1 Filling of vacancies

Resolution 60/02

That, in accordance with the Academic Governance Rules relating to the Academic Board, the Academic Board appoint Professors P Boyce and G Gill and Associate Professors A Mitchell and A Fekete to fill vacancies on the Academic Board, as set out in the report presented.

Action: No further action required.

(File 2001/1122, 2001/5495)

11.2.2 Election of a Deputy Chair to fill a casual vacancy

Resolution 61/02

That the Academic Board note the report relating to the election of a Deputy Chair to fill a casual vacancy and the schedule of dates for the election of a Deputy Chair to fill a casual vacancy, as set out in the report presented.

Action: Members of the Board to note the schedule of dates for the election of a Deputy Chair.

(File 2001/1122, 2001/1973)

11.3 Cancellation of the April Academic Board meeting

Resolution 62/02

That the Academic Board:

- (1) cancel the meeting of the Academic Board scheduled to be held on 17 April 2001; and
- (2) authorise the Chair of the Academic Board to act on its behalf in respect of any urgent matters that may arise between the Board meetings of 13 March 2002 and 15 May 2002, as set out in the report presented.

Action: Members of the Board to note the cancellation of the April meeting of the Board.

(File 021/0005/00004, 033/0001/00019)

The meeting closed at 3.25pm.

Signed as a correct record

Chair

Date