
ACADEMIC STANDARDS AND POLICY COMMITTEE

2:00pm – 4:00pm, Tuesday 11 July 2017

Senate Room, Quadrangle (A14)

Members Present: Professor Jane Hanrahan (Chair); Helen Agus (Science); Associate Professor Tim Allender (Education & Social Work); Isabella Brook (President, SRC); Associate Professor Geoff Frost (Business); Associate Professor Peter Gibbens (Engineering & IT); Kerrie Henderson (Office of General Counsel); Associate Professor Glen Hill (Architecture, Design & Planning); Associate Professor Veysel Kayser (Pharmacy); Associate Professor Tony Masters (Chair of Academic Board); Kiriti Mortha (Co-President, SUPRA) Professor Donna Waters (for Dr Vasiliki Betihavas, Nursing).

Attendees: Professor Tyrone Carlin (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Registrar)) (for Item 4.1); Dr Glenys Eddy (Acting Secretary).

Apologies: Professor Adam Bridgeman (Director, Educational Innovation); Associate Professor Alex Chaves (Veterinary Science); Dr Frances Di Lauro (Arts & Social Sciences); Associate Professor Robyn Gibson (Education & Social Work);); Professor Manuel Graeber (Medicine); Georgia Mantle (Student, Arts & Social Sciences); Associate Professor Mark Melatos (Arts and Social Sciences); Professor Pip Pattison (Deputy Vice-Chancellor Education); Dr Debra Shirley (Health Sciences); Professor Anne Twomey (Law); Professor Donna Waters (Nursing).

5/2017

MINUTES

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, extended an especial welcome to Professor Tyrone Carlin, Professor Donna Waters attending for Dr Vasiliki Betihavas, and to Kiriti Mortha, Co-President of SUPRA. The Chair also noted the apologies as recorded above.

2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 May 2017 were approved as a true record of that meeting.

Resolution ASPC17/5-1

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee resolve that the minutes of meeting 4/2017, held on 30 May 2017, be confirmed as a true record.

2.2 Business Arising

There was no business arising from the previous meeting.

3 STANDING ITEMS

3.1 Report of the Chair

The Chair advised the meeting that she had nothing to report.

Resolution ASPC17/5-2

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

3.2 Report of Academic Board

At its meeting on 13 June 2017, the Academic Board agreed to recommend that Senate adopt the *University of Sydney (Academic Board) Rule 2017* as presented, and rescind the *University of Sydney (Academic Governance) Rule 2003 (as amended)*, with effect from 19 July 2017. The *Academic Board Rule 2017* states that *ex officio* members do not vote for the Academic Board Chair. Associate Professor Masters expressed concerned that no reason could be found for such a decision and there was no discussion in the Senate minutes from the time regarding this aspect

of the change to the Governance Rule, the then-VC is no longer around to provide an explanation, and it is highly desirable for the University to be able to provide TEQSA with a rationale for the current position. Associate Professor Masters had therefore formed a working party to explore the reasons for the decision. Up until 2005 *ex-officio* members did vote, but in 2005 no provisions were made in the Academic Governance Rule. The Working Party has produced reasons for *ex-officio* members not voting in the election of the Academic Board Chair, which at this time are yet to be communicated to Associate Professor Masters.

Resolution ASPC17/5-3

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee note the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 13 June 2017.

4 ITEMS FOR ACTION

4.1 Semester Dates 2019 and beyond

Professor Carlin spoke to the proposal, noting that whilst the ASPC had endorsed the previous version of the proposal by majority, the Academic Board expressed some concerns at its meeting of 13 June resulting in the paper not being approved. Consequently there are no semester dates for 2019 and beyond, and it is now imperative to establish a set of dates for 2019. The current paper circulated with the agenda made a further recommendation for semester dates, and Professor Carlin recommended, that pending approval by this meeting, the semester date pattern proposed be approved by the Academic Board for the foreseeable future.

Although the change from 13 to 12 weeks had been welcomed in some quarters of the University, 13 weeks had been preserved in the presented proposal. Changes to UAC's dates with the main offer round, now 21 December, has resulted in the University making changes to its annual close-down dates, which now begin a week later. The University is also trying to create a six-week window in the Winter break to facilitate more time for Winter School. Appendix B of the proposal outlines some identified winter school programs at other universities that Sydney can partner with, and although this will require manual work-arounds and special permissions under our current semester dates, these identified winter schools will work with the proposed semester dates.

A concern was raised about the effect on professional experiential placement schedules which are tightly allied to the primary and secondary school semesters. The current difficulty of placing students, and the capacity of the proposed dates to shut down a window of opportunity for students to do placements during the school year, were both noted. Professor Carlin acknowledged that several faculties will be affected, and that faculties with placements at the end of the year face the problem of ensuring that exams are completed before this time.

Another concern was the decreasing flexibility faced by students enrolled in combined degrees, in terms of completing units and undertaking professional experience placements in a timely manner. A workaround being considered in some circumstances is for some cohorts to begin their semester earlier. Students enrolled in the combined Education and Arts or Science degree will begin their Education units earlier, and units in Arts or Science would begin on the dates set out in the Registrar's model. However, the earlier start of semester 1 would impact on the availability of combined-degree students to complete a block of placements in February.

A workaround being considered for admission to combined Medicine and Dentistry degrees is to make a conditional offer earlier, based on the candidate's successful navigation through the interview, and the firm offer later. Professor Carlin observed that a large amount of work will be compressed into late November. In order to understand the effect of this on the grant writing window, he has sought feedback from seasoned ARC and NHMRC grant recipients, who maintain that this will not adversely affect the University's grant performance; NHMRC and some ARC deadlines already fall with the proposed semester periods and good planning and support from the Research Office will help.

Trimesters at UNSW, how will they play out in relation to us? Professor Carlin replied that we don't know precisely, but they have adopted a strategy to get \$3 billion within the next three years, get more students, but need to spend on more buildings, so try to extend their pattern of utilization of their estate, maximize teaching time; heavily promoting Summer School, 36 weeks of utilization of buildings a year; science is where they might be aggressive, coheres to some of their core strengths; underweight in the natural sciences and humanities, expects that they will be

aggressive in those areas; UAC will still further change their enrolment schedule; thinks that there will be an enrolment round in the 3rd semester/trimester; we have raised English requirements a level higher to counteract; they will pitch accelerated completion; his paper not predicated as a competitive response to UNSW, but the university is mindful of the issue. The UNSW landscape is changing predicated on a set of commercial objectives, so they need to grow.

Concern was expressed about the effect on due dates for return of results with Semester 2 being pushed back a week. Professor Carlin stated that both exams and results-release would occur a week later. He would make it explicit in the paper that it is the same interval between return of results and close-down, but all will occur a week later, with the release of results pushed back to 18th of December. The dates for results release and close-down will be added to the Semester Dates table.

Concern was also expressed for students who would undertake off-shore internships of up to 12 weeks' duration, which would need to take place in the Summer break as the Winter break is not long enough to be competitive.

Professor Carlin confirmed that the Census date for student enrolments will remain at the end of week 4 of semester. He also thought that the change of dates should not affect the APA allotment process as this has been streamlined so that scholarships can be offered earlier, but would check this with Associate Professor Coleman nonetheless.

To the statement that the proposal had not been circulated early enough for the faculties to have had time to respond, Professor Hanrahan responded that she believed that the deans had received the proposal some time ago, but members should take it to their faculties for discussion, and email Professor Carlin directly about any concerns they feel have not been addressed.

With nine members for the proposal and one against, the Committee endorsed the proposal for presentation to the Academic Board for approval.

Resolution ASPC17/5-4

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend that the Academic Board approve the semester date model recommended in this paper, as set out in Appendix A, noting the commentary on both risks and benefits associated with the change.

4.2 Election Procedures 2017

Kerrie Henderson outlined the design of these procedures as a single set of procedures to meet the requirements of both the GOFUS rule and the Academic Board rule. The paper circulated with the agenda discussed progress with the process: the electronic platform has been identified, and a code of conduct has been developed for candidates in these elections.

There are requirements for preserved positions, for instance, for a number of professors on the Academic Board and for a certain spread of academics: for a certain number of levels A to B and C to D. There will also be a number of allocated positions with at least one undergraduate and postgraduate representatives.

People will vote using optional preferential voting. The user will not be able to forward on the election email. Once voting has closed, the system will generate a ranked list and positions will be allocated. All allocated positions will be determined first, and if only one meets the criteria for the position then the candidate will be appointed. After this allocation will depend on the number of votes.

The committee endorsed this proposal for presentation to the Academic Board.

Resolution ASPC17/5-5

That the Academic Standards & Policy Committee discuss the Election Procedures 2017 and note that they will come into effect from 8 August 2017.

4.3 Dentistry: Amendment of Resolutions of Faculty

Several changes to the Faculty resolutions were proposed, one of which was to extend the time limit for the Doctor of Dental Medicine from five to seven years (which had not been marked up in the CMS pdf). Kerrie Henderson undertook to check the consistency of this with the Coursework Rule, and observed that although the other changes could be approved by Academic Board, the time-limit change would need Senate approval on the Academic Board's recommendation.

In relation to the 10-year time limit for many degrees, Dentistry was concerned that students who suspend for too long a time might lose their already acquired skills. Seven years was considered an appropriate time-limit, being not too long, but being long enough not to disadvantage students who might need to suspend for periods, for instance, to take maternity leave.

The committee endorsed this proposal for presentation to the Academic Board for approval.

Resolution ASPC17/5-6

That the Academic Standards and Policy Committee recommend the amendments for approval by the Academic Board.

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING

6 OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Any Other Business

There being no other business, the meeting concluded at 3:12pm.

Next meeting: 2:00pm – 4:00pm, **Tuesday 8 August 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/2017/20170711-ASPC-Agenda-Pack.pdf.