MEMBERS OF THE FACULTY OF LIFE AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Executive committee will be held in the Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences Meeting Room, Room 1.58, First Floor, Physics Building on Tuesday, 24 February 2009, at 2.15pm.

Membership of the Executive Committee as follows:

The Dean (Professor George Stewart)
The Deputy Dean (Professor Bob Grove)
The Academic Student Advisor (Dr Jane Emberson)
The Faculty Manager (Ms Jenny Gamble)

Heads (or their nominees) of the following Schools:
Associate Professor Linc Schmitt (Anatomy and Human Biology)
Professor Geoff Stewart (Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences)
Professor Bruce Elliott (Sport Science, Exercise and Health)
Associate Professor Ian McArthurea (Physics)
Associate Professor David Morrison (Psychology)

Deputy Head of the following School:
Dr Allan McKinley (Chemistry – Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences)

Associate Deans:
Professor Colin Raston (Research)
Professor Geoff Hammond (Teaching and Learning)
Professor Arun Dharmarajan (South Asia Research Initiatives)
Dr Mohamed Makha (Middle East Research Initiatives)

Managers of the following Schools:
Dr Ron Swann (Anatomy and Human Biology)
Ms Jennifer Stevenson (Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences)
Mr David Faithfull (Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences)
Mr Ron Kelly (Sport Science, Exercise and Health)
Mr Jegathva Jegathesan (Physics)
Dr Craig Clark (Psychology)

Elected Representatives:
Professor Ian Dadour (Centre for Forensic Science)
Mr Doug Robb (School of Psychology)
Dr Giles Plant (Anatomy and Human Biology)

Part 1 of the agenda has items of communication to be dealt with en bloc. Part 2 of the agenda is items for decisions to be dealt with en bloc by motion of the Chair. Part 3 is for discussion and decision. A member may request the removal of an item from one part to another.

Up to three members of staff from resourced Schools in the Faculty may attend the meeting with speaking rights only. Anyone wishing to do so should contact the Faculty Office prior to the meeting.

Mrs Lesley Tubic
Secretary
WELCOME
Professor Ian Dadour (Director, Centre for Forensic Science), academic staff representative
Mr Doug Robb (School of Psychology), technical staff representative

RETIRING MEMBERS
The following members retired from the committee at the end of 2008:
Dr James Dimmock (Sport Science, Exercise and Health), former academic staff representative
Mr Guy Ben-Ary (Anatomy and Human Biology), former technical staff representative

AGENDA

1. MINUTES
   Confirmation of the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 30 September 2008.

2. DECLARATION OF POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT OR PERCEIVED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
   The chair invites members to declare interests in relation to any item on the agenda.

3. 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 A).

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

PART I – Items for Communication to be dealt with En Bloc

   There are no items for inclusion in Part I

PART II – Items for Decision to be dealt with En Bloc

   There are no items for inclusion in Part II
PART III – Items for Discussion and Decision

4. UNIT INFORMATION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM (UIMS)
From semester 1, 2009, FLPS and FNAS will be introducing the Unit Information Management System (UIMS). The system aims to improve the management of unit information across the Faculties. UIMS will allow unit co-ordinators and the Faculty to manage unit information more efficiently, improving the learning experience of students and streamlining business processes. The publication of unit information via UIMS will have to conform to University regulations. Unit outline files will no longer be displayed on any Faculty web site. The UIMS Support Network has been established across the Faculty to provide assistance. The UIMS Helpdesk uims@csp.uwa.edu.au will assist staff with questions about the system. Mr Matthew Kohler, Project Manager, will also be available to assist staff as UIMS is established in this Faculty. For reference please find a copy of the UIMS Briefing Notes attached to this agenda (Attachment B). Mr Kohler will be attending the meeting to answer questions regarding UIMS.

Members are asked to consider a proposal to make the recording of unit information in UIMS mandatory in this Faculty.

For discussion

5. DEAN’S REPORT
The Dean will report on current issues of interest to members of the Executive Committee

6. RESEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT
Professor Colin Raston, Chair, Research Committee, will provide an update on research activities within this Faculty.

7. MIDDLE EAST RESEARCH INITIATIVES REPORT
Dr Mohamed Makha, Associate Dean (Middle East Research Initiatives) will provide an update on the Faculty’s marketing activities in the Middle East.

8. TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE REPORT
Professor Geoff Hammond, Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee has sent his apologies for this meeting. His report on the Teaching and Learning Awards, 2008 is attached (Attachment C). The winners in each category were:

9. OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS
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:

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

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

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

8. *Membership*: Committee membership ensures the broad University community, in all its diversity, is reasonably 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
Rules for the Operation of Committees

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.
- Effective Meetings - A Guide to Good Practice

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

Revised 16 February 2006
Briefing Notes

Background

A review of the management of unit information and unit outlines undertaken by the Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences (LPS) in July 2008, determined that unit information was best managed using a database system where staff are able to enter information directly onto a web based template. In the review, LPS staff indicated that they wanted a unit information system that was easy to use, automated, derived as much information as possible from other sources and did not require double entry of data.

Between 2006 and 2008, the Faculty had access to a web based facility for entering unit information directly onto a database. This facility, the Caliope Unit Outline Online Facility (Caliope) was introduced by the UWA Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) to:

- Provide a facility for easy access to unit outlines by UWA students (drawing from existing information, such as Handbooks)
- Support the needs of prospective international students via OUTWARD (http://www.admin.uwa.edu.au/ic/outward)

However, in November 2008 the TLC resolved to discontinue the use of Caliope on the recommendation of the Caliope Reference Group due to a lack of use by faculties. The LPS Unit Information Management Review determined that the lack of use by faculties was caused by poor implementation of Caliope across the faculties. It was also not made mandatory to use Caliope to display unit information on-line. The TLC resolved that faculties could either continue to use Caliope or to store unit outlines on their web pages until a proposed future system was developed and made available by Callista. The Director of Student Services has indicated the Callista development will not be available to the Faculty until the end of 2010 at the earliest.

Issues

With the withdrawal of the Caliope Facility and the delay of the introduction of the proposed alternative web based system, the Faculty faced the problem of continuing to manage unit outline 'files'. The process is time consuming and the information stored in these files cannot be manipulated for other purposes or easily managed for quality control.

Solution

In collaboration, LPS and The Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences (NAS) will build upon the Caliope System to develop a more robust, simplified and functional system. This new system, UIMS, focuses on the needs of the students and staff at the faculty and school level. The development phase is currently under way.

Benefits

The benefits of using a web based system that allows unit information data to be directly entered into a database by staff are:

- an easy portal for students to access standardised and up to date unit information
- better quality control over the information
- improved business process that will reduce the time spent by administrative staff managing unit information (it is estimated that the introduction of UIMS will save the Faculty around 400 hours of administrative time per year)
• a one-stop-shop for the management of unit information at the Faculty/School level
• flexibility in displaying information in the format required
• share information across different applications without the need to re-key information
• opportunities for future developments using the database and the data

Challenges

It will take time for the staff to accept UIMS after the false start with Calliope. A network of school administrators will be trained to use UIMS and offer support to unit coordinators using it.

Implementation

1. 6 Feb - Calliope renamed UIMS.
2. 6 Feb - UIMS available for staff to enter unit information
3. 9 Feb – UIMS demonstration
4. 12 Feb - Training session for all school UIMS administrators
5. 23 Feb - Unit Outline On-line www.unitoutlines.uwa.edu.au begins to display 2009 unit outlines as the teaching periods begin (2006-2008 unit outlines are also available).
6. May – System review from ongoing monitoring and evaluation. All stakeholders will be asked to participate in a survey. A second development phase will then follow.
LPS Teaching Awards, 2008

A total of 42 nominations was received. Fifteen nominees submitted applications. Some nominees elected not to submit an application because of time constraints and other commitments.

Awards are offered in the following categories:

- Excellence in coursework teaching
  - Excellence in coursework teaching (First year teaching)
  - Excellence in coursework teaching (Early career teacher - up to 3 years)
- Student teacher award
- Programs that enhance student learning
- Excellence in postgraduate research supervision
- Excellence in honours research supervision
- Excellence in student support

The submissions were considered by a selection panel made up of:

Vance Locke (Psychology)
Nancy Longnecker (Teaching & Learning Coordinator)
Ian McArthur (Physics)
Jan Meyer (Anatomy & Human Biology)
Peter Whipp (Sports Science Exercise & Health)
Jenny Gamble (as Executive Officer)
Geoff Hammond (as Chair)

Don Robertson was unable to attend the meeting but supplied his views in writing.

Joint awards were made in two categories in which there were two very high-quality submissions which the selection panel was unable to separate. The winners were:

**Coursework Teaching**
Nick Milne and Karen Wallman (shared)

**Coursework Teaching (Early Career)**
Dan Franklin

**Student Support**
Ian Dadour

**Student Teacher**
David Sewell

**Postgraduate Supervision**
Paul Fournier and Alan Harvey (Shared)

**Honours supervision**
Lawrie Abraham was awarded a Letter of Commendation
Heads of School are urged to submit nominations for the next round of awards, particularly in the ‘Student teacher’ category (to recognise the contribution of postgraduates to our teaching programs) and in the ‘Programs that enhance student learning’ and ‘Excellence in student support’ categories (in which few or no nominations were received). These two latter categories are less likely to attract student and self nominations, and hence it is important for Heads of School to nominate worthy candidates. Without the support of Heads, good teaching programs and practices in the Faculty will go unrecognized. Nominations can be made (by email) to the Faculty Office at any time during the year. The University expects each faculty to forward one nominee for ‘Awards for Programs that Enhance Learning’ and two nominees for ‘Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning’ to be considered centrally for developing an application to the Australian Learning and Teaching Council (formerly Carrick).

The following improvements have been made to the process for implementation next year:

- changed deadlines so that nominees have the maximum amount of time possible to prepare their applications (these deadlines are now specified in the Guidelines)
- revised Guidelines to give nominees greater assistance in preparing their applications.

Geoff Hammond

17 February 2009.