UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG
FACULTY OF INFORMATICS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting 4/04 held at 1.30pm on Thursday 1 July 2004 in the Faculty Meeting Room, Building 39, room 150A.

PRESENT: A/Prof F Naghdy (Chair), Dr R Caladine, Dr P Ciufo, A/Prof N Gray, Ms B James, Dr X Lu, Dr J Lukasiak, Ms A Meldrum, Dr A Porter, A/Prof D Siviter and Dr G Trott.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms K Sheridan.

1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

*1.1 Apologies/Leave of Absence

The following members are currently on leave: Dr A Worthy and A/Prof T Wysocki.

*1.2 Arrangement of Agenda

1.2.1 Items 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4.1, 1.4.3, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11.1, 11.2, 11.3, 11.4 and 13 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 13 May 2004

A/Prof Douglas Siviter requested a change to the minutes on page 9 to clarify that, although SITACS have reviewed various aspects of subject outlines, learning outcomes and assessment, they are still moving towards compliance with the University assessment policies rather than being wholly compliant at this stage.

The Committee agreed that stating SITACS ‘have completed a first review of …’ would be sufficient to communicate this point.

The Committee agreed to confirm the minutes of Meeting 3/04 held on 13 May 2004, subject to the incorporation of the above revision.

1.4 Business Arising from the Previous Minutes

*1.4.1 Dean’s Scholar and Advanced Programs

Members of the School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics previously agreed to develop a model for a Faculty Dean’s Scholars program and report back to FEC.
Dr Xiaoping Lu tabled a proposal for a Dean's Scholar Program, as follows:

- To replace the BMath(Adv) program, but will be attached to all Mathematics degrees, including double degrees (subject to negotiation with relevant faculties).
- Entry to the Program would be based on an interview plus completion of HSC Maths Ext 2 and a UAI of 95 or above.
- For entry after first year, students must achieve a WAM of 80%.
- Students who do not maintain an 80% WAM will be transferred out the Program and into the normal degree program.
- In double degrees, the WAM would only be based on the subjects completed for the Maths degree.

FEC members noted the following:

- The BMath double degree with SECTE Engineering degrees should be included in the list of degrees in the tabled document.
- There are concerns about entry into the Program for third year, i.e., after completion of two years of a normal degree program. It was considered that this would not be appropriate and there would be no benefit for students to transfer at this stage.
- Should the level for transferring into the degree be at a different level to that required to maintain a place?
- Can this proposal be easily adopted by the other Schools, as desired when SMAAS was asked to propose a model?

As the tabled document was considered to be a working document only, FEC Members were asked to send any further comments to Dr Anne Porter and Dr Xiaoping Lu for further revision by SMAAS and subsequent circulation to the other Schools.

1.4.2 Compliance with New and Revised Assessment Policies
See Item 9.

*1.4.3 New/Revised Honours Policies
At the last meeting, it was noted that SMAAS are yet to provide its Honours Assessment procedures to FEC for noting/approval.

ACTION: School to be contacted directly for copy of updated procedures for the next meeting.

*2. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR – VERBAL REPORT

2.1 Faculty Service Agreement – Outcome

All four Faculty applicants were successful in obtaining production assistance from CEDIR for July-December 2004. Congratulations to:

- Holly Tootell
  IACT201 Information Technology & Citizens’ Rights
- Christian Ritz
  ECTE171 Introduction to Signs and Signals
- Anne Porter
  Maintenance Utility & Dual Boot Training & Orientation
- Will Tibben
  IACT202 Structure and Organisation of Telecommunications
2.2 AUQA Teaching & Learning Reference Group

The Chair noted that the AUQA Teaching & Learning Reference Group, which consists of FEC members and additional representatives from the Schools, was recently convened to look at what we have in place in terms of teaching and learning procedures and how familiar we are with these procedures. The Chair hopes that feedback and minutes from the meeting will be available soon.

3. REPORT FROM CEDIR/LEARNING DEVELOPMENT UNIT

*3.1 Verbal Report from CEDIR – Ric Caladine

Dr Ric Caladine reported the following:
- CEDIR encourages more Informatics staff to apply for Faculty Service Agreement project support, as there are resources available to assist more than the number of applications submitted during this round.
- eduStream (ie., recording lectures and streaming via the internet) implementation is being scaled up and there is more capacity for it to be used in the Spring session. All Informatics Faculty Service Agreement applicants have used eduStream, or will this session. If staff members are interested in trying it, they should contact Ric.
- Three new learning management systems have been shortlisted, with a decision on a new system to be made by the end of the year. An updated version of WebCT is one of those shortlisted.

*3.2 Verbal Report from Learning Development – Bronwyn James

Ms Bronwyn James noted that learning development integration took place in ECTE991, ECTE955, ECTE953, ECTE250 and INFO202 last session, and will take place in ECTE991, ECTE955 and CSCI102 in Spring session. The evaluation from last session will be available soon.

*4. REPORT FROM THE LIBRARY – ANNETTE MELDRUM

4.1 Information Literacy Integration

The Library is in the process of drafting a policy for Information Literacy Integration which will go to the UEC for endorsement in September. Annette will keep the Committee informed of developments.

4.2 Subject Revisions and Library Resources

A reminder that Revised Subjects still need to have the New/Revised Subject Proposal Form filled out in full. Liaison with all parties is still required. Revised Subjects are also fully funded for resources by the New Subject Fund and it is a good opportunity to ensure that library resources are current and adequate. The resourcing of new subjects has been a focus of previous AUQA Audits.
4.3 OVUM Database Trial

The OVUM database trial finishes at the end of June. OVUM prepares reports on telecommunications and developments in the IT industry. If you think this database would be a useful addition to our resources, the Library needs your feedback. Often feedback on database trials is not forthcoming and this makes it difficult to give serious consideration to buying the new subscription.

5. REPORT FROM STUDENT MEMBER

No report this meeting.

*6. REPORT FROM WORKING PARTY ON PASS/FAILURE RATES

Dr Anne Porter tabled a report outlining the first year subjects with a 25% or larger failure rate in Autumn session which the Working Party wishes to investigate through a subject review. The report also included a preliminary outline of the steps to be taken and funding required.

The Committee discussed the report, making the following comments:

- It is important that the review is received as a review of subject objectives, processes, impediments, incoming students’ backgrounds etc rather than a comparison of lecturing styles. The review needs to be clearly defined as a quality enhancement review to identify if and how a subject can be improved with the help of the lecturers involved.
- It was suggested that a review of new first year CSCI core subjects may be premature, as appropriate delivery methods etc are still being fine-tuned based on experiences in first session. It may be more appropriate to review CSCI204 as it has not changed with the introduction of the new curriculum, and has experienced high failure rates in the past.
- The exercise should include at least one benchmarking subject. For example, other subjects with good pass rates should also be reviewed for comparative reasons, keeping in mind that some subjects with good pass rates may be considered as ‘easy’ subjects to pass. STAT131 has already undergone a similar review and can be used as a benchmarking subject.
- It may be a little ambitious to review all the subjects listed as having a 25% or larger failure rate in Autumn session. Instead, one subject should be nominated from each School, eg. ECTE101, CSCI114 and a nominated MATH subject.
- The report should be revised to include more detail of the methods to be used and steps to be taken to ensure financial support from the Dean and support from the Heads of Schools and staff members affected.
- The Working Party should be renamed to remove the negative connotations of the current name. Quality 101 was suggested as an appropriate alternative.

The Committee expressed in principle agreement with the Working Party’s subject review proposal, requesting that the project outline be reviewed – taking into account of the Committee’s comments – before submission to the Dean and implementation.
Resolved (FEC04/31)
That, in principle, FEC:

a) recommends that a cross-section of first year Informatics subjects undergo a subject review.

b) recommends a budget of $10,000 be approved to support the investigation of student, systemic and program factors causing problems in these subject, and to identify and report strategies for trial and evaluation in these subjects.

c) recommends that the Sub-Dean, on the advice of the Quality 101 Working Party, be delegated the responsibility of funding expenditure, establishing the subject review and reporting back to the Faculty.

7. SCHOOL ITEMS

SCHOOL OF ELECTRICAL, COMPUTER & TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENGINEERING

7.1 New Prize – Spruson & Ferguson Prize

Resolved (FEC04/32)
That FEC:

a) recommends that the Spruson & Ferguson Prize, as attached to the agenda, be forwarded to the University Student Awards Committee for approval.

b) notes that the prize will be awarded for the first time in 2005, ie. It will be available to students who complete INFO202 in 2004.

7.2 Revision of Prize – Women in Engineering Bursaries

Resolved (FEC04/33)
That FEC

a) recommends that, once endorsed by the Faculty of Engineering, the revised prize conditions for the Women in Engineering Bursaries, as attached to the agenda, be forwarded to the University Students Awards Committee for approval.

b) notes that the revised prize conditions will be applicable from 2005.

SCHOOL OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & COMPUTER SCIENCE

7.3 Deletion of CSCI112/MCS9112 – Fundamentals of Computer Science

Resolved (FEC04/34)
That FEC recommends the deletion of the subject CSCI112/MCS9112 – Fundamentals of Computer Science, effective from 2005.

SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS AND APPLIED STATISTICS

No items for this meeting.
8. **DELETION OF BACHELOR OF MATHEMATICAL SCIENCES DEGREE**

Resolved (FEC04/35)
That FEC recommends that Faculty:

a) **endorses the decision of the Faculty of Science to delete the Bachelor of Mathematical Sciences, effective 2005,** and

b) **requests the Faculty of Science to forward the proposal to Academic Senate Standing Committee for approval.**

9. **COMPLIANCE WITH NEW AND REVISED ASSESSMENT POLICIES**

SITACS written procedures were tabled at the meeting for approval, SECTE and SMAAS policies were attached to the agenda.

Members noted that the SMAAS written procedures need to be clear and explicit, in particular the Assessor procedures need to be described in full.

It was agreed that SMAAS written procedures should be considered further by the School and submitted to the next FEC meeting for approval.

Members noted that, in the SITACS written procedures, the relationship between the subject assessors and the School Education Committee needs to be clarified and defined.

It was agreed to approve the SITACS written procedures in principle, and to request SITACS to refine the document, as discussed, and submit the revised document to the FEC Chair for approval.

Resolved (FEC04/36)
That FEC:

a) **approves the written procedures specifying processes for approving assessment methods, as required by Section 5.1.1 of the Code of Practice – Teaching & Assessment, submitted by the School of Electrical, Computer and Telecommunications Engineering and requests the procedures be forwarded to the University Education Committee for tabling at its next meeting.**

b) **approves, in principle, the written procedures specifying processes for approving assessment methods, as required by Section 5.1.1 of the Code of Practice – Teaching & Assessment, submitted by the School of Information Technology and Computer Science and requests that a revised document is submitted to the FEC Chair for approval before forwarding to the University Education Committee for tabling at its next meeting.**

c) **refers the School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics written procedures back to the School for further consideration and resubmission to FEC.**

10. **COMPLIANCE WITH CODE OF PRACTICE – HONOURS**

Resolved (FEC04/37)
That FEC:

a) **approves the School of Electrical, Computer and Telecommunications Engineering written Honours assessment procedures, as required by Section 7.2 of the Code of Practice – Honours.**

b) **requests that the written procedures be forwarded to the University Education Committee for tabling at its next meeting.**
11. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & FEEDBACK

*11.1 Faculty Learning & Teaching Objectives and Strategies

Due to time constraints, the Committee agreed to defer discussion of this item until the next FEC meeting.

*11.2 Best Practice – Assessment Guidelines

FEC members noted that, overall, the document is very thorough and should be useful to staff. However, they expressed major concerns about the section regarding In-Session Tests, namely:

- The requirements are too formal and restrictive, and appear to make in-session tests even more arduous than end of session exams - in particular, the requirement to negotiate alternative arrangements with students. This may discourage staff from conducting useful in-session tests.
- Assessor requirements are too onerous.
- The definition of what constitutes an in-session test is very broad. The category, as currently defined, could quite possibly include assessment such as in-class presentations.
- Members expressed different interpretations of the 10-30% requirement. Some interpreted the requirements to mean that an in-session test could only be worth 10 -30%, ie. an in-session test could not be worth less than 10%. Whereas, others though the intention was that in-session tests could be worth less than 10%, but only those worth more 10% or more need to comply with the requirements. Clarification is required.
- Requirement for subject co-ordinator to check all in-session due dates across subjects taken in conjunction with the subject in question is virtually impossible – especially where the subject is a service subject.
- Clarification of what is policy and what are guidelines in regard to in-session tests is required.

*11.3 Review of Course Transfer Rules & Processes

Members noted that the proposed changes to the rules and processes for administering course and inter-campus transfers will simply create a more formalised approach. Members did not have any further comments or concerns regarding the draft policy.

*11.4 School Education Committees

Due to time constraints, the Committee agreed to defer discussion of this item until the next FEC meeting.

12. ITEMS FOR NOTING

12.1 Draft Policy on Prizes for Academic Excellence

Resolved (FEC04/38)
That FEC notes the Draft Policy on Prizes for Academic Excellence, as recently endorsed by University Education Committee.
13. OTHER BUSINESS

*13.1 Verbal Report from the University Education Committee E-Learning and Teaching Innovations Sub-committee (ELTIS) – Jason Lukasiak

Dr Jason Lukasiak reported on the following items discussed at the last ELTIS meeting:

- The Sub-committee is currently defining issues in e-teaching and e-learning in the form of a Strategic Plan. Interested parties can obtain a copy of the latest version of the plan from Dr Lukasiak.
- As reported by Dr Ric Caladine, a new learning management system should be in place by 2006.
- The Sub-committee will be reviewing the current requirements and guidelines for the Educational Strategies Development Fund (ESDF) scheme. In the meantime, the call for 2005 applications will go out at the end of July, and the current guidelines will still apply.
- There was some discussion about making monitored online discussion groups a mandatory part of WebCT use. FEC members expressed concerns about this, which Dr Lukasiak will voice when further discussions take place.

14. NEXT MEETING

Thursday 26 August, 2004 Faculty Meeting Room, Building 39/150A

F Naghdy
Chair
15 July 2004