MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF THE FACULTY OF LIFE AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES

The first meeting of the Board of the Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences will be held on Monday, 21 January 2008 at 2.15 pm in the Economics and Commerce conference room.

Membership of the Board is as follows:

The Dean (Professor G Stewart)
The Deputy Dean (Professor Bob Grove)
The Academic Student Adviser (Dr Jane Emberson)
The Faculty Manager (Ms Jenny Gamble)
Associate Professor Ian Dadour (Centre for Forensic Science)
Mr Roger Dickinson (Centre for Learning Technology)

Heads (or their nominees) of the following Schools:
Anatomy and Human Biology
Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences
Human Movement and Exercise Science
Physics
Psychology

Elected representatives (or their alternates):
Professor Jim Chisholm (Anatomy & Human Biology)
Dr Silvana Gaudieri (Centre for Forensic Science, LPS)
Dr Linda Jeffery (Psychology)
Mr Hubert Jurkiewicz (Psychology)
Dr Thelma Koppi (Microbiology & Immunology [BBCS])
Mr Peter Mills (Human Movement & Exercise Science)
Ms Heather Morton (Anatomy & Human Biology)
Mrs Jennifer Stevenson (BBCS)
Associate Professor Michael Wise (Biochemistry & Molecular Biology [BBCS])

Nominees from the following Faculties:
Professor Craig Atkins (Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences)
Dr John Henderson (Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences)
Dr Chris McDonald (Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics)
Dr Jane Heyworth (Faculty of Medicine and Dentistry)

Science Union (VP, Education – Ms Kirsty Hendry)

Part I of the Agenda is to be dealt with en bloc by motion of the Chair. Part II is for discussion. A member may request the removal of an item from Part I to Part II.

Any member of the Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences (see Statute 8[12]) may attend the meeting as an observer, with speaking rights only, by prior arrangement with the Dean or the Faculty Manager.

A full copy of this agenda (including attachments) is sent to all administrative secretaries for consultation by Faculty members.

Imelda Ooi
Administrative Officer
AGENDA

1. MINUTES REF: F3059

Confirmation of minutes of meeting held on 6 December 2007.

2. DECLARATIONS OF POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT OR PERCEIVED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The Chair invites members to declare interests in relation to any items on the agenda.

PART I

(Items for Communication to be dealt with en bloc)

3. PROMOTION REF: F1158

The Faculty congratulates Dr Elizabeth Quail (School of Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences) on her promotion to Senior Lecturer.

PART II

(Items for Decision to be dealt with en bloc)

4. BSc (PSYCHOLOGY) – INCLUSION OF SCIE1106 MOLECULAR BIOLOGY OF THE CELL AS AN OPTIONAL UNIT REF: F5028, F5075

In order to provide greater flexibility for students, the School of Psychology has requested that in the Rules for BSc (Psychology) programme, the Psychology Level 1 options under Group A be amended to include SCIE1106 Molecular Biology of the Cell (6 points) which will be taken in combination with one of the following biology units – ANHB1101 Human Biology I, ANHB1102 Human Biology II, BIOL1130 Core Concepts in Biology and BIOL1131 Plant and Animal Biology, as shown in attachment A.

The Chair recommends that the Rules for BSc (Psychology) be amended with effect from 2008 to include SCIE1106 taken in combination with one of the following units - ANHB1101/ANHB1102 and BIOL1130/BIOL1131.

5. MASTER OF PHARMACY - INCLUSION OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE COMPETENCY REQUIREMENT IN THE RULES REF: F7784, F5075

The International Centre has advised that some of the course entries and Rules in the Handbook are incomplete as they fail to specify higher than normal English language entry requirements. They have requested that the Rules for these courses be changed to incorporate the English language requirement. To comply with this request the Faculty proposes to add the following statement to the admission rules for the Master of Pharmacy as shown in attachment B.

"Applicants with qualifications from overseas institutions where English is not the medium of instruction must provide evidence of English language competency equivalent to an IELTS score of 7.0 overall with no band lower than 7.0".

The Chair recommends that the Rules for the Master of Pharmacy be amended to include the statement above.
PART III
(Items for discussion and Decision)

6. **PRINCIPLES FOR THE OPERATION OF COMMITTEES** REF: F12439

Members will be aware that all committees of the University are expected to operate according to the principles set out in the Principles for the Operation of Committees.

In 2005 the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and the Executive Director (Academic Services and Registrar) commissioned a "Working Smarter Through Committees" working party in order to investigate ways of streamlining and improving committee processes without compromising collegiality.

In accordance with Recommendation 9 – That the University’s principles and rules for the operation of committees are distributed (as part of the agenda) to all committee members and the Chair explicitly address these at the first meeting of each year - the principles and rules are attached along with the code of conduct for committee members (Attachment C).

The Chair will speak to the principles, rules and code of conduct.

7. **REVIEW OF COURSE COURSES** REF: F15115

As part of the Course Structures Review currently being conducted by UWA, a discussion paper: “Courses for Tomorrow’s World: Issues and Options” had been prepared by the University for consultative purposes. Professors Ian Reid and Don Markwell had attended a meeting of the Board on 6 December 2007 to provide an overview of the process to date and encouraged members to submit comments/feedback on the paper, deadline for which was 31 January 2008. An extract from the minutes of this meeting is attached (Attachment D).

The Faculty’s Teaching and Learning Committee has held a number of meetings to discuss and draft a response to the discussion paper. At its meeting on 11 January 2008, the main points and issues of importance to the Faculty identified were:

- **Simplification of degree structures** - in favour of simplifying the undergraduate degree structure and that any reformed structure should differentiate BA and BSc degrees.
- **Preservation of end-on Honours program** – implementation of the 3+2 cycle of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees at UWA creates a predicament for the one year honours program but that this predicament would be removed by allowing for a 3+1 cycle (i.e., an end-on Honours year which would be an exit point or an entry point to doctoral research).
- **A four-year degree as the standard** - not in favour of adopting a four-year undergraduate degree structure as the standard, as it feels that not all students are suited for it. Not only does it create a risk of losing students to other universities where they can complete their chosen degree in three years but that it is also too costly to administer.
- **Enhancing the teaching-research nexus** - strongly supports that any reformed course structure at UWA should facilitate the teaching of scholarly enquiry and that this should be a hallmark of all UWA degrees.
- **The balance of breadth and depth** - favours a choice of 18-24 points of units selected from a menu without a requirement to do any compulsory units and that the units complement study in the students’ ‘home’ discipline.
- **Introducing an elite undergraduate degree (the BPhil)** – concern about inequities that might accompany the introduction of a BPhil and maintains that admission based on academic achievement in the first year of university study would be more equitable than admission based on achievement in high school.

A draft response to the discussion paper submitted by Professor Geoff Hammond, Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning), is attached (Attachment E) for members consideration.

Members are reminded that this will be their last opportunity to consider the “Issues and Options” paper.
8. PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF A FOUR-YEAR PHD COURSE INCLUDING PROGRAMS REF:

At the last Faculty Board meeting on 6 December 2007, the proposal for the establishment of a four-year PhD course including programs was discussed. An extract from the minutes of the meeting is attached (Attachment F). It was proposed that the item be deferred to the next Board meeting to enable Schools to discuss with their staff, the structure of the proposal in greater detail particularly in relation to the following.

- Initial Coursework - should this be 36 points coursework and 12 points dissertation, or 24 points coursework and 24 points dissertation; or some other combination?
- Should there be a requirement for students to do additional coursework in the second, third or final year, or should this be optional?
- Should progression to second year be conditional upon students achieving a weighted average mark of either 65% or 70%, or should the pass mark for each unit be set at 65%?

Schools are urged to prepare a submission of the feedback/comments provided by their staff for circulation to Board members at the meeting for consideration.

9. ATTENDANCE AT LABS AT PSB ACADEMY, SINGAPORE REF:

PSB Academy, Singapore, has highlighted an issue in relation to attendance at labs for the offshore students. Professor Geoff Stewart will speak to the item.

10. OTHER BUSINESS
9.2.7V Psychology (PG-PSYCH)

9.2.7V.1 The programme consists of units to a total value of 144 points comprising—

(a) all units in Table 9.2.7V(1) (Psychology Core Units)—60 points

and

(b) four units chosen from the units in Table 9.2.7V(2) (Psychology Options)—24 points

and

(c) Level 1 units to the value of at least 24 points chosen from Groups A to G in Table 9.2.7V(3) (Psychology Level 1 Options);

and

(d) if necessary to make the total value of Level 1 units up to 48 points, additional units chosen in consultation with a Faculty Adviser;

and

(e) the Level 2 requirements of the major sequence for at least one of the following majors, as set out in 9.2.6:

Anatomy and Human Biology
Anthropology
Computer Science
Geography
Human Movement and Exercise Science
Linguistics
Mathematical Sciences
Pharmacology
Physiology
Zoology

and

(f) if necessary to make up the required number of points, Level 2 units chosen in consultation with a Faculty Adviser from the major sequences for the majors listed in (e) or from Table 9.2.7V(4) (Psychology Level 2 Options).

Table 9.2.7V(1)—Psychology Core Units
All units have a value of six points unless otherwise stated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>PSYC1101</td>
<td>Psychology: Mind and Brain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>PSYC1102</td>
<td>Psychology: Behaviour in Context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>PSYC2203</td>
<td>Psychological Research Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>PSYC2205</td>
<td>Psychology: Behavioural Neuroscience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>PSYC2206</td>
<td>Social and Cognitive Psychology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>PSYC2207</td>
<td>Psychology: Normal and Abnormal Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>PSYC3301</td>
<td>Psychological Research Methods: Design and Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>PSYC3302</td>
<td>Psychological Measurement and its Application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1, S2</td>
<td>PSYC3310</td>
<td>Psychology: Specialist Research Topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1, S2</td>
<td>PSYC3311</td>
<td>Psychology: Specialist Research Topics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Students who have already passed PSYC2204 Psychological Science: Theory, Research and Practice are not permitted to take this unit and should instead take an additional unit from Table 9.2.7V(2).
### Table 9.2.7V(2)—Psychology Options
All units have a value of six points unless otherwise stated.

**S2**  PSYC3312  Psychology: Social  
**S2**  PSYC3313  Psychology: Developmental  
**S2**  PSYC3314  Psychology: Abnormal  
**S1**  PSYC3315  Psychology: Cognitive  
**S1**  PSYC3317  Psychology: Cognitive Neuroscience  
**S1**  PSYC3318  Psychology: Perception and Sensory Neuropsychology  

### Table 9.2.7V(3)—Psychology Level 1 Options
All units have a value of six points unless otherwise stated.

**Group A**
one or more of the following pairs of units:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group A</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>ANHB1101</td>
<td>Human Biology I; and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>ANHB1102</td>
<td>Human Biology II</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>ANTH1101</td>
<td>Being Human: Culture, Identity and Society; and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>ANTH1102</td>
<td>Global Change, Local Responses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>ARCY1101</td>
<td>Digging up the Past; and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>ARCY1102</td>
<td>Archaeology of Tribes and Empires</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>BIOL1130</td>
<td>Core Concepts in Biology; and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>BIOL1131</td>
<td>Plant and Animal Biology</td>
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<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>EART1105</td>
<td>Earth and Environment: Dynamic Planet; and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>EART1108</td>
<td>Earth and Environment: Geographical Perspectives</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>HMES1101</td>
<td>Human Movement; and</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>HMES1102</td>
<td>Human Movement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>SCIE1106</td>
<td>Molecular Biology of the Cell; and</td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Level 1 biology unit to the value of 6 points chosen from Group A above**

**Group B**
two of the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group B</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>LING1101</td>
<td>Language and Communication</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>LING1102</td>
<td>Language as a Cognitive System</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>LING1103</td>
<td>Language, Culture and Society</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Group C**

-   
-   
-   

A2
20 December 2007

Jenny Gamble
Faculty Manager
Life & Physical Sciences
M011

Dear Jenny,

I write to request a change to the rules for the BSc (Psychology). Psychology would like to add SCIE1106 as an option with ANHB1101/2 and BIOL1130/1 in the level 1 program requirements.

Yours faithfully,

David Morrison
9.6.5B Master of Pharmacy (51500)

Admission

9.6.5B.5(1) The Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences may accept into the course for the degree of Master of Pharmacy an applicant who—

(a) has a bachelor's degree in Science with a major sequence in the area of biomedical or biophysical science, or equivalent as recognised by the Faculty;

and

(b) has demonstrated to the Faculty adequate knowledge of each of the following at a tertiary level: physiology and anatomy, cell biology, biochemistry, molecular biology, chemistry and statistics; ¹

and

(c) has obtained certification of national police clearance.

(2) Applicants with qualifications from overseas institutions where English is not the medium of instruction must provide evidence of English language competency equivalent to an IELTS score of 7.0 overall with no band lower than 7.0.

Course Structure

•

•
University Secretariat Principles

Principles for the Operation of Committees

While the committee structures provide a suitable framework, it is the members of the committees who determine whether good governance and better practice standards are actually achieved and ensure that the committee is adding value.

**General:**

1. **Collegiality:** The Committee system is transparent and consultative, and all staff have the opportunity to provide meaningful input into decisions that significantly affect them.

2. **Working Smart:** Committee time is used in ways which make the most efficient and effective use of staff time to deliberate on significant issues and policies.

3. **Good Conduct:** Committee members abide by a Code of Conduct that requires them to be appropriately informed and prepared before the meeting so that they can contribute to the decisions of the committee.

4. **Review:** All committees are regularly reviewed in relation to both the performance of committee business and committee members.

**Functional:**

1. **Policy Decisions:** Committees are, wherever possible, engaged in establishing policies and rules within which individual staff can manage and administer University business.

2. **Management Decisions:** Committees are involved in management and administrative decisions as close to the activity as is compatible with legislative requirements.

3. **Communication:** Committees are used to provide a contextual framework within which University policies are developed and decisions are made.

4. **Membership:** Committee membership ensures the broad University community, in all its diversity, is represented. However, individual committees are not constituted to represent every possible interest group and the number of members should be kept as low as practicable.

Revised on 16/02/2006
Establishment and Review of Committees:

1. Committees are to have a constitution that clearly describes the purpose and operation of the committee including membership, Chair, function, decision-making and communication lines, quorum and conduct of meetings.

2. Mechanisms for reporting the business of each committee should be made clear at the time of establishment of the committee.

3. Committees should establish a review regime addressing the frequency and nature of the review process and the allocation of responsibility for conducting and acting on the review.

Conduct of Meetings:

4. Meetings should only commence with the appropriate quorum. If the meeting is inquorate the meeting can be cancelled and business dealt with by circulation or discussion can take place in committee mode with recommendations ratified at the next meeting or by circular.

5. Meetings should be held in accordance with constitution. However, the committee should not meet simply because a meeting has been scheduled rather only when there is important business to transact. If business is limited, consideration should be given to circulating items with the Chair’s recommendation rather than to deferring items to a later meeting.

6. Items brought to the committee for a decision for noting or for communication should be relevant to the business or role of the committee. Consideration should be given to holding a joint meeting of two committees when there is an item of interest for more than one committee. When it is clear that the committee has insufficient knowledge to add value to a decision, then other means of processing the decision should be found within existing policy and legislative provisions.

7. Where decisions are to be referred to other University committees then meeting dates should be scheduled to facilitate the efficient flow of business to these committees.

8. There should be an opportunity at the start of each meeting for members to declare any potential or perceived conflict of interest in respect of any item and where appropriate to absent themselves from discussion and/or the room while the item is being considered.

9. Documentation for committees should be written precisely, accurately, clearly and succinctly. The level of formality and detail should match the purpose and readership of the document.

10. Agendas of meetings should:

   • Contain or have attached any background material necessary to enable members to make informed decisions. If items have been discussed previously a chronology of key elements of the discussion should be attached.
   • Be divided into three parts (Attachment C):

   Part 1. Items for Communication to be dealt with En Bloc - only items for communication that require no decision or discussion, but are relevant to the business of the committee or its future decision-making, or require dissemination by members to staff within their areas;

   Part 2. Items for Decision to be dealt with En Bloc - only items for decision with clear recommendations by the Chair that are likely to require no further discussion;
Part 3. Items for Discussion and Decision.

- Include an Item/Business in Progress List providing an update of actions since the last meeting, where appropriate
- At the discretion of the Chair allow items of ‘Other Business’ provided there is advance notice to the Chair and the item is not a major policy item.
- Be distributed to members at least three working days before the meeting and items perceived by the Chair to be key issues should be highlighted. Deadlines for placing formal items on the agenda should be enforced by the Chair and the Executive Officer. Rather than delay the distribution of an agenda because one item is not ready, the use of supplementary agendas should be considered.
- Be posted on the Web, with attachments where possible and available to all staff on the University’s intranet, unless issues of confidentiality preclude this.

11. Minutes of meetings should:

- Contain a summary or précis of events, in dot form wherever possible, rather than a detailed account of every contribution. In general names of individuals should not be recorded in the discussion.
- Contain all resolutions and agreements, whether reached formally through motions or through general consensus, and a clear statement of the action to be taken in relation to each item including the person responsible for the action and a timeline for completion, where appropriate.
- Be distributed to committee members within 10 working days of the close of the meeting.
- Be posted on the Web and available to all staff on the University’s intranet, unless issues of confidentiality preclude this.

Role of Members:

12. Members are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the University’s Code of Conduct and the University Committee Members’ Code of Conduct.

13. Members are required to participate actively in committee business and provide appropriate contributions to decision making for the betterment of the University as a whole.

14. University members should only nominate for committees for which they feel they are well placed and appropriately informed to contribute to the business of that committee.

15. Members who represent constituents on a committee should make every attempt to canvass the views and opinion of that group to bring back to the discussion of the committee and report committee decisions back to their constituents.

Role of Chair and Executive Officer:

16. Chairs and Executive Officers are responsible for ensuring these rules for the operation of committees are followed including the appropriate recording of decisions and actions.

17. Chairs should conduct meetings with the degree of formality appropriate to the committee. Generally, greater formality is needed with major committees, committees with a larger membership and where it is required by constitutional and statutory provisions.

18. Chairs should ensure meetings are conducted fluently so members understand the matters at hand and have the opportunity to discuss them, and the voting processes and resolutions are clear. Chairs should try to ensure the active participation by all members of the committee.

19. Chairs and the Executive Officers have a responsibility to ensure the business of the committee is either referred for a decision to the relevant committee or is communicated effectively to relevant areas of the University.
20. Committees should make provision for delegating responsibilities to the Chair and Executive Officer as far as possible, ensuring accountability for these delegations.

21. Chairs and Executive Officers should meet to discuss the draft agenda so both understand the purpose and possible outcomes of the meeting.

22. Executive Officers should familiarise themselves with the working of the University committee system as a whole, and as much as possible work with Executive Officers of other committees to ensure smooth transition of business through the committee system.

23. Executive Officers should work with the Chair to provide all new members with induction briefing material and appropriately induct new members into the committee. Where possible, this should occur well before the member's first attendance at a meeting of the committee. It is recommended that briefing material provided to new members includes:

   The constitution of the committee including information on the position of the committee in the University committee structure (namely maps with pathways for decisions and communication).
   - The Principles and Rules of the Operation of Committees.
   - The Code of Conduct of committee members.
   - Committee meeting dates.
   - Major items of business of the committee of the previous year.
   - Commonly used acronyms and abbreviations which might be used in the conduct of the committee's business.

Any enquiries relating to the rules for the operation of committees may be directed to the University Secretariat.

Revised 16 February 2006
University Secretariat University Committee Members’ Code of Conduct

Code of Conduct

Membership of a University Committee is an important role and brings with it key responsibilities and obligations. The specific membership requirements for University Committees have been prepared to promote good practice and give committee members a summary of their obligations and provide guidance on ethical conduct.

The University Committee Members’ Code of Conduct is based on the Western Australian Public Sector Code of Ethics and the template for Code of Conduct for Government Boards and Committees (http://www.wa.gov.au/opscc/documents/)

1. Personal Conduct: All members of University committees are required to conduct themselves at all times in accordance with the University’s Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct. A copy is available at: http://www.hr.uwa.edu.au/publications/code_of_ethics

Members of committees are also required to:
- Understand the committee’s role and purpose within the University.
- Stay informed about relevant matters affecting the committee’s business.
- Attend all committee meetings or where attendance is not possible, submit an apology.
- Participate actively and work cooperatively with other committee members and University staff.
- Prepare for all committee meetings by reading and considering the agenda items, papers circulated and other relevant documents.
- Not improperly influence other committee members.
- Make new points succinctly without reiterating at length points already made.

2. Accountability. All members have a responsibility to ensure efficient and effective operations of the committee, avoid extravagant and wasteful use of resources and ensure actions are consistent with the role and purpose of the committee.

Members of committees are also required to:
  - Participate constructively in committee activities in a lawful, ethical and justifiable manner.
  - Ensure decisions are consistent with any statutory and legal requirements.
  - Ensure resources, funds and staff are used effectively and economically for committee business.

3. Record Keeping and Use of Information: All documentation produced by the committee forms part of the University records and should be maintained in accordance with University’s Record Keeping Plan (http://www.archives.uwa.edu.au/kip).

In conjunction with specific responsibilities of the Executive Officer, members of committees are also required to:
- Ensure adequate procedures are followed for documenting decisions and actions of the committee.
- Maintain confidentiality of committee business where necessary, ensuring confidential records are subject to appropriate storage and access procedures.
- Respect confidential discussions and not misuse any information obtained through membership of the committee.
• Openly declare any matters of private interest and record any issues with the potential for conflict or perceived conflict to ensure they are transparent and capable of review.

• Where appropriate, disqualify themselves from committee discussions and decisions where a conflict of interest occurs.

• Be aware of the FOI Act 1992 and that access may be sought to all records under this legislation.

Where members are unsure of their obligations or responsibilities under the University Committee Members’ Code of Conduct, the member should contact the Chair or Executive Officer of the Committee for assistance.

Revised on 16/02/2006
5. REVIEW OF COURSE STRUCTURES REF: F15115

The Chair welcomed Professors Ian Reid and Don Markwell who attended the meeting to provide a briefing and to lead the discussion on the issues and options paper “Courses for Tomorrow’s World”.

Opening the discussion, Professor Markwell provided an overview of the process and stated that extensive consultation would continue with comments on the paper being invited from all stakeholders. He encouraged staff to submit their comments, the deadline for which was end of January 2008. Prior to this meeting, a constructive meeting had been held with the Dean, Professor George Stewart and Professor Geoff Hammond (the Faculty’s Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning). In order to achieve the University’s aspiration to be one of the top fifty universities in the world within the next fifty years it was necessary to review course structures to ensure they would prepare graduates appropriately for the changing world of the twenty-first century. The first stage of the Review was to assess the educational merits of each of the options before looking at risks and resourcing issues.

Professor Markwell listed some of the core principles as follows:

- refining of UWA’s Educational Principles;
- role of research skills as a means of equipping students for lifelong learning;
- need to achieve appropriate balance between breadth and depth; and
- ways in which UWA might provide international and intercultural focus and enrich the student learning experience

The options that staff were asked to consider were:

Option 1: Reinforcement of “Educational Principles” – to ensure that UWA’s Educational principles are embedded in every degree course and to identify attributes that students should acquire. It is proposed that all the other options (i.e. 2 – 7) would include the elements of this option.

Option 2: First-semester of common general units taken from outside the home discipline — students complete 24 points of common general interdisciplinary, foundation units taken from outside the home discipline, aimed at broadening the scope of undergraduate education

Option 3: Distributed General Requirements — students complete 24 points of general units which need not be taken during the first year and need not all be tied to a specific set of units

Option 4: Breadth governed from within the home discipline — students choose 24 points of “broadening” units from outside the core requirements of their course as stipulated by the home Faculty which govern the choice of relevant “breadth” for their students

Option 5: Honours as the standard first-degree program — an honours degree becomes the standard UWA undergraduate program along with a research capstone and/or practicum and/or Study Abroad

Option 6: Several general undergraduate degrees with expanded provision of postgraduate degrees — a five year framework in which general bachelor degrees lead to professional or specialist master degrees.

Option 7: One comprehensive undergraduate degree (or two) plus a variant for especially high achievers, with expanded provision of postgraduate degrees — either two undergraduate degrees (BA&Sc and BPhil) or three (BA, BSc and BPhil). The BPhil is for outstanding students with a high entry cut-off. There is an expanded provision of postgraduate degrees whilst educational breadth is provided through incorporation of 24 points of common or general units chosen by students themselves.
5. REVIEW OF COURSE STRUCTURES  REF: F15115  (cont’d…)

The Faculty Manager queried how “discipline” would be defined in science in respect to the recommendation on “broadening” units since science was already so broad. Professor Markwell commented that several options had been put forward in respect to broadening the student learning experience, and it was up to the Faculty to decide which structure best met their needs.

One member queried as to who would be responsible for deciding on the ‘breadth’ or ‘broadening’ units. Professor Markwell replied that it was up to schools to provide the Steering Group with a list of the units that they deem relevant to their discipline. Whilst option 7 with its offering of general degrees had the attraction of taking pressure off Year 12 students and thus providing for a much healthier education, he admitted that for a specialist degree like Medicine, students might be required to undertake a bridging course to bring them up to the required standard for entry.

Another member queried whether there was employer demand for the four or five-year degrees locally. Professor Markwell replied that they had consulted widely with employers and professional groups and held meetings with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry and other industry representatives. It had become clear from discussions with these groups that there would be a greater demand for students with a masters degree rather than those with only a bachelors degree. These groups had also stressed the need for students to be equipped with a range of generic/transferable skills especially ethics.

The Faculty Manager provided the background on why programs had been introduced in the BSc, the advantages of having them within degrees and suggested that programs be included in option 6 and 7. Professor Markwell remarked that several staff members were of this view. However, he pointed out that Stanford University had successfully recruited students without using programs. In response to a query as to whether UWA would be competing with Stanford in terms of its name or its degree, Professor Markwell remarked that it would be UWA’s long term aspiration to be the Stanford University in Australia.

In response to a query as to the lessons the Steering Group could learn from the University of Melbourne model, Professor Markwell remarked that they had been following its development with interest and commented that UWA was more sophisticated in its approach of the Review. Both he and Professor Reid would be visiting Melbourne early next year to obtain further insight into its development process.

In closing, Professors Markwell and Reid stressed that the process ahead would be a long one in terms of determining the nature and content of the course structures. They would narrow down the options and then conduct a market research on the remaining options. On behalf of Board members, the Chair thanked Professor Markwell and Professor Reid for their time.
DRAFT RESPONSE TO THE DISCUSSION PAPER: COURSES FOR TOMORROW’S WORLD: ISSUES AND OPTIONS

FACULTY OF LIFE AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES

The Faculty’s view is that the path to international excellence for UWA is by its distinctiveness, not necessarily by a conforming to or copying course structures that have evolved elsewhere in the world. It is important that UWA is known by the qualities of its graduates as by the nature of its course structures.

We have confined our submission to issues raised in the Issues and Options paper rather than commenting on each of the options in turn.

1. Simplification of degree structures

and the companion rules. Our view is that a changed degree structure must be all-or-none, without exemptions or exceptions. A hybrid system would lose the advantages of simplification.

Any reformed course structure should differentiate BA and BSc degrees. Each has its separate identity that is recognized and understood in much, if not all, of the world.

2. Preservation of the end-on Honours program

LPS strongly supports for those students who wish to undertake an intensive research year and whose academic achievement indicates that they would benefit from the experience. Honours teaching is intensive, and hence costly, and is not for everyone.

We strongly endorse the first recommendation of the Working Party on Honours, that:

“Whatever the degree structure(s) established at UWA in the future, Honours as an intensively supervised, yet independent, research experience for our best students must be maintained, nurtured, and if possible enhanced.”

James Wilkinson (in his 2006 Menzies Oration to the University of Melbourne) argued that education should instil the ability to “ask good questions and seek answers based on evidence”. Just so, and this, together with the ability to communicate the answers, both orally and in writing, is what we strive to achieve in the Honours programs in Science. It is also important that teaching the processes of scholarly enquiry is part of all undergraduate years, and not restricted to an Honours year.

Implementing a 3+2 cycle of undergraduate and postgraduate degrees at UWA creates a predicament for the one-year Honours program, which has worked well. A slight elaboration of the degree sequences, by allowing a 3+1 cycle (i.e., an end-on Honours year which would be an exit point or an entry point to doctoral research) would remove the predicament. It would also allow for entry into the MSc and PhD degrees.
3. Enhancing the teaching-research nexus

This is done most noticeably through of our distinctive Honours program, but also more generally through the undergraduate course of study.

LPS strongly supports the view that enquiry should be a hallmark of a UWA degree. To quote Wilkinson again, “The most important thing they [the undergraduates] can learn is the process of inquiry itself”. It is the very strong view of LPS that any reformed course structure at UWA should facilitate the teaching of scholarly enquiry and that this should be a hallmark of all UWA degrees.

4. The balance of breadth and depth

The explosion of knowledge in the sciences inevitably builds pressure for increasing specialization at the cost of breadth. This pressure aside, LPS welcomes a broadening of the undergraduate education that would both facilitate discipline-based learning for students enrolled in the BSc and lead to graduates who would be broadly informed and knowledgeable citizens. To achieve this, LPS favours a choice of 18-24 points of units selected from a menu without a requirement to do any compulsory units, which could provoke student resistance. The choice should be constrained in a way that complements study in the students’ ‘home’ discipline by illustrating, in contemporary context, the methods of enquiry in the sciences and the humanities. The ‘breadth’ units should, by design, be cross-faculty offerings; the proposed undergraduate units in Integrated Human Studies are examples that could be adopted.

Requiring more than 24 points of extra-disciplinary study would arguably give an even broader education, but would compromise the first of UWA’s Educational Principles, “to master the subject matter, concepts and techniques of their chosen discipline(s) at internationally-recognised levels and standards”.

If ‘breadth’ units are introduced students in a BSc must be able to take more than 144 points in order to get a sufficient breadth of study within science (already a broad domain!) and to be able to complete two majors in all science disciplines.

Learning ‘what’ (i.e., disciplinary content) and learning ‘how’ (i.e., methods of inquiry) don’t map on to specialist (learning what) and generalist (learning how) education respectively. A course structure that develops specialization of disciplinary knowledge is arguably more able than a generalist course to develop the process of inquiry, of learning how. The ability to ask the right questions and to find answers through the appropriate methods of inquiry are developed best in a disciplinary context.

5. Introducing an elite undergraduate degree (the BPhil)

There is some discomfort in LPS about inequities that might accompany the introduction of a BPhil degree. If such a degree were implemented, admission based on academic achievement in the first year of university study would be more equitable than admission based on achievement in high school.
Moreover, if scholarly enquiry is to be a hallmark of a UWA degree, differentiating degrees, so that one (the BPhil) offers more of it than the other (the BA&Sc, or separate BA and BSc degrees), is not appealing. Advanced scholarly enquiry is better developed after the basic degree.

6. A four-year degree as the standard

LPS is not in favour of adopting a four-year undergraduate degree structure as the standard. Although many students in LPS elect to do a fourth year at present (either an end-on Honours year, or, in some Schools, a professionally oriented year) not all students want to do a fourth year nor are all suited for it. Adopting a four-year degree as standard creates a risk of losing students to other universities where they can complete their chosen degree in three years. Furthermore, the teaching and administrative costs of sustaining a fourth year for marginal students would be burdensome.

Finally, although this response has identified educational issues raised by the *Issues and Options* paper, we note that these issues cannot be disentangled from resource issues. In LPS we see a need to reduce the number of units offered (to allow students and academic staff the time for reflection) and to introduce more intensive research-based learning into the undergraduate curriculum. Both changes would enhance learning outcomes, but implementing them will require attention to the allocation of teaching resources.
6. PROPOSED ESTABLISHMENT OF A FOUR-YEAR PHD COURSE INCLUDING PROGRAMS
REF: F5075

Members had before them the Faculty’s proposal for the establishment of a four-year PhD course including programs. Speaking to the item, the Faculty Manager stated that the Faculty had been getting enquiries from overseas institutions for a PhD course involving coursework as they were not interested in a Higher Degree Preliminary course which did not result in a student being awarded a formal qualification. Members were provided with examples of PhD courses involving coursework offered in North American universities (e.g. Stanford, Princeton) and Queens University in Canada. The proposed structure comprised:

**Year 1 (48 points)**
Coursework in one of the following programs – Biomedical Science, Human Science, Physical Science

**Years 2-4**
Completion of a PhD thesis

Members were asked to consider the educational advantages of a PhD with coursework. The following points were noted:

- It embodied a broadening of skills for students which would be favourable for some institutions;
- It provided greater breadth academically and would equip students for a broader career path;
- It met the needs of international students who were looking for a PhD program similar to that offered in North America; and
- Current students coming in might not have any knowledge of research at all. This type of PhD allowed prospective students to settle into their studies first before being required to submit a research proposal.

In considering the specifics of the proposal, the following points were made:

- Need to consider the number of years required for coursework, whether it would be one or two years. The Faculty Manager stated that this would have to depend on the calibre of the student;
- Would there be a requirement for students to simply “pass” all units or would there be a provision to pass them at a particular level?;
- Need to consider what the upper limit for coursework should be or whether it should be set at 48 points;
- Need to determine whether there should be a requirement for students to do additional points of coursework in the second, third or final year;
- Should progression to second year be conditional upon students achieving a weighted average mark of either 65% or 70%?; and
- Should a unit for testing of a student’s research and written skills be incorporated into the coursework component?

Members generally supported the initiative. However, as members were not able to reach a consensus on the issues raised above, the Chair proposed that the item be deferred to the next meeting of the Board which would be held early next year. Schools were now asked to discuss with their staff, the structure of the proposal in greater detail particularly in relation to the following:

- Initial Coursework - should this be 36 points coursework and 12 points dissertation, or 24 points coursework and 24 points dissertation; or some other combination?
- Should there be a requirement for students to do additional coursework in the second, third or final year, or should this be optional?
- Should progression to second year be conditional upon students achieving a weighted average mark of either 65% or 70%, or should the pass mark for each unit be set at 65%?