The University of Western Australia

THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE FACULTY OF LIFE AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD IN ROOM 158, FIRST FLOOR, PHYSICS BUILDING ON TUESDAY 26 MAY 2009

PRESENT:
Dean as Chair (Winthrop Professor George Stewart)
Deputy Dean (Winthrop Professor Bob Grove)
Dr Jane Emberson (Academic Student Adviser)

Heads (or their nominees) of the following Schools:
Professor Alan Harvey (Anatomy and Human Biology)
Associate Professor Ian McArthur (Physics)
Professor Bruce Elliott (Sport Science, Exercise and Health)

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

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

Elected Representatives:
Dr Giles Plant (Anatomy & Human Biology)
Mr Doug Robb (Psychology)

Visitors:
Mr David Rogers (Senior Employee Relations Officer (Human Resources))
Professor Adrian Baddeley (School of Mathematics and Statistics)
Professor Sanjay Deshmukh (Head, School of Life Sciences, University of Mumbai, India)
Mrs Katherine Williams (Senior Project Officer, FLPS)

APOLOGIES:
Faculty Manager (Ms Jenny Gamble)
Professor Line Schmitt (Anatomy and Human Biology)
Professor Geoff Stewart (Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences)
Associate Professor David Morrison (Psychology)
Associate Professor Lee Yong Lim (Biomedical, Biomolecular and Chemical Sciences)
Professor Colin Raston (Associate Dean (Research))
Professor Ian Dadour (Centre for Forensic Science)

Mrs Lesley Tubic as Executive Officer

1. MINUTES

RESOLVED – 4

that the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 31 March 2009 be confirmed.
2. DECLARATION OF POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT OR PERCEIVED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
The Dean invited members to declare conflicts of interest in relation to any item on the agenda. No conflicts were declared.

3. ONGOING CONTINGENT FUNDED RESEARCH CONTRACTS (CFCs)
Mr David Rogers, Employee Relations Officer with Human Resources, spoke to members regarding the new Ongoing Contingent Funded Research Contracts (CFCs). These were, he informed members, a category of employment under the 2009 Academic and General Staff Agreement. CFCs had been established following the release of the discussion paper ‘Better Supporting Research Staff at the University of Western Australia’. The aim of the contracts was to provide greater opportunities for continuity of employment for research staff on fixed term contracts. He informed members that Human Resources would be sending schools lists of staff employed on fixed term contracts for three more years.

The Faculty had to decide how these contracts would be funded and a determination had to be made regarding the definition of ‘research active’ applicable to this Faculty. The Dean told members that the Associate Dean (Research) would be sending an email to all schools regarding the definition of ‘research active’ applicable to this Faculty.

4. SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS – PROPOSED INTRODUCTION OF A NEW UNIT REF: 5075
Members had before them a proposal by the School of Mathematics and Statistics to introduce a new unit STAT1400. Professor Adrian Baddeley from the School of Mathematics and Statistics informed members that it was proposed that this unit would replace both Statistics A (STAT1510) and Statistics B (STAT 1530). STAT1400 would focus on statistical ideas and methods with emphasis on data analysis and interpretation. It would not include mathematical theory currently taught in Stats A and B. Professor Baddeley told members that one of the outcomes of the review of the School had been the recommendation by Professor Louden, Chair of the Review Panel, that Stats A and B be reviewed. A lot of work had been undertaken including extensive consultations internationally and within Australia. He emphasised that although this would not be an easy unit to teach it was important that it was taught well.
Members noted: that:

- A considerable number of FLPS students were enrolled in the Biometrics unit taught through the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Science.
- Negative grading scheme presented a problem especially for weaker students.
- Students who enrol in Stats B or Stats A and Biometrics will lead to a major. Enrolment in STAT1400 would not permit a student to undertake a major.

Members supported the proposal to introduce STAT1400.

(Note: This item was recommended for approval at the Board of Studies meeting on 2 June 2009.)

5. SOUTH ASIA RESEARCH INITIATIVES REPORT
The Dean welcomed Professor Sanjay Deshmukh, Head of the School of Life Sciences at the University of Mumbai, India, to the meeting. Professor Deshmukh thanked the Dean and Professor Dharmarajan (Associate Dean (South Asia Research Initiatives) for hosting his visit to UWA, which had been very fruitful. He explained that the University of Mumbai, established in 1867, had been awarded a five star rating (the highest available) by National Accreditation Council in India. Amongst the world’s universities the University of Mumbai was currently ranked in the top 500. Improvement in this ranking was sought through collaborative interchanges with leading universities. Professor Deshmukh told members that the University of Mumbai comprised three campuses, 57 departments 530 affiliated colleges, and two centres of excellence. The university was also ideally located, in a region with 730 kms of coastline, to
conduct marine science research. Over half a million students were enrolled at the University. This included 85,000 students enrolled in distance education programs. At a meeting with the Vice-Chancellor Professor Deskmukh had discussed the possibility of sending self-funded students to study at the University of Western Australia. These students may have the potential to go on to postgraduate studies at the University of Western Australia. He was also interested in opportunities at UWA for Indian students to study for several months prior to undertaking PhD studies in the United States. He was enthusiastic about the opportunities for staff and student exchanges between the University of Mumbai and the University of Western Australia and extended a welcome to those staff members who may be visiting India to come to the University of Mumbai. Of particular interest may be the launch of the University’s Centre for Integrated Health Studies program on Teachers’ Day, commemorated on the 5 September 2009.

6. **MIDDLE EAST RESEARCH INITIATIVES REPORT**
The Associate Dean (Middle East Research Initiatives) provided an update on the Faculty’s recruitment activities and collaborative activities in the Middle East. He would be visiting the region in an effort to promote exchanges between UWA and universities and institutions in the Middle East.

7. **TEACHING AND LEARNING COMMITTEE REPORT**
The Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning) informed members that deadline for proposals for the next round of Learning and Teaching Performance Fund applications was 5 June 2009. Applications would be considered at the Faculty Teaching and Learning Committee to be held on 9 June 2009.

8. **RESEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT**
The Associate Dean (Research) gave his apologies for this meeting. He had to attend two day survival skills workshop for researchers. His research related issues and events at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

9. **DEAN’S REPORT**
The Dean reported on the following issues:

   - **Financial Meeting**
     The Dean informed members that he and the Faculty Manager had discussed the Faculty’s financial status at a recent meeting with the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and representatives from Financial Services. The Faculty, as a whole, had so far met the 3% savings target. He stressed the importance of maintaining this target for the remainder of 2009.

   - **Education Investment Fund Scheme**
     The Dean informed members that two applications submitted by the University for EIF funding had been unsuccessful. Funding had been sought for a marine research facility and student accommodation. He also informed members that he was now a member of the Research and Teaching Facilities Reference Group.

   - **Science Futures Foundation**
     The Dean informed members that an agreement Mr Ivan Hoffman had resigned as Chair of the Science Futures Foundation. A suitable candidate was needed to replace Mr Hoffman.
10. REDUCTION IN UNITS WITH ENROLMENTS LESS THAN 30
The Dean told members that number of undergraduate units taught in this Faculty had to be reduced by deleting those units considered economically unviable. Units with enrolments less than 50 were considered uneconomical to teach. The Dean proposed that units with enrolments less than 30 be deleted. If there were technical reasons for retaining a unit with a small enrolment this needed to be flagged and funding assured. Reduced enrolments could be avoided by offering units that could also be taught across schools. The Dean planned to meet with Heads of Schools and proposed that this issue be discussed at the next meeting.

11. AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITIES QUALITY AGENCY (AUQA)
The Australian Universities Quality Agency had recently completed a review of UWA. The Dean informed members that Vice-Chancellor had been pleased with the feedback. One issue that had been raised was the lack of feedback and poor response to criticisms from students. The final report from the review panel was expected in a couple of months.

12. PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM
Members had before them a copy of the changes to be made to the University's Performance Management System. Under the new system it would be important for schools to conduct regular Performance Development Reviews (PDRs) for all staff. A member requested that clarification be sought regarding who had access to PDRs.

(Note: A response to the member’s query concerning access to the PDR was sought. At present PDRs can be conducted through Alesco or locally. It is the intention for all PDRs to be dealt with through Alesco. If it is done via Alesco supervisors will be able to view the PDR for each staff member they supervise.)

13. FEDERAL BUDGET
The Dean reported on the items in the Federal Budget relating to higher education. These included:

- 50,000 new places would be created by 2012 in the demand driven university system.
- Proposed target where 40% of 24 – 35 year olds would have university degrees.
- Under the new scheme, UWA would be able to increase the number of enrolled students to 25,000. Opportunities would also be provided to enable increased numbers of enrolled students from disadvantaged areas.
- AUQA to be replaced by a more performance-based body. A budget of $206m dollars had been provided to establish the new body.

Confirmed

CHAIR