UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG
FACULTY OF INFORMATICS EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting 5/04 held at 1.30pm on Thursday 2 September 2004 in the Faculty Meeting Room, Building 39, room 150A.

PRESENT: A/Prof F Naghdy (Chair), Mr P Castle, Mr M Freeman, Ms B James, Dr X Lu, Dr J Lukasiak, Ms A Meldrum, Dr A Porter, A/Prof D Siviter, Dr G Trott and Dr A Worthy.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms K Sheridan and Ms A Phillips.

1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

*1.1 Apologies/Leave of Absence

There were no apologies to note.

*1.2 Arrangement of Agenda

1.2.1 Items 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2, 3.1, 6, 8.1, 8.2, 8.3 and 10 were starred (*) for discussion.

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

*1.3 Confirmation of the Minutes of the Meeting of 1 July 2004

Dr Anne Porter noted that references to ‘QUAL101’ should read ‘Quality 101’.

The Committee agreed to confirm the minutes of Meeting 4/04 held on 1 July 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

SMAAS has submitted a revised proposal – see Item 7.4.

1.4.2 Honours Policies

SMAAS has submitted revised Honours guidelines for approval – see Item 7.2.

1.4.3 Compliance with Assessment Policies

The FEC Chair approved the revised written assessment policy submitted by SITACS after the last meeting. SMAAS has not yet revised their procedures. However, SMAAS has submitted written procedures for submitting and returning written assessment tasks – see Item 7.3.
*2. REPORT FROM THE CHAIR – VERBAL REPORT

The Chair reported that the only item from the last University Education Committee (UEC) meeting not already referred to in the agenda was regarding the replacement of WebCT – it is hoped a decision will be made soon regarding which package to adopt.

The Committee agreed to consider Item 8.1 out of agenda order.

8. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & FEEDBACK

*8.1 Faculty Process for Evaluation of WUC/Dubai Subjects

A/Prof Ken Russell raised issues regarding the review of exams and subject outlines for equivalent subjects offered at WUC and the Dubai campus. Responses from Mark Sandilands (WUC) and Penney McFarlane were attached to the agenda.

Ms Anji Phillips, from the Faculty International Office, attended the meeting to explain and discuss the current process employed, and highlight problems encountered and changes expected. Ms Phillips noted the following:

- The Dubai quality assurance protocol applied until recently was that subject outlines, examinations and sample scripts were sent to the International Office for quality assurance. From here, the documents were usually sent to the nominated teaching staff member in the relevant Faculty for feedback.
- Historically, WUC used to provide exams and sample scripts to Professor Cooper. They then started sending them to the Informatics representative on the WUC Education Committee. Since the implementation of the new Computer Science core curriculum, the papers have been sent to Penney McFarlane in the International Office, and she disseminates the information to the relevant teaching staff.
- The problems faced are that the subject outline and exam papers are not always received prior to the commencement of the subject/examination or very little time is available for review and feedback. The timeframe for feedback is usually 5 days, and if no response is received from the nominated teaching staff member in this time, an alternative must be found. This is what happened in the case described by A/Prof Russell.
- In reviewing this process for WUC subjects, it has been agreed that the papers will still be collated centrally (International Office) and distributed from there. If no reply is received from the nominated teaching staff member in the time allocated, the Head of School will be contacted to arrange an alternative.
- Unfortunately, recent accreditation of Dubai as an autonomous institution (UOW-D) means that the moderation process is now likely to take place after the examination process is completed. The final agreed process is still under discussion.

The Committee noted that despite guidelines, there have been ongoing problems with receiving outlines, exams and exam scripts from Dubai for review.
Members raised the issue of remuneration for the time spent reviewing exams and exam scripts. It was noted that a fee is paid to the relevant Academic Unit for the service provided to Dubai, and that a fee (still to be determined) will continue to be paid under the new system. Members were unsure if a fee was paid by WUC. It was agreed that if a fee is paid, the teaching staff member should be advised each time they receive exams or exam scripts to review.

It was raised that FEC may not actually have a role to play in addressing the problems raised. It was noted that this is certainly the case with Dubai, which appears to now be an autonomous institution. However, as the Faculty played a part in the accreditation of the WUC Diploma program, it should have some input into their policy and procedures.

Ms Phillips noted that a simple procedure, taking into account comments made at the meeting, can be drafted and implemented before the next round of WUC exams.

3. REPORT FROM CEDIR/LEARNING DEVELOPMENT UNIT

*3.1 Verbal Report from Learning Development – Bronwyn James

Ms James tabled a report, which included the following information:

- A summary of integrated language and/or academic support conducted in Spring Session 2004.
- The Cultural Inclusivity Working Party of the University Internationalisation Committee (UIC) is seeking examples of teaching and assessment strategies used by staff to make subjects/classrooms more inclusive.
- There is an opportunity for an Informatics staff member to take up a Teaching Fellowship with CEDIR to integrate aspects of cultural inclusivity into his/her curriculum.

It was noted that this information should be communicated widely to Faculty staff.

**ACTION:** Ms James to send soft copy of report to Faculty Officer for distribution to Informatics Staff.

4. REPORT FROM THE LIBRARY – ANNETTE MELDRUM

No report this meeting.

5. REPORT FROM STUDENT MEMBER – MARK FREEMAN

No report this meeting.
**6. REPORT FROM QUALITY 101 WORKING PARTY**

Dr Trott reported the following:
- the working party had met regularly since the last FEC meeting and is progressing well.
- A budget of $13,000 has been approved, which will be used primarily to employ a research assistant.
- Staff members involved with CSCI114, MATH161 and ECTE101 have been contacted and further meetings will take place to discuss the process and the goals to improve student learning and pass rates.
- It has been recognised that, once any recommendations are made and implemented, ongoing monitoring will be required to observe if the recommended changes make a difference to pass rates and outcomes.

**7. SCHOOL ITEMS**

**SCHOOL OF ELECTRICAL, COMPUTER & TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENGINEERING**

No items for this meeting.

**SCHOOL OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & COMPUTER SCIENCE**

**7.1 Subject Proposal – Revision of ITCS949**

Resolved (FEC04/39)

*That FEC recommends the approval of the revisions to ITCS949 – Industry-based Information Technology Project, effective from 2005.*

**SCHOOL OF MATHEMATICS AND APPLIED STATISTICS**

**7.2 Compliance with Code of Practice - Honours**

Resolved (FEC04/40)

*That FEC:*

a) approves the School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics 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.

**7.3 Compliance with Assessment Policies**

Resolved (FEC04/41)

*That FEC:*

a) endorses the School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics written procedures for the submission and return of written assessment tasks, and

b) notes the School's compliance with Section 5.3.1 of the Code of Practice – Teaching & Assessment.
*7.4 Dean’s Scholar Degree Proposal

SMAAS has revised the model it presented at the last FEC meeting, and is resubmitting the model for endorsement by FEC.

It was noted that there does not appear to be many benefits for students who transfer into the program after completing 48cp. For example, they would be unable to take advantage of the benefits associated with the completion of second year subjects in first year. In particular, if a student commences after second year, there does not appear to be any benefit at all.

Dr Porter noted that those that transfer into the program after 48cp will still have the benefit of undertaking research projects, which is not available in the standard Mathematics degree.

It was agreed that students should not be able to transfer into the program after completion of second year, and that the entry requirements should be adjusted accordingly.

The Committee agreed to endorse the proposal, subject to the School’s approval of the suggested change to entry requirements.

Resolved (FEC04/42)

That FEC endorses the Dean’s Scholar Degree model submitted by the School of Mathematics and Applied Statistics, subject to the School’s agreement to limit entry so that students cannot transfer into the program after completion of second year.

8. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION & FEEDBACK

*8.2 Faculty Objectives and Strategies – FEC Progress Report

Members discussed the Learning & Teaching objectives and strategies identified in the Faculty’s 2005 Planning and Resource Report as being the responsibility of FEC.

The comments were recorded directly into the progress report template, which will be submitted to the Faculty Executive Officer.

A copy of the progress report will be provided at the next FEC meeting for further discussion.

*8.3 School Education Committees

Due to time constraints, the Committee agreed to defer discussions of this item until the next FEC meeting.
9. ITEMS FOR NOTING

9.1 Honours Guide Audit

An audit of Honours Guides for all honours programs offered by the University was undertaken in June and a report was provided to the Dean at the end of July.

A summary of the outcomes for the Faculty of Informatics was tabled at the meeting for information and full copies of the outcomes were provided to School Education Committees for noting and/or discussion.

*10. OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 WUC Representative on FEC

Given the close relationship between the Wollongong University College (WUC) Diploma in Information Technology program and the Faculty, Mark Sandilands has suggested that a WUC representative be included as a member of the FEC. The Faculty of Commerce already has a WUC Representative on their FEC.

FEC Members agreed with the suggestion, noting that the Dean would make the final decision regarding the inclusion.

ACTION: Suggestion regarding the inclusion of a WUC representative on the FEC be forwarded to the Dean for approval.

10.2 Use of PC Grades

Dr Trott flagged that the University is considering a review of the use of PC grades. Issues to be considered include:

- whether they are useful or not.
- should they be awarded for both postgraduate and undergraduate subjects?
- should they be removed?

Due to the limited time available, it was agreed to include the issue as an item for discussion at the next FEC meeting.

ACTION: Dr Trott to provide background information on discussion of the use of PC grades for next FEC meeting.

11. NEXT MEETING

Thursday 21 October, 2004 Faculty Meeting Room, Building 39/150A

F Naghdy
Chair
12 October 2004