UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG
FACULTY OF INFORMATICS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting 2/04 held at 1.30pm on Thursday 1 April 2004 in the Faculty Meeting Room, Building 39, room 150A.

PRESENT: A/Prof F Naghdy (Chair), A/Prof N Gray, Dr J Lukasiak, Dr C McPhail, Ms A Meldrum, Dr A Porter, A/Prof D Siviter, Dr G Trott and A/Prof T Wysocki.

IN ATTENDANCE: Dr X Lu, Ms K Oborn and Ms S Dewhurst.

1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

*1.1 Apologies/Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from: Ms B James

The following members are currently on leave: Dr A Worthy, Mr E Kuen Ha.

*1.2 Arrangement of Agenda

1.2.1 Items 6.2, 8, 10, 11 and 12 were starred (*) for discussion.

1.2.2 A motion to adopt the draft resolutions for the unstarrred items was carried.

*1.3 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting of 12 February 2004

The Committee confirmed the minutes of Meeting 1/04 held on 12 February 2004.

1.4 Business Arising from the Previous Minutes

1.4.1 Dean’s Scholar and Advanced Programs

At the last meeting it was noted that Schools needed to consider the introduction of Dean’s Scholars programs. A reminder was sent to Heads of Schools regarding the introduction of Dean’s Scholars Programs. Progress reports were presented at item 8.

1.4.2 Revised FEC Terms of Reference

As requested at the last meeting, SECTE and SITACS have supplied a copy of their School Education Committee (SEC) Terms of Reference. SMAAS was requested to supply a report on the feasibility of establishing a School Education Committee.

SMAAS Head of School Prof David Steel has advised that the School, at its last meeting, agreed to combine its two current teams on education matters to form a School Education Committee.

The Dean has agreed to a suggestion that a member of the International Unit attend FEC meetings when an item of interest (ie revisions to courses or policies that may affect offshore offerings or onshore advanced standing etc.) is listed on the agenda. The FEC Terms of
Reference should be altered to reflect the inclusion of a representative from the International Office.

Resolved (FEC04/07)
That FEC approves the inclusion of a representative of the Faculty International Office as a member of the Faculty Education Committee and that the Terms of Reference be altered accordingly.

1.4.3 Proposed Bachelor of Software Engineering
SITACS has indicated that the degree proposal will not go forward for commencement in 2005. The reasons were outlined in an email received from A/Prof Neil Gray and distributed with the agenda.

1.4.4 Compliance With New and Revised Assessment Policies
The Chair and Faculty Officer have reviewed the action required and notified the Heads of Schools of the requirements and the timeline to ensure compliance is met.

Action: Heads of Schools to provide progress reports by the next meeting scheduled for 13 May 2004

1.4.5 Compliance with New and Revised Honours Policies
SECTE have provided an updated procedure for assessment of Honours projects worth less than 24 credit points (as required under Section 7 of the Code of Practice – Teaching and Assessment).

*2. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR – VERBAL REPORT
No report as all relevant items have been covered elsewhere in the agenda.

3. REPORT FROM CEDIR/LEARNING DEVELOPMENT UNIT

*3.1 Faculty Service Agreement Projects – Sarah Lambert
A 10-minute presentation was provided by CEDIR’s Sarah Lambert on how Faculty Service Agreement Projects can enhance teaching and improve learning using a range of tools to produce more innovative questionnaires, quizzes, interactive WebcT modules and other teaching aids. With the assistance of CEDIR’s professional designers, video producers, website and multimedia developers, teaching resources can be developed to produce projects ranging from well-designed workbooks through to animations suitable for lectures.

A/Prof Doug Siviter asked whether CEDIR was proposing to develop a software system to support the various Quality Assurance processes being proposed. He suggested that a subject management package similar to the current Student Management Package (SMP) would allow all aspects of administrative data surrounding a subject to be better managed. A/Prof Siviter suggested that if the University does not have plans for such software then perhaps the Faculty could consider it. The committee noted that an ESDF grant may be the best way to proceed.

Sarah reminded the committee that the deadline for Faculty Service Agreement Project applications recently distributed to Faculties is 14 May.

Action: Executive Officer to follow-up application forms and distribute to Schools
4. REPORT FROM THE LIBRARY – ANNETTE MELDRUM

No report for this meeting.

5. REPORT FROM STUDENT MEMBER

No report received as the current student member is on leave of absence. It was noted that this student’s term expires 30 April and will be replaced in the current round of student elections.

6. SCHOOL ITEMS

SCHOOL OF ELECTRICAL, COMPUTER & TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENGINEERING

6.1 Deletion of Internet Engineering Major from Bachelor of Engineering

Resolved (FEC04/08)
That FEC recommends the deletion of the Bachelor of Engineering – Internet Engineering major from the UAC Booklet and no new enrolments be accepted, effective from 2005.

SCHOOL OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & COMPUTER SCIENCE

6.2 Revision of BIST Course Requirements

The BIST coordinator wishes to revise the BIST course requirements, as listed in the University Handbook.

Resolved (FEC04/09)
That FEC recommends the approval of the Revision of BIST Course requirements effective from 2004.

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS AND APPLIED STATISTICS

No items for this meeting.

7. FACULTY GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Faculty Grievance Procedures were distributed to Heads of Schools for comment and feedback prior to approval and adoption.

Resolved (FEC04/10)
That FEC recommends the approval of the Revised Faculty Grievance Procedures in compliance with the University Academic Grievance Policy.
8. DEAN’S SCHOLARS AND ADVANCED PROGRAMS

Schools replied to the Faculty Officer with the following comments:

SMAAS: See no need to change the BMATH(Adv) at this point if the Faculty does not have a Dean’s Scholars program. If the Faculty decides to have such a program then SMAAS would review the BMATH(Adv).

SITACS: After discussions it was felt that none of the current SITACS courses would fit the Dean's Scholars design. SITACS would like to take the option provided by Senate not to implement it, but instead would like to provide incentives to take SITACS’ courses via a scholarship plan.

SECTE: The SECTE sub-committee undertaking course reviews for changes effective from 2005 is to look at the feasibility of introducing a Dean’s Scholar program.

The Committee discussed the Dean’s Scholars and Advanced programs and made the following comments:

- SMAAS would offer the BMATH(Adv) degree irrespective of the introduction of a Dean’s Scholars Program. SMAAS question the need to offer another program in their school which gives students similar benefits to the current advanced program. A review of BMATH(Adv) would be conducted if the Faculty decides to implement a Dean’s Scholar program.
- Prefer for Schools to have their own programs rather than a Faculty program.
- Need clarification of the meaning of Dean’s Scholar.
- Uniadvice feedback is that a Dean’s Scholars program is a good marketing technique, the Informatics Faculty is lagging behind in not offering such a program, and is missing out on better quality students who are attracted by such programs.
- Benefits offered need to be consistent across the Faculty.
- SECTE is exploring a separate approach to incorporate a Dean’s Scholar program.
- To overcome the fear of creating 1st and 2nd class students if offered within a currently existing program, there needs to be a distinctly different program for Dean’s Scholars.
- A sub-committee should be formed to look at the feasibility of constructing a program suitable for the Schools to adopt.
- A School produced program which is useful for other schools provides a model to work from in providing a Faculty Dean’s Scholars program. SMAAS School Education Committee are looking at BMATH(Adv) and Dean’s Scholar program in context of the School Education Committee.

Action: SMAAS to develop a model for a Faculty Dean’s Scholars program and report back to FEC.

9. ANNUAL PLANNING AND RESOURCE REPORT

The latest version of the draft Report was circulated with the agenda for comment and feedback.
10. QUALITY REVIEW FRAMEWORK

The Committee discussed the Quality Review Framework and made the following comments:

- The workload needed to meet the requirements of a complete review of every subject and course on a 5-year cycle is very heavy and resources are not available.
- Expectations of the Framework are very ambitious.
- Current review process is superior to proposed review process, which doesn’t address quality of delivery.
- There is already a 5-year review of courses through IEAUST.
- A WebcT student survey is not adequate as the response from students is poor.
- Finding staff who haven’t taught a subject for two years is an impossible expectation.
- Need definition on what to review and how to conduct the review.

**Action:** Faculty Officer to send Quality Review Framework documents to Heads of Schools and Admin Assistants for distribution to School staff members requesting an immediate response. Feedback due back by Tuesday 6 April for FEC Chair and Faculty Officer to formulate a response for Chair and to communicate to UEC Secretary by 7 April deadline.

11. PASS/FAILURE RATES

Dr Geoff Trott gave a summary of the information extracted from COGNOS detailing Faculty pass/failure rates across all levels of study. The high rate of failure, ie greater than 10% at the 100-level and 900-level across the Schools, is a concern. The FEC agreed that a number of issues needed to be looked at closely by the sub-committee:

- Reasons for failure.
- Reasons for dramatic changes from year-to-year in the failure rate.
- Impact of some subjects moving from elective to core.
- Impact of delays in degree completion.

The Committee decided that:

- subjects with the highest failure rates should be the first to be reviewed under the Quality Review Framework proposal.
- the sub-committee devise a set of questions for follow-up.
- the sub-committee select a group of subjects to be looked at including a subject with good pass rates for contrast.
- School Education Committees should work closely with the sub-committee.

It was noted that A/Prof Neil Gray was elected as the replacement on the sub-committee for Dr Ian Piper.

It was also noted that Sally Rogan (Student Services) is to be co-opted to assist the sub-committee.

It was further noted that the Dean has agreed to provide funding to the sub-committee to achieve its aims.

**Action:** In view of the strategic plan, the sub-committee to hasten progress and report to each FEC meeting.
12. OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 SITACS Prizes
To comply with the University Awards Committee requirements, SITACS has altered the wording of its prize documents. Dr Trott tabled the following altered prize documents for approval by the FEC:

- Nortel Networks Australia, First Year Prize
- Getronics Australia (Pty) Ltd Prize
- Cashcard Australia Ltd Prize
- SITACS Visiting Committee Prize

Resolved (FEC04/11)
That FEC recommends the approval of the changes in wording and syntax of the various SITACS prizes in compliance with the University Awards Committee requirements.

12.2 Unscheduled Subject Clashes
It was brought to the committee’s attention that some Faculties are randomly rescheduling mid-session tests in Maths scheduled lecture time slots resulting in timetable clashes for some students. Any contact made with the staff responsible for this practice has been met with indifference.

Action: Faculty Officer to draft a memo advising PVC (Academic), PVC (Operations) and Dean of Students of this practice.

12.3 Special Consideration
To note that the Grievance Policy is not being followed, that rulings being made by staff regarding applications for special consideration are being challenged by students and over-turned by the Dean of Students. The Dean of Students is concerned that the changing of assessment on an individual basis is in breach of the Code of Practice – Teaching and Assessment and does not assess the recorded outcomes of the subject. Schools should check that their policies for making such decisions are either “approved” by the current Dean of Students or do not essentially change the assessment for any student.

12.4 E-Learning and Teaching Innovations Sub-committee
To note that Dr Jason Lukasiak is the FEC’s representative on the E-Learning and Teaching Innovations Sub-committee.

F Naghdy
Chair
5 April 2004