MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
FACULTY TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE
held in Room 1.55, First Floor, Physics Building
on Friday 20 June 2008

Present:
Professor Geoff Hammond (Chair)
Dr Jane Emberson (Academic Student Advisor)
Ms Jenny Gamble (Faculty Manager)

Representatives from Schools:
Associate Professor Barbara Chang (Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences)
Professor Tim Ackland (Sports Science, Exercise and Health)
Dr Ralph James (Physics)
Dr Vance Locke (Psychology)

Other Representatives:
Dr Patrick Finnegan (Representative from FNAS)
Ms Carmel O’Sullivan (Biological Sciences Library)
Ms Jacqueline McNally (Postgraduate Student Representative)

Visitor:
Mrs Katherine Williams (Project Officer (Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences)

Apologies
Dr Nancy Longnecker (CATLyst)
Dr Jan Meyer (Anatomy and Human Biology)
Miss Matilda Oke (Undergraduate Student Representative)

1. MINUTES
RESOLVED – 5

that the minutes of the meeting of Teaching and Learning Committee held on Tuesday 13 May 2008 be confirmed.

2. DECLARATIONS OF POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT OR PERCEIVED CONFLICT OF INTEREST
No declarations of conflict were declared.

3. ITEMS/BUSINESS IN PROGRESS FOR NOTING SINCE PREVIOUS MEETING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item/Business in Progress</th>
<th>Progress Update</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tr>
<td>Teaching and Learning Guide for Faculty Staff.</td>
<td>Draft, prepared by Ms Heather Morton, to be checked by Faculty Student Adviser and Faculty Manager.</td>
<td>In progress</td>
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4. SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS REPRESENTATION ON THE FACULTY TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE
Members noted that the membership of the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee had been amended to include a representative from the School of Mathematics and Statistics. It had been recommended at the review of the School in 2007 that the School should be represented on the teaching and learning committees of those faculties in which it taught service units. A request to
the Dean from Associate Professor Les Jennings, Head of the School of Mathematics and Statistics, had been approved. Following verification by the Faculty Board the change to the membership would be formally recorded in the Faculty Governance and Structure document.

5. CHAIR’S REPORT
The Chair reported as follows:

- **Australian Council of Deans of Science (ACDS) National Conference of Associate Deans Teaching and Learning**
The Chair informed members that the Australian Council of Deans of Science had hosted the inaugural meeting of Associate Deans (Teaching and Learning) and the equivalents from science faculties across Australia. These meetings would be held annually to promote science teaching and learning initiatives. A copy of the press release was tabled at the meeting (Attachment A). The Australian Council of Deans of Science (ACDS) website could be accessed at:

  http://www.acds.edu.au/

- **Carrick Project – Achieving Teaching-Research Connections: Launching New Resources and Ideas**
The Chair informed members that the aim of this project was to investigate ways in which a combination research could be incorporated into the undergraduate curriculum to strengthen the teaching-research nexus. Details about the project were tabled at the meeting (Attachment B). Information could also be obtained from the following website:

  www.trnexus.edu.au

Members were encouraged to look at the examples on the website, and in particular, those in the Jenkins paper. Ways of promoting the teaching-research nexus would be discussed at a future meeting of the committee.

- **Academic Oversight PSB Committee**
The Chair informed members that the Faculty Board meeting held on 17 June 2008 resolved to include oversight of the programs offered through the PSB Academy in the functions of the Teaching and Learning Committee. This would require including a representative of these programs in the membership of the Committee.

- **Distinguished Visiting Teachers Fund**
The Chair encouraged members to utilise the Distinguished Visiting Teachers Fund. Financial support for visiting teachers provided $4,000.00 for a national visitor or $6,000.00 for an international visitor. Details could be obtained from the following website:

  http://www.teachingandlearning.uwa.edu.au/page/74871

6. SCHOOL REPORTS

**Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences (BBCS)** – Associate Professor Barbara Chang reported that the School had conducted a review of PSB programs taught in Singapore. This included some changes to the way examination results would be administered.

**Sport Science, Exercise and Health (SSEH)** – Professor Tim Ackland reported that preparation for accreditation of the School’s courses by the Australian Association for Exercise and Sports Science (AAESS) had been completed.

**Physics** – Dr Ralph James reported that refurbishment of the first-floor physics teaching laboratories had been completed. Teaching efficiency measures were being considered, including deletion of units with small enrolments and sharing units across years and between courses.
Psychology — Dr Vance Locke reported that the School had been investigating ways in which teaching could be more efficient without compromising quality. One option being considered was the offering of non-core second-year and third-year units in alternate years.

7. THE EDUCATION ATTRIBUTES OF SOME OF THE WORLD’S “TOP 50” UNIVERSITIES – DISCUSSION PAPER
The University of Western Australia (UWA) aspired to become one of the top 50 universities in the world within 50 years. A working party of the UWA Teaching and Learning Committee (TLC) had been established to investigate ways this could be achieved through teaching activities at UWA. A paper prepared by Dr Carolyn Daniels, Research Associate, Education Policy, provided a useful guide on what characterises a top university. This paper entitled: ‘The Educational Attributes of Some of the World’s “Top 50” Universities – Discussion Paper’ could be accessed via:


The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) recommended that particular attention be paid to Section 3 ‘Where to from Here’ and the list of questions included in this section and asked faculty Teaching and Learning Committees to provide:

- Two or three ideas that could be included in the Operational Priority Plan (OPP) for the period 2009 – 2013.
- Ten ideas that could be implemented in the teaching arena over the next 5 to 50 years.

Members put forward several ideas that would improve the student experience on campus. These included:

- Employing students on campus (e.g. reception and administrative duties in faculty offices). This would enhance their sense of belonging to the university community.
- Learning spaces could be provided for students on a 24/7 basis. This had been trialled successfully at the University of Queensland.
- Information technology support needs to be improved. Many students, particularly those from overseas, were disappointed at the lack of wireless facilities on campus.

More general comments were also invited on the discussion paper. These should be addressed to:

The Executive Officer
Achieving International Excellence Working Party
Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Or sent by email to: top50-feedback@uwa.edu.au.

Comments are sought by the 1 August 2008. However any received by the 31 October 2008 would be useful.

The Chair informed members that the University of Manchester in the UK was engaged in a similar process. Documents prepared by Professor Alan Gilbert, President and Vice-Chancellor of the University of Manchester had been noted in the UWA discussion paper. These were available on the following websites:

  http://www.campus.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/tlao/Pres-review-t&l/interim-report-review-ug-ed-jan-08.pdf

- Gilbert, Alan, 'Reviews of Teaching, Learning and the Student Experience: Pursuing Step Change for Improvement for Students', 27 October 2007, University of Manchester.
  http://www.manchester.ac.uk/medialibrary/staffnet/teaching_and_learning_review.pdf
8. MATURE-AGE ACCESS TRIAL

A mature-age access entry scheme which would admit applicants without formal qualifications was to be trialled during second semester this year. Successful applicants would, initially, be provisionally enrolled. Provisional enrolments would be converted to full enrolment status when students had complied with specified conditions. A list of "English language rich" units that would allow these students to demonstrate competence in English expression was being compiled. PSYC1102 was the only FLPS unit included on the list.

Members’ were concerned about a number of issues regarding this initiative. Their comments included:

- Equity issues had been identified in relation to entry qualifications for the trial compared to those for normal entry students.
- Mathematics competence testing – agreement should be reached regarding how this should be done (e.g. Mathematics Tutor, one hour sit down test, bridging course).
- HMES1102 and ANHB 1102 should be added as "English language rich" units.

9. REVIEW OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS OF UWA GRADUATES – REF: F19237, F983

Following acceptance of the Report of the Review of English Language Skills of UWA Graduates by Academic Council at its meeting held on 5 March 2008, five recommendations were identified as requiring action by the Faculty.

Recommendation 5, which required that unit outlines include a statement describing assistance with study skills, including English language skills, that was available from Student Services, could be implemented immediately. Heads of Schools would be responsible for implementing this Recommendation. Members were asked to bring this recommendation to the attention of Heads of Schools and unit co-ordinators.

Recommendation 7, which required that School workload allocation models take into account the workload associated with teaching in units where significant numbers of students have problems with English language, including postgraduate research students, would be difficult to implement. However, as the Faculty had a large international student cohort, it was important that it find ways in which it could provide language support to these students. The following suggestions were made:

- Testing English language capability could be included as a component of the assessment for particular units.
- The entry-level English requirements, particularly at the postgraduate level could be increased. Some courses already required a higher IELTS score than set generally for the University. These included Law, which required a score of 8 and Education, which required a score of 7.5. It was noted that the Centre for Forensic Science was seeking to increase its IELTS score from 6.5 to 7.

It was agreed that changes to workload models required greater discussion by Heads of School and therefore needed to be referred to the Faculty Executive Committee for consideration.

Recommendation 8, which required that this Committee ensure that students were to required to demonstrate English language skills in each year of the Bachelor of Science, could be implemented by including language skills as a learning outcome and as a component in the
assessment table for the core units in each major sequence at each level. It was noted that the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences was in the process of developing assessment tables which would include an assessment of students' writing skills and that a report would be submitted shortly from the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund project on assessing generic skills of BSc students.

**Recommendation 10**, which required that all academic staff and all professional staff who had direct contact with students be made aware of their responsibilities with respect to identifying students who may require additional English language training and referring them to Student Services for support, could be implemented immediately through the implementation of Recommendation 5.

**Recommendation 11**, which required that guidelines be devised for undergraduate students and postgraduate students undertaking coursework in respect to using professional editorial assistance permitted in preparing assignments (similar guidelines had already been developed for higher degree by research students), would managed by the University Teaching and Learning Committee.

The implementation of Recommendation 7 from the Report of the Report of the Review of English Language Skills of UWA Graduates would be referred to the Faculty Executive Committee for consideration.

**10. LIBRARY REPORT**

Ms Carmel O'Sullivan reported to members regarding the following library activities and issues:

- **Interuniversity Teaching Facilities** - the Biological Sciences Library had set up a facility which could be used to co-teach units with other universities.

- **Biological Sciences Library closure** – The Biological Sciences Library would be closed for 4 weeks, from Monday 30th June to Sunday 27th July, while building work is completed. The library will re-open on Monday 28th July. Information for staff and students could be obtained from the Library website at:


AUSTRALIAN COUNCIL of
DEANS of SCIENCE

PRESS RELEASE June 10th 2008

SCIENTISTS ORGANISE FOR SCIENCE EDUCATION

In an historic first the ACDS last week convened the first ever national conference of Associate Deans Teaching and Learning of the nation's science faculties.

Over the last many years individual universities have grappled with the problems of declining enrolments and the generally poor image of studying science. This is despite that science and scientists are needed to maintain Australia's competitive place in the technological evolution that drives the global economy.

The conference inaugurates a national network of people who have overall responsibility for science teaching and learning in Universities, particularly the promotion of quality and innovation.

ACDS President, Professor John Rice, said that the ACDS was committed to holding this conference as an annual event and to supporting national innovation in science teaching and learning through this mechanism.

'Already at this conference we've seen great ideas about laboratories and learning spaces, developed and implemented by scientists, that change the paradigms of tertiary science teaching,' he said.

'We also saw quite innovative change management programs that draw single-minded and determined researchers into the teaching and learning arena. We want these ideas promoted nationally, and this is the group to do it.'

Rice observed that the role and nature of appointment of Associate Deans Teaching & Learning was quite variable across science faculties, and it would be important to develop and strengthen that role if we are to advance a strong agenda in science teaching and learning.

'The conference will report to the AGM of the Council in October, and propose an agenda for the Deans to foster innovation and raise the profile of teaching in tertiary science education' he said. 'At a time when the RQF and now ERA are driving universities and their staff to focus particularly on research, this is a critical initiative.'

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john.rice@uts.edu.au
Achieving Teaching-Research Connections: Launching New Resources and Ideas

Website Map - www.trnexus.edu.au

About the project (home)
  - Project team
  - Acknowledgements
  - Definitions of the TRN
  - SOTL
  - Research into the TRN

What is the TRN?
  - Bibliography
  - The Broad Possibilities

Benefits to Students
  - Avoiding Pitfalls

In the Curriculum
  - Disciplinary Differences
  - Differences Across the Year Levels

TRN in Policy
  - 1. Embedding the TRN in Institutional Policy
  - 2. Faculty & Department Strategies
  - 3. The Influence of Public Policy
  - 4. Benefits to Institutions
  - 5. Policy-Makers' Views on How to Promote the TRN in Universities
  - 6. Recognising and Rewarding the TRN
  - 7. Self-Review Framework
  - 8. Quality Assurance & TRN Performance Indicators

TRN and Academic Careers

Examples of TRN Practice
  - Provides multiple links to:
    - discipline specific examples
    - year level specific examples
    - policy-maker examples
    - teaching & learning context examples
    - TRN strategy examples

A project supported by
The Australian Learning and Teaching Council