

Minutes of the eLearning Governance Group, Thursday 21 February 2008.

There were present: The Chair of the eLearning Governance Group Acting Deputy Provost (Learning and Teaching) and Pro Vice-Chancellor, Professor Derrick Armstrong, the Chair of the Academic Board, Professor Bruce Sutton, Associate Professor Rob Ellis, Director, eLearning, Dr Lesley Treleaven (representing Associate Professor Mark Freeman, Director Office of Learning and Teaching in Economics and Business), Mr Bruce Meikle, Assistant Director, CP&S, Mr Peter McGeorge and Mr Jonathan Saurine, Professional and Academic Development Officer for The College Sydney Project. Ms Sally Paynter was in attendance.

1. Apologies

2. Minutes of previous meeting

Resolution 1/08

The eLearning Governance Group adopted the minutes of the previous meeting held on 15 November 2007 as a true record.

3. Matters arising from Minutes (not dealt with elsewhere in the Agenda)

There were no matters arising.

4. Report of the Chair

The Chair advised that he had nothing on which to report.

5. ePortfolios 2008

Associate Professor Ellis explained that agenda items 5, 6, 7 and 8 were all inter-related and should be discussed as such. Members noted that ePortfolios, Streaming, the Student Laptop Scheme and AV/ICT developments were all elements of the overall picture of the virtual campus. A coherent approach to developing a virtual campus was needed to ensure that the philosophical and pedagogical outcomes of implementing the technology were explored.

The Chair of the Academic Board advised that the Learning and Teaching Committee were interested in exploring the pedagogical implications of the eLearning technology purposed and had invited Associate Professor Ellis to discuss these issues at their last meeting. Professor Armstrong added that he believed there needed to be more consultation with the wider-academic community about the pedagogical issues surrounding eLearning and that the Academic Board provided the opportunity to do this.

Associate Professor Ellis agreed that eLearning developments would be reported to the Learning and Teaching Committee as appropriate and that the Committee would be utilised to disseminate information and to consult with the wider-academic community.

The Group noted that the ePortfolio was progressing well, that Emeritus Professor Ann Sefton was involved with the project and that discussions were taking place with faculties. During the process it was agreed that the Student Portal would need to be updated to be more attractive to students and to include more real time interaction.

Resolution 2/08

The eLearning Governance Group noted the report on ePortfolios 2008.

6. Streaming 2008

The Group noted that the pilot had been trialled in the first semester of 2007 and that three systems were being used to capture and three systems to support the streaming trial. Associate Professor Ellis reported that there were over 3500 unit of study websites and that students were facing problems accessing the information. The Student Laptop scheme was a suggested solution to this problem and would also enable alumni to take their ePortfolios with them when they graduated.

Resolution 3/08

The eLearning Governance Group noted the report on Streaming 2008.

7. Student Laptop Scheme

Mr Cooper advised that he had been preparing a report on the introduction of a student laptop scheme as a means of assisting student to access online information and to reduce the strain on teaching spaces. Members noted that vendors such as IBM, HP and Apple had all been interested in being involved with the scheme. Mr Meikle advised that the scheme was a major investment for the University and that it was vital that the infrastructure was in place to support it. The Chair asked what evidence had been provided to support the value of the scheme and suggested that a way forward was to pilot the scheme and ask faculties to consider the use of laptops and develop proposals about how the technology would work in their faculty. Members noted that an assessment of the pedagogical value of the introduction of the technology needed to be a major consideration by faculties when providing rationale for the scheme.

It was suggested that the faculties of Economics and Business and Veterinary Science may be suitable for piloting the scheme and that Mr Cooper would consider this option when preparing his report.

Resolution 3/08

The eLearning Governance Group noted the report on the Student Laptop Scheme.

8. AV/ICT 2008

Resolution 4/08

The eLearning Governance Group noted the report on AV/ICT 2008.

9. Information Management working group

Mr Cooper advised that an Information Management Working Group had been established to examine what information management systems were in place at the University, how the information was accessed and how the University would work towards establishing a coherent approach to managing information. At its first meeting the Group had discussed shared services, the roll out of a new email system and the growth of demand for disc space. Members of the Working Group included some representatives from the eLearning Governance Group in particular the Chair of the Academic Board and the University Librarian. Members noted that the Working Group would meet regularly and would report back to the eLearning Governance Group as appropriate.

Resolution 5/08

The eLearning Governance Group noted the report from the Information Management Working Group.

10. Any other business

10.1 Assessment/results online

Dr Teleaven advised that the Faculty of Economics and Business were using Blackboard 7 to ensure that all assessments were submitted electronically and all results were posted online.

11. Next Meeting

Members noted that the next meeting of the eLearning Governance Group would be held on Thursday 10 April 2008 in the Kevin Lee's Room, A14.