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## Academic Board Agenda

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### SUPPLEMENTARY AGENDA

for the meeting on Wednesday 10 August 2005

Pages

- ★ 1. **Apologies**  
Apologies have been received from:  
Professors B Armstrong, A Brewer, M J Field, D Grant, M Jackson and E Schwarz,  
Associate Professors A Bashford, P Phibbs, N Weber, S West and P Windsor, Drs K  
Bosward, R Dixon and L Napier, Mr J Conomos, Ms K O'Connor and Ms T  
Thornley.
- ★ 3. **Minutes of previous meetings**  
3.2 **Meeting by circulation in July 2005**  
3.2.1 **Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies: Master of Indigenous  
Languages Education** 3-7
- Recommendation*  
That the Academic Board:
- (i) approve the proposal from the Board of Studies in Indigenous  
Studies to rename the Master of Education (Indigenous  
Languages) as the Master of Indigenous Languages  
Education;
- (ii) recommend that Senate:
- (a) endorse the Academic Board's approval of the  
proposal; and
- (b) approve the amendment of the Senate Resolutions  
relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in  
the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies and  
relating to the course  
with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.
- ★ 5. **Report of the Chair**  
5.1 **Report on Senate matters**  
5.1.2 **Report of the Senate meeting held on 1 August 2005** 8-10
- Recommendation*  
That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair on matters  
considered by Senate at its meeting held on 1 August 2005.

**5.2 General report**  
**5.2.3 Academic Board Elections in 2005** 10-11

***Recommendation***

*That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Board relating to Academic Board elections in 2005, as set out in the report presented.*

★ **6. Report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal**  
**6.1 Report on Senate matters**  
**6.1.2 Report of the Senate meeting held on 1 August 2005** 12-13

***Recommendation***

*That the Academic Board note the report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal on matters considered by Senate at its meeting held on 1 August 2005.*

**14. Report of the Academic Staffing Committee**  
**14.2 Report of the meeting held on 6 July 2005**  
**14.2.3 Discussion of Draft Policy on Public Comment** 14-15

***Recommendation***

*That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Staffing Committee regarding the Committee's discussion of a draft policy on public comment, as set out in the report presented.*

### AGENDA ITEM 3 Minutes of Previous Meetings

#### 3.2 Meeting by circulation in July 2005

##### 3.2.1 Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies: Master of Indigenous Languages Education

Following the circulation of the proposal from the Board of Studies in Indigenous Languages to introduce the Master of Education (Indigenous Languages), and its approval by members of the Academic Board, further consultation has taken place between the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies and the Faculty of Education and Social Work.

As a result of these discussions the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies has requested that the proposed course be renamed the Master of Indigenous Languages Education.

##### **Recommendation**

*That the Academic Board:*

- (i) *approve the proposal from the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies to rename the Master of Education (Indigenous Languages) as the Master of Indigenous Languages Education;*
  - (ii) *recommend that Senate:*
    - (a) *endorse the Academic Board's approval of the proposal; and*
    - (b) *approve the amendment of the Senate Resolutions relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies and relating to the course*
- with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.*

## Amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate

### Resolution of the Senate

#### **Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies**

The Resolutions of the Senate relating to Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies (p 413, *Calendar 2005*) are amended, with effect from 1 January 2006, as follows (additions indicated by underline, deletions indicated by strikethrough):

#### **DEGREES, DIPLOMAS AND OTHER PROGRAMS IN ABORIGINAL AND INDIGENOUS STUDIES**

The degrees, diplomas and other programs in the Koori Centre shall be:

- (a) Diploma in Education (Aboriginal) (DipEd(Aboriginal))
- (b) Cadigal Program—Academic Skills I & II.
- (c) Master of Indigenous Languages Education (MIndigenousLanguagesEd)

#### **MASTER OF INDIGENOUS LANGUAGES EDUCATION**

1. These Resolutions must be read in conjunction with the *University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000*, which sets out the requirements for all coursework courses, and the relevant Faculty Resolutions.
2. **Requirements for the Master of Indigenous Languages Education**  
To qualify for the award of the Master of Indigenous Languages Education a student must:
  - (1) complete successfully units of study giving credit for a total of 48 credit points; and
  - (2) satisfy the requirements of all other relevant By-Laws, Rules and Resolutions of the University.

## Amendments to Faculty Resolutions

### Faculty Resolutions

The Resolutions of the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies are amended from 1 January 2006 to insert the following new resolutions:

1. These Resolutions must be read in conjunction with the *University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000*, which sets out the requirements for all coursework courses, and the relevant Resolutions of the Senate.

### Section 1

#### 2. Admission

Admission to candidature for the Master of Indigenous Languages Education may be granted to an Indigenous Australian who:

- (a) has completed a recognised four-year teacher training program; or
- (b) holds other qualifications acceptable to the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies.

#### 3. Units of study

~~Specify units of study for the course, including:~~

- ~~(1) — credit point value;~~
- ~~(2) — assumed knowledge;~~
- ~~(3) — co-requisites/prerequisites/assumed learning/assumed knowledge; and~~
- ~~(4) — any special conditions.~~

Except with the permission of the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies a candidate for the degree shall complete the following units of study:

Linguistics for Indigenous Languages:

Sounds & Writing in Indigenous Languages, Words & Meanings in Indigenous Languages, Sentences & Texts in Indigenous Languages, Field Methods in Indigenous Languages, Research Project in Indigenous Languages, or; Learning an Indigenous Language

Teaching Indigenous Languages:

Theories & Methods in Language Learning, Language Curriculum Development, Technology & Language Learning

#### 4. Requirements for the Master of Indigenous Languages Education

~~(1) — Prescribe requirements for award of the Master of Indigenous Languages Education including:~~

- ~~(a) — credit points (total required as specified in Resolutions of the Senate for the award course);~~

To qualify for the award of the degree a candidate shall complete 48 credit points from units of study prescribed by the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies.

- ~~(b) — definition of a major and/or a minor sequence (if required) in terms of credit points and levels; and~~
- ~~(c) — the required distribution of credit points across levels and subject areas, any major and minor sequences and any core units required.~~

~~(2) — Specify progression requirements (if appropriate).~~

~~(1) Except with the permission of the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies, a candidate shall complete the degree in not less than one year of enrolment and not more than three years of enrolment.~~

Notwithstanding the provisions of the above, the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies may reduce the time limit for the completion of the degree based on previous experience and education.

~~(3) — Specify conditions for enrolment in units of study not in table.~~

(2) A candidate may undertake units of study other than those listed above with the permission of the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies, on the recommendation of staff involved in programs concerned that such units of study are equivalent in workload and academic standard, provided that the maximum credit that may be earned does not exceed one quarter of the degree requirements.

**5. ~~Combined Degrees and Specially Designated Streams~~**

~~Not applicable.~~

**6. ~~Requirements for Honours Degrees~~**

~~Not applicable.~~

**7. ~~Award of Masters of Indigenous Languages Education~~**

~~(1) Specify any special requirements for the award of [award course] in addition to successful completion of units of study.~~

~~Not applicable.~~

**Section 2**

**5. Details of units of study**

Except with the permission of the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies a candidate for the degree shall complete the following units of study:

Linguistics for Indigenous Languages:

Sounds & Writing in Indigenous Languages, Words & Meanings in Indigenous Languages, Sentences & Texts in Indigenous Languages, Field Methods in Indigenous Languages, Research Project in Indigenous Languages, or; Learning an Indigenous Language

Teaching Indigenous Languages:

Theories & Methods in Language Learning, Language Curriculum Development, Technology & Language Learning

**6. Enrolment in more/less than minimum load**

Except where required by prerequisite conditions or to immediately qualify for the award of the degree a candidate may not undertake less than the minimum load prescribed by the University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000 (as amended).

**7. Cross-institutional study**

A candidate may undertake units of study at another university or other tertiary institution for credit towards the degree with the permission of the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies, on the recommendation of staff involved in programs concerned that such units of study are equivalent in workload and academic standard, provided that the maximum credit granted does not exceed one quarter of the degree requirements.

**8. Restrictions on enrolment**

Admission to candidature for the degree may be restricted by quota.

In determining the quota the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies will take into account the availability of resources, including teaching staff, space, library equipment and computer facilities.

In considering an application for admission to candidature the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies, in taking account of any quota, will select in preference applicants who are most meritorious in terms of admission criteria.

**9 Discontinuation of enrolment (faculty procedures)**

A candidate may discontinue enrolment or otherwise suspend candidature in the degree by seeking permission from the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies.

**10. Suspension of candidature (faculty procedures for readmission)**

Except where the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies determines otherwise a candidate who has suspended their candidature for a period of one year or greater must reapply to be selected for admission.

**11. Re-enrolment after an absence**

Except where the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies determines otherwise a candidate who re-enrols after suspension of candidature shall proceed under those resolutions on force at the time of re-enrolment.

**12. Satisfactory progress pursuant to the *University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000***

The Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies may call upon any candidate to show cause why their candidature should not be terminated by reason of unsatisfactory progress towards completion of the degree and, where in the opinion of the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies the candidate does not show good cause, may terminate the candidature.

**13. Time limit if different from the *University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000***

As per 4(1) above.

**14. Assessment policy**

A candidate may be tested by written and oral examinations, assignments, exercises and practical work or any combination of these as may be determined by the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies.

On completion of the requirements for the degree the results of the examination of coursework shall be reported to the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies which shall determine the result of the candidature.

**15. Credit transfer policy in accordance with the *University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000* and Academic Board policies.**

A candidate may be granted credit towards the degree on the basis of a subject or subjects completed at another university or other tertiary institution regarded by the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies, on the recommendation of staff involved in programs concerned that such units of study are equivalent in workload and academic standard, provided that the maximum credit granted does not exceed half of the degree requirements.

Except as otherwise permitted by the Board of Studies in Indigenous Studies, a candidate shall not be granted credit for any unit of study which was counted towards the award of a course other than the degree.

## AGENDA ITEM 5 Report of the Chair

### 5.1 Report on Senate matters

#### 5.1.2 Report of the Senate meeting held on 1 August 2005

Senate, at its meeting on 1 August 2005, on the report of the Academic Board:

- (1) approved the amendment to the *University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003* (as amended) regarding nominators for student candidates, with effect from 2 August 2005, as set out in the report presented.
- (2) approved the proposal of the Academic Board of the AGSM to introduce the Executive Master of Business Administration (Construction) and the Graduate Diploma in Management (Construction) effective 29 August 2005, as set out in the report presented.
- (3) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the amendments to the Bachelor of Science in Agriculture, Bachelor of Horticultural Science, Bachelor of Land and Water Science, Bachelor of Agricultural Economics and Bachelor of Resource Economics courses with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.
- (4) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty of Arts to introduce the Master of Crosscultural Communication, Master of Applied Linguistics, Graduate Diploma in Applied Linguistics and Graduate Certificate in Applied Linguistics courses; and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Arts and the introduction of Resolutions of the Senate relating to these courses, with effect from 25 July 2005, as set out in the report presented.
- (5) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty of Arts to introduce the Master of Asian Studies, Graduate Diploma in Asian Studies and Graduate Certificate in Asian Studies courses; and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Arts and the introduction of Resolutions of the Senate relating to these courses, with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.
- (6) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty of Arts to introduce the Master of Creative Writing, Graduate Diploma in Creative Writing and Graduate Certificate in Creative Writing courses; and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Arts and the introduction of Resolutions of the Senate relating to these courses, with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.
- (7) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty of Arts to introduce the Master of European Studies, Graduate Diploma in European Studies and Graduate Certificate in European Studies courses; and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Arts and the introduction of Resolutions of the Senate relating to these courses, with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.
- (8) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty of Arts to introduce the Master of Peace and Conflict Studies, Graduate Diploma in Peace and Conflict Studies and Graduate Certificate in Peace and Conflict Studies courses; and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Arts and the introduction of Resolutions of the Senate relating to these courses with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.
- (9) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty of Arts to introduce the Master of Museum Studies course; and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Arts and the introduction of

- Resolutions of the Senate relating to this course, with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.
- (10) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty of Economics and Business to amend the Master of Business and Graduate Diploma of Business, with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.
- (11) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to amend the Bachelor of Health Science (Nursing) course; and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to this course; with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.
- (12) approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Master of International Law in the Faculty of Law, made pursuant to the *University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000*, with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.
- (13) approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the various Masters and Graduate Diploma Programs in the Faculty of Law, made pursuant to the *University of Sydney (Coursework) Rule 2000*, with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.
- (14) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty of Nursing to introduce the Master of Nursing; Bachelor of Arts/Master of Nursing; Bachelor of Science/Master of Nursing; Bachelor of Health Science/Master of Nursing and Bachelor of Behavioural Health Science/Master of Nursing; and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Nursing and the introduction of Resolutions of the Senate relating to these courses; with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.
- (15) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty of Science to amend the Master of Applied Science; Graduate Diploma in Applied Science and Graduate Certificate in Applied Science; and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to these courses, with effect from 25 July 2005, as set out in the report presented.
- (16) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty of Science to amend the Graduate Certificate in Applied Science (Molecular Biotechnology), Graduate Diploma in Applied Science (Molecular Biotechnology) and Master in Applied Science (Molecular Biotechnology) with effect from 25 July 2005, as set out in the report presented.
- (17) endorsed the Academic Board's approval of the proposal from the Faculty of Science to introduce the Graduate Certificate in Bioethics (Biotechnology), Graduate Diploma in Bioethics, Master of Bioethics and Master of Bioethics (Honours); and approved the amendment of the Resolutions of the Senate relating to the Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates in the Faculty of Science and the introduction of Resolutions of the Senate relating to these courses, with effect from 1 January 2006, as set out in the report presented.
- (18) noted the Chair's report on the following:
- (a) Academic Board Resolutions: *Amendment, Variation and Deletion of Award Courses*
  - (b) Academic Board Resolutions: *Admission to Undergraduate Courses*
  - (c) Academic Board Policy: *Scholarships*
  - (d) Academic Board Policy: *Special Arrangements for Assessment and Examination*
  - (e) Academic Board Resolutions: *Academic Honesty in Coursework*
  - (f) Academic Board Policy: *Research Fellows Conditions*
  - (g) Membership of the Academic Board: Student Members
  - (h) National Students' Day of Action

**Recommendation**

*That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair on matters considered by Senate at its meeting held on 1 August 2005.*

**5.2 General Report**

**5.2.3 Academic Board Elections in 2005**

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In 2005, elections to the Academic Board will be conducted in accordance with the *University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003*. Members of the Board to be elected in 2005 for terms of office commencing 1 January 2006 include:

- 64 Academic staff members elected from faculties;
- 9 Non-professorial staff members elected from Colleges; and
- 12 student members elected from Colleges.

The Chair of the Academic Board must also be elected in 2005 by all members of the Board, including both elected and ex-officio members, for a term of office which also commences on 1 January 2006.

Key election dates for the election of staff and student members to the Board, and for the election of the Chair, are detailed in the following schedule. The dates comply with required time intervals for different stages of the election process (Rule 15(1) and 17) and with requirements relating to a member of staff nominating in more than one category (Rule 33). Unfortunately it has not been possible to schedule some of the election dates to ensure that they fall outside examination periods.

**Recommendation**

*That the Academic Board note the key dates for elections of staff and student members to the Academic Board in 2005, as set out in the report presented.*

## Elections to the Academic Board 2005

Academic Governance Rule	Students to Faculties	Faculty Academic Staff	Non-professorial Staff	Students to AB	Chair AB
	Conducted by faculties	Conducted by faculties	Conducted by Academic Board	Conducted by Academic Board	Conducted by Academic Board
A. Publish Notice (14 – 28 before close of nominations)	Mon 22 Aug (14 days before C)	Mon 22 Aug (14 days before C)	Mon 10 Oct (14 days before C)	Mon 10 Oct (14 days before C)	Mon 7 Nov (14 days before C)
B. Roll available for inspection (at least 14 days before election)	Tues 20 Sep (14 days before E)	Tues 20 Sep (14 days before E)	Tues 8 Nov (14 days before E)	Tues 8 Nov (14 days before E)	Tues 6 Dec (14 days before E)
C. Nominations close (14 – 28 days after A at 4.00pm)	Mon 5 Sep (14 days after A)	Mon 5 Sep (14 days after A)	Mon 24 Oct (14 days after A)	Mon 24 Oct (14 days after A)	Mon 21 Nov (14 days after A)
D. Issue ballot papers (14 – 28 days after C and 14 – 28 days before F)	Tues 20 Sep (14 days after B and 14 days before E)	Tues 20 Sep (14 days after B and 14 days before E)	Tues 8 Nov (14 days after B and 14 days before E)	Tues 8 Nov (14 days after B and 14 days before E)	Tues 6 Dec (14 days after B and 14 days before E)
E. Return ballot papers, 4.00pm	Tues 4 Oct	Tues 4 Oct	Tues 22 Nov	Tues 22 Nov	Tues 20 Dec
F. Polling day (14 – 28 days after D)	Wed 5 Oct	Wed 5 Oct	Wed 23 Nov	Wed 23 Nov	Wed 21 Dec

### Semester and vacation dates

- Lectures begin 25 July
- AVCC Common week/non-teaching period: 26 – 30 September
- Public Holiday – Monday 3 October
- Stu-vac: 31 October – 4 November
- Exams: 7 – 19 November
- Semester ends: 19 November

### Notes

- All terms of office commence 1 January 2006

## AGENDA ITEM 6

### Report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal

#### 6.1 Report on Senate matters

##### 6.1.2 Report of the Senate meeting held on 1 August 2005

Senate, at its meeting held on 1 August 2005:

- (1) unanimously agreed to extend Professor Brown's contract as Vice-Chancellor and Principal of the University of Sydney to July 2008.
- (2) appointed the following selection committee for the position of Dean, Faculty of Pharmacy:

##### *Ex-officio*

- Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Professor Gavin Brown
- Chair of the Academic Board, Professor John Carter
- Pro-Vice-Chancellor, Health Sciences, Professor Don Nutbeam

##### *Members appointed by Senate*

Three members (plus reserve) nominated by the Faculty:

- Associate Professor Iqbal Ramzan
- Professor Carol Armour
- Professor Michael Murray

Reserve members:

- Professor Jo-anne Brien
- Dr Mary Collins

External Member:

- Ms Brenda McLeod, Chief Allied Health Officer, NSW Health

- (3) approved the Constitution for the University of Sydney Sport Foundation..
- (4) resolved that the Acting Dean of the Faculty of Pharmacy, Professor Iqbal Ramzan, be put forward for nomination to the Pharmacy Board of New South Wales.
- (5) deferred the focus topic on academic assessment and consideration of the President's Report on the renewal of the Standing Committee of Convocation to the next meeting.
- (6) noted updates by the Vice-Chancellor on the following:
  - (a) the decision after consultation that the Graduate School of Government would be a centre, associated with the School of Business, located within the Faculty of Economics and Business.
  - (b) Mr Paul McClintock's retainer by the University as a political adviser, particularly on the issue of VSU.
  - (c) a review of the AGSM for the University of Sydney.
  - (d) awarding by the *Good Universities Guide 2005* of ten 5 star ratings to the University of Sydney, the largest number of any university in Australia.
  - (e) SUPRA.
- (7) noted the University's submission to the Senate Employment, Workplace Relations and Education Legislation Committee on the Higher Education Support Amendment (Abolition of Compulsory Up-front Union Fees) Bill 2005.
- (8) noted reports on recent visits to Singapore and the United Kingdom by the Chancellor and the Vice-Chancellor, and on International Activities.
- (9) noted the report on University Relations.
- (10) noted the following reports:
  - (a) that the University of Sydney had been awarded \$6.6m for nineteen research projects in the latest round of funding for ARC linkage grants.
  - (b) that Professor Peter Lay from the School of Chemistry had received the Royal Australian Chemical Institute's HG Smith Medal and Professor Terry Carney from the Faculty of Law has been elected President of the International Academy of Law and Mental Health.

- (c) that the Legion d'Honneur would be awarded to Professor Judith Robinson-Valery in the Common Room at Women's College at the request of Professor Robinson-Valery's family.
  - (d) that the Vice-Chancellor had approved the establishment of the new Planning Research Centre, with responsibility for the research centre having been assigned to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, College of Sciences and Technology.
  - (e) that Dr Frank Harland Mills AO had accepted Senate's invitation to receive the honorary degree of Doctor of Medicine, and that the award would be conferred at the graduation ceremony to be held at 4.00pm on 18 November 2005.
  - (f) that University of Sydney student Jacqui Bonnitche had won a sailing title in the World 29er Championships.
  - (g) that the University of Sydney had won the 2005 Australasian Intersarsity Debating Championships
- (11) noted the Vice-Chancellor's response to questions regarding an international partnership of a global "Elite 8" group and other international consortia.
- (12) noted responses to questions about a change management proposal to outsource the University's security service and a scoping exercise with respect to an upgrade of the Human Resources system as part of a PeopleSoft upgrade.

***Recommendation***

*That the Academic Board note the report of the Vice-Chancellor and Principal on matters considered by Senate at its meeting held on 1 August 2005.*

**AGENDA ITEM 14**  
**Report of the Academic Staffing Committee**

**14.2 Report of the Academic Staffing Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 6 July 2005 at 2.00pm in the Western Tower Room**

**14.2.3 Discussion of Draft Policy on Public Comment**

15

Attached are notes from the Chair of the Academic Staffing Committee regarding the discussion of the draft policy on public comment at the Committee's meeting of 6 July 2005.

***Recommendation***

*That the Academic Board note the report of the Chair of the Academic Staffing Committee regarding the Committee's discussion of a draft policy on public comment, as set out in the report presented.*

Academic Staffing Committee - meeting of 6 July 2005.

Notes and comments by the Chair arising from debate around a draft policy document on public comment by University staff.

1. The Committee debated the general issue of whether it would be worse for The University of Sydney to gain a reputation as stifling public comment by its staff (regardless of whether real or perceived) or to suffer any transient embarrassment generated by unwelcome public comment by its staff.

Since the University of Sydney is and wishes to enhance, its standing as a major international player and a feature of such Universities is fearless comment by their staff on public issues, the Committee was unanimous that the former would be far worse than the latter.

2. The Committee expressed the view that it was important to have a Policy which did not imply a contradiction.

For instance, any Policy should not on one hand, 'encourage the ideal of the public academic willing and able to comment on matters' but on the other hand suggest that staff must not use the name of the University or otherwise identify themselves as a staff member when they are commenting on an issue 'which is not in their field of expertise'.

By definition for staff to be 'staff', they must identify themselves as a member of the University.

The Committee thought that this contradiction could be resolved, if, when commenting publicly and identifying themselves as staff (as they must to fulfill the role of 'public academic'), the staff member also made clear that they were NOT REPRESENTING OR STATING OFFICIAL UNIVERSITY POLICY.

Without this clarification, a policy could be interpreted as meaning that the University is happy to have staff identify themselves as staff when they are saying something with which the University agrees or is pleased, but not happy to have the staff member identify themselves as staff when the person is saying something which the University does not like; a clearly untenable position.

3. The Committee also thought that a clear statement of moral principle at the beginning of the Policy was important. The statement should unambiguously affirm that the University values, supports and encourages the concept of Academic Freedom.

Perhaps our principle for this policy could be: "Error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it". Thomas Jefferson, 1801. There are also statements from the 2003 - 2006 Academic and Teaching Staff Agreement which might be useful:

"A academic staff member is expected to support the role of the University as a place of independent learning and thought, where ideas may be put forward and reasoned opinion expressed freely" (19.5)

and "Academic staff members have the right to: "(20.1)

"Participate in public debates and express opinions about issues and ideas related to their discipline area and about the institution within which they work or higher education issues more generally;" (20.1.2)

"Express unpopular or controversial views, but this does not mean that they have a right to harass, vilify or intimidate" (20.1.8)

4. The Committee felt that a policy on public comment without provisions like the foregoing could damage the standing of The University of Sydney in the international community of scholars.  
Chris Murphy

August 2005