MINUTES

1 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Committee noted apologies and welcomed attendees.

2 PROCEDURAL MATTERS

2.1 Minutes of Previous Meeting

Members confirmed the minutes of the previous meeting, held on 16 November 2016, as an accurate record.

Resolution GSC17/1-0

That the Graduate Studies Committee resolve that the minutes of meeting 7/2016, held by circulation on 16 November 2016, be confirmed as a true record.

2.2 Actions Arising

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting.

2.3 Committee Forward Plan

The Committee Forward Plan was noted as presented.

Resolution GSC17/1-2

That the Graduate Studies Committee note the 2017 Forward Plan.

3 STANDING ITEMS

3.1 Report of the Chair

The Chair drew the attention of members to the written report.

Regarding thesis embargo requests, the Chair asked members with faculty responsibilities to draw to the early attention of the Chair any theses that might potentially need to request an embargo, rather than waiting until the thesis is ready for submission. He observed that confidentiality issues are often easier to resolve earlier in the process, and Associate Professor Masters cited the example of including confidential material in a separate appendix – which can be incorporated into thesis write-up planning – as an appropriate structural mechanism to address need for confidentiality. The Chair also asked faculties to ensure that embargo requests are submitted with a
detailed description of both the reason for and duration of the embargo period being sought.

Resolution GSC17/1-3
That the Graduate Studies Committee note the report of the Chair.

3.2 Report of the Academic Board

Further to the written report, Associate Professor Masters reaffirmed his thanks to the Committee for the significant volume of curriculum work it undertook in 2016. He also advised that a draft report of the external review of the Academic Board is currently with the Chancellor and Vice-Chancellor for review and is anticipated for wider distribution prior to the 28 February meeting of the Academic Board.

The Report of the Academic Board was noted as presented.

Resolution GSC17/1-4
That the Graduate Studies Committee note the report of the Academic Board meeting held on 7 December 2016.

3.3 Report of HDR Examinations Sub-Committee

Associate Professor Nelson advised that she had nothing to add to the written reports, which were noted as presented.

Resolution GSC17/1-5
That the Graduate Studies Committee note the reports of the HDR Examinations Sub-Committee meetings of 22 November and 6 December 2016.

3.4 HDR Examinations Sub-Committee: Amended Terms of Reference

The Committee approved the amendment of the Terms of Reference as presented, and noted that the Sub-Committee has agreed, subject to approval of this proposal, to the appointment of Professor Ines Krass as Deputy Chair.

Resolution GSC17/1-6
That the Graduate Studies Committee approve the amendment of the Terms of Reference for the HDR Examinations Sub-Committee, with immediate effect, as presented.

3.5 Report of HDR Scholarships Sub-Committee

Members were referred to the written report for detailed information about the latest rounds of scholarship allocations. Further to this report, Associate Professor McCrystal advised the Committee that the Sub-Committee is moving in 2017 to a rolling model for scholarship allocation. This will expand the number and frequency of meetings, with the intention of enabling faster allocation of scholarships to outstanding applicants (ideally within 4-8 weeks of application). The Sub-Committee is to hold its first meeting later in the month, at which it will agree on the variable values to be used in the allocation of scholarships.

The Report of the HDR Scholarships Sub-Committee was noted as presented.

Resolution GSC17/1-7
That the Graduate Studies Committee note the report of the Higher Degree by Research Scholarships Sub-Committee (HDRSSC) meeting held on 9 December 2016.

3.6 HDR Scholarships Ranking Guidelines Review Report

Associate Professor McCrystal summarised the written report for members and provided background to the review and its recommendations. Members were advised that the review was required as part of an earlier revision of allocation procedures, as well as a transition to the central management of allocations by the Scholarships Office. Feedback was obtained from interested parties and several extraordinary meetings of the Sub-Committee were held to discuss submissions received. This process has resulted in the formulation of ten recommendations, with several points of feedback (internal University ranking adjustments, for example) added to the Sub-Committee work slate for further exploration and data collection in 2017.

In discussion, several of the recommendations were further explored. It was agreed that the single ranking list (as referenced in Recommendation One) be monitored and reviewed in two years. Reference to Beall’s List in Recommendation Two is to be removed as this list is no longer published; it was also suggested that faculties be able to add journals to the list. It was also agreed
that the nominal score given to Category 3 holders of an MPhil (as per Recommendation Four) would be reviewed by the Sub-Committee annually and would be subject to the approval of the Graduate Studies Committee.

Associate Professor Coleman commended the Sub-Committee for the thoroughness of its review.

The Committee received the Review Report and approved its recommendations, as amended. [Note: Subsequent to the meeting, the member who suggested allowing faculties to add to the list of acceptable journals has advised that this is no longer necessary and the Chair of the HDRSSC has agreed to its non-inclusion in the revised Guidelines.]

Resolution GSC17/1-8
That the Graduate Studies Committee approve the Scholarship Ranking Guidelines Review Report and the Recommendations and recommend that the Academic Board approve the proposed changes to the Ranking Guidelines, with immediate effect.

4 ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

Minor Course Proposals

4.1 Health Sciences: Master of Speech Language Pathology
In the absence of a faculty representative, it was agreed that this item be held over. [Note: A faculty representative attended the meeting but did not identify themselves prior to the discussion of this item and was not present when the proposal was raised.]

4.2 Nursing: Master of Nursing
Dr Gullick spoke to this proposal, advising that it has been suggested by the Sydney Student development team as an administrative solution to distinguish the location of two different cohorts in the current degree. It is proposed to retain the name of the degree as well as the curriculum and unit of study structure, but to distinguish students undertaking the degree at Westmead from those at Mallett Street.

In discussion, it was suggested that there may be easier mechanisms to distinguish these student cohorts, and Ms Fernandez undertook to liaise with the faculty to explore alternative options. The Committee supported this suggestion.

Resolution GSC17/1-9
That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Student Centre further liaise with Sydney Nursing School to develop an alternative solution to cohort management.

4.3 Science: Bachelor of Veterinary Biology/Doctor of Veterinary Medicine
Dr Bathgate spoke to this proposal and advised that it reflects the ongoing rollout of the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. It includes the development of units of study totalling 48 credit points, to comprise Year 4 of the Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Year 6 of the combined degree, and includes professional placement.

In discussion, the provision of the mapping of outcomes to the AQF was highlighted as helpful, and the large number of 3 credit point units of study was explained as emerging from the curriculum mapping, with volume of learning for many areas falling into the equivalent of a 3 credit point load.

This proposal was endorsed as presented.

Resolution GSC17/1-10
That the Graduate Studies Committee recommend that the Academic Board approve the proposed Units of Study to make up the Year 4 curriculum of the DVM, and Year 6 curriculum for the BVB/DVM, for implementation in 2018.

4.4 Sydney College of the Arts: Faculty Resolutions
It was agreed to withdraw this item from consideration until further consultation with the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences.

5 ITEMS FOR NOTING
6 OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Next meeting: 2:00pm – 4:00pm, Tuesday 7 March 2017
Senate Room, Quadrangle

A full copy of the Graduate Studies Committee papers is available at sydney.edu.au_secretariat/academic-board-committees/graduate-studies-committee.