ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND POLICY COMMITTEE
2:00pm – 4:00pm, Wednesday 9 November 2016
Senate Room, Quadrangle (A14)

Members Present: Professor Jane Hanrahan (Chair); Helen Agus, Science; Associate Professor Alex Chaves, Veterinary Science; Dr Frances Di Lauro, Arts & Social Sciences; Associate Professor Geoff Frost, Business; Associate Professor Tania Gerzina, Dentistry; Associate Professor Peter Gibbens, Engineering & IT; Professor Manuel Graeber, Medicine; Thomas Greenwell, President, SUPRA; Kerrie Henderson, Office of General Counsel; Associate Professor Glen Hill, Architecture, Design & Planning; Dr Peter Knight, Medicine; Associate Professor Jennifer Rowley, Sydney Conservatorium of Music; Dr Debra Shirley, Health Sciences; Subeta Vimalarajah, Undergraduate Student.

Attendees: Jill Baker, Chair, Academic Board Review; Dr Matthew Charet, Secretary; Associate Professor Peter McCallum, Director, Educational Strategy; Dr Anne Rogerson, Arts and Social Sciences (for Item 4.3); Lynda Rose, Office of the Provost & Deputy Vice-Chancellor.

Apologies: Associate Professor Tony Masters, Chair of the Academic Board; Associate Professor Mark Melatos, Arts & Social Sciences; Professor Pip Pattison, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education); Associate Professor Veysel Kayser, Pharmacy.

MINUTES

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES
The Chair welcomed members and conveyed apologies from those unable to attend.

2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS
2.1 Minutes of Meeting 6/2016 on 12 October 2016
Two omissions from the attendance were noted. Members confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 October 2016, as amended.

Resolution ASPC16/7-1
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee resolve that the minutes of meeting 6/2016, held on 12 October 2016, be confirmed as a true record as amended.

2.2 Business Arising
Mrs Agus raised a matter relating to Item 4.5 of the previous meeting, Academic Delegations of Authority, regarding the need for an automatic process for termination of candidature for failure by a student to complete an award within specified time limits (as required by the Coursework Policy 2014). Ms Henderson advised that the authority to terminate is provided in by policy so it is a matter of implementing this authority, possibly by the development of appropriate functionality in Sydney Student. The Chair observed that faculty- and degree-specific time limits will also need to be included in any automated system, and undertook to communicate requirements that need to be encompassed with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar). The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) undertook to raise the development of this functionality in future system modifications.

Action 5/2016: Chair to communicate with DVC (Registrar) regarding the development of functionality within Sydney Student for automatic termination of candidature. Responsible: Chair.
Timing: As soon as possible.

Resolution ASPC16/7-2
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the business arising.
2.3 Transitional Provisions – Amendment of Terms of Reference

This proposal was tabled and endorsed as presented.

Resolution ASPC16/7-3

That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee endorse the amendment of its Terms of Reference and recommend the adoption of the amended Terms of Reference to the Academic Board, with immediate effect.

3 STANDING ITEMS

3.1 Report of the Chair

This report was included in discussion of Item 3.2 below.

Resolution ASPC16/7-4

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Chair.

3.2 Report of the Academic Board meeting, 2 November 2016

A hard copy of this report was tabled, as the Academic Board had met on the day of agenda distribution for the current meeting. In the absence of Associate Professor Masters, the Chair highlighted the passage of three separate amendments to the Assessment Procedures 2011, as endorsed at the previous meeting of the Committee. The Board also discussed the introduction of amended Academic Delegations of Authority and a new Governance of Faculties and University Schools Rule 2016, arising from changes to the organisational design. Discussion continues regarding the structure of the health faculties, and this will be communicated when available.

Resolution ASPC16/7-5

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 2 November 2016.

4 ITEMS FOR ACTION

4.1 Replacement Assessments – Amendment of Assessment Procedures 2011

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) informed the Committee that this proposal builds on the three amendments to the Assessment Procedures 2011 that were approved at the 2 November meeting of the Academic Board. The proposal arises from a desire to finalise examinations by a set point in time, which will enable the confident completion of progression checks and enrolment for the following semester without the need to await outstanding results. The proposal also addresses issues with processes for Special Consideration arising in the formal exam period, and facilitates the scheduling of replacement exams before the end of Week 18 in each semester. The proposal sets out a workable solution to address these issues while maintaining compliance with policy.

In discussion, the submission of replacement examination papers at the same time as the main examination paper was questioned, and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) advised that this is not part of the current proposal or the current procedures. Ms Vimalarajah opened discussion regarding the 2-6 day notice period for scheduling replacement exams, observing that this arguably provides too little notice for students to adequately prepare. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) advised that by setting a formal period for replacement exams, the student can confidently anticipate that the exam will take place within a clearly defined window of time. As formal examinations end in Week 16 and replacement exams are to be scheduled in Week 18, ample opportunity is therefore available for exam preparation.

It was agreed that group work should first be assessed against the Decisions Matrix as approved by the Academic Board, and referred to the Faculty if a decision is not able to be determined. Associate Professor McCallum advised the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) that specific instances have emerged where this process has not occurred, and he undertook to forward details. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar) advised members that changes to the Decisions Matrix are within the purview of the Academic Board, and that a review of current Special Consideration processes will be presented to a future meeting.
Associate Professor McCallum recommended that the reference to standards-based assessment be amended with the deletion of clause 7(4)(a)(i) as it is redundant. The Committee supported this recommendation.

The proposal was endorsed as amended.

**Action 6/2016**: Associate Professor McCallum to communicate issues with the processing of Special Consideration for group work to the DVC (Registrar). **Responsible**: Associate Professor McCallum. **Timing**: As soon as possible.

**Resolution ASPC16/7-6**
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend that Academic Board:
(1) approve the amendment of the Assessment Procedures 2011, as presented, to establish that as part of the administration of the formal exam period the Examinations Office be responsible for the scheduling and administration of replacement written exams in week 18 of each semester; and
(2) approve the adoption of the amended policy with effect from 1 January 2017.

**4.2 Standardised Statement on Academic Honesty and Use of Similarity Detection Software**
Associate Professor McCallum spoke to this item and advised that it arose from feedback provided to a student survey conducted earlier in the year by Student Support Services. It is proposed to add to every unit of study outline a one page statement outlining what is and is not permitted under the University’s Academic Honesty provisions, as requested by students.

In discussion, concern was expressed at the ‘bloating’ of unit of study outlines with this additional content. Associate Professor McCallum advised that the Director, Educational Innovation, is currently considering the development of a single unit of study outline template which is unlikely to be available before 2018 at the earliest. It was also suggested in discussion that the statement could be accessed via a link, rather than directly included in the outline, and that it could be left up to faculties to determine the best means of implementation. It was also suggested that this information should be incorporated into the online training module completed by all first year students, and that it could be included on the websites of the SRC and SUPRA.

This proposal was endorsed in principle, with specific application to be determined by the Unit of Study Coordinator.

**Resolution ASPC16/7-7**
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee:
(1) endorse the standardised Statement on Academic Honesty and Use of Similarity Detection Software; and
(2) endorse in principle the insertion of the Statement in all unit of study outlines from 1 January 2017, with specific application as determined by the Unit of Study Coordinator.

**4.3 Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences: Resolutions of Faculty**
Dr Rogerson spoke to this proposal and advised that it addresses redundancies in the existing Resolutions of Faculty. In discussion, a number of concerns were raised and it was agreed that the proposal not be supported, but that the Faculty should liaise with the University Policy Manager to agree on a version to be circulated to the Committee for endorsement.

**Action 7/2016**: FASS to liaise with the University Policy Officer to refine the proposal, which is to be circulated to the Committee for endorsement once finalised. **Responsible**: Dr Rogerson / Secretary. **Timing**: As soon as possible.

**Resolution ASPC16/7-8**
That this proposal be further refined, prior to circulation for re-consideration.

[Note]: Subsequent to the meeting, an amended proposal was circulated to and endorsed by the Committee. The above resolution is to be updated, to read:

**Resolution ASPC16/7-8**
That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend that the Academic Board approve the amendment of the Resolutions of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, as presented, with effect from 1 January 2017.
5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

5.1 University of Sydney (Governance of Faculties and University Schools) Rule 2016 – New Policy

Members were informed that this proposal was endorsed by the Academic Board at its meeting on 2 November. Concern had been expressed at the meeting regarding the structure of the University Schools, and it was agreed that this would be addressed via consultation between the Provost, the Chair of Academic Board and the heads of the three University Schools. An updated version of the proposal is to be circulated to the Board before presentation of the proposal to the 12 December meeting of Senate.

Resolution ASPC16/7-9
That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee note the Academic Board’s endorsement of the University of Sydney (Governance of Faculties and University Schools) Rule 2016, for presentation to Senate for approval.

5.2 University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Academic Functions) Rule 2016 – New Policy

The final version of this proposal was noted.

Resolution ASPC16/7-10
That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee note the Academic Board’s endorsement of the University of Sydney (Delegations of Authority – Academic Functions) Rule 2016, for presentation to Senate for approval.

6 OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Any Other Business

The Chair asked members to forward any suggestions to the Secretary for charitable organisations, for which donations will be sought at the Academic Board’s end of year function following the final 2016 meeting of the Academic Board on 7 December.

Professor Graeber questioned where responsibility for setting academic standards lies, and was advised that this responsibility has been delegated by Senate to the Academic Board. On behalf of the Board, the Committee undertakes a preliminary assessment of policies and procedures that establish and maintain quality and standards. These policies and procedures may be developed and managed by other parts of the University community and are often developed via extensive consultation, but all proposals relating to setting academic standards ultimately require the approval of the Board as the delegated authority.

Observing that this is the final meeting for 2016, the Chair thanked members for the contributions they have made to the business of the Committee, and made particular note of Associate Professor McCallum’s work on academic honesty and curriculum reform.

Next meeting: 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Tuesday 14 February 2017
Senate Room, Quadrangle

A full copy of the Academic Standards and Policy Committee papers is available at: sydney.edu.au/secretariat/pdfs/academic-board-committees/academic-standards/2016/20161109%20ASPC%20Agenda%20Pack.pdf