UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG
FACULTY OF INFORMATICS RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Minutes for Distribution of Meeting 2/03 held at 1:30pm on Thursday, 1st May 2003 in the Faculty Meeting Room, Building 39, room 150A.

PRESENT: Professor J Hill (Chair), Dr S Gower (Deputy Chair), Professor J Fulcher, Associate Professor Tim Marchant, Dr S Perera, Associate Professor J Rayner, Professor R Safavi-Naini and Associate Professor Tad Wysocki.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms K Sheridan

1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1.1 Apologies/Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from: Mr S Antoun and Professor F Safaei.

The following members are on leave: Associate Professor F Naghdy and Professor J Seberry.

1.2 FRC Membership

It was noted that, for this meeting:
- Professor J Hill is the Dean’s nominee as Chair.
- Dr S Gower is the Dean’s nominee as Deputy Chair.
- Professor J Fulcher, A/Professor T Marchant and A/Professor T Wysocki are Head of School nominees.
- Professor R Safavi-Naini is the Faculty Postgraduate Coordinator.
- Dr S Perera and A/Professor J Rayner represent two of the three key research institutes in the Faculty.


The minutes of the meetings held 19th November 2002 and 13th March 2003 were confirmed.

1.4 Business Arising from Previous Meeting/s

1.4.1 Research Publications

It was noted that Ms Chris Bray has done an excellent job of encouraging academic staff to submit book chapters by the required deadline, however there are still further publications to be collected under other categories.

It was noted that publications count towards only 10% of research quantum for the University, however for the benefit of each School, it is still important that all relevant publications are submitted in a timely manner, and with the appropriate peer-review information to ensure they are acceptable under DEST guidelines.
ACTION:
FRC members must be proactive and encourage colleagues to provide their research publications to Ms Bray in a timely manner.

2. REPORT FROM CHAIR

The following items were discussed at Academic Senate on 23 April 2003:

2.1 Digitisation of Theses - Proposal

The Office of Research and Library are seeking to implement the mandatory submission of research student theses in digital format, in addition to the current requirements for submissions of bound copies. This involves changes to the Code of Practice – Supervision (Section 15) and the University General Course Rules. It is expected that the digital copy will be accessible (subject to approved access restrictions requested by the author) through the UoW website, a national database of Australian theses and through web search engines.

The University is a member of the Australian Digital Thesis (ADT) program, which involves the creation of a research database containing all Australian doctorate by research and masters by research theses. There are 26 Australian universities involved in the ADT program – 2 have implemented mandatory submissions and the UoW Library has trialled the use of ADT over the past year. At a national level, issues regarding conversion, security, copyright and submission have been dealt with and procedures established.

Although Academic Senate approved the proposal, revisions were made at the meeting and the final outcome is not known at the time of distributing the minutes. When notification regarding the final outcome is received, it will be forwarded to members via email for information.

2.2 Course Rule Changes - PhD by Publications

The Postgraduate Research Policy Committee (PRPC) has reviewed the current course rules for PhD by Publication, identifying that the current procedures contain little detail on the submission requirements; procedures are contradictory in relation to the examination process; and procedures do not contain any details on the role of the sponsoring unit. The PRPC revised the current course rules and produced a set of guidelines for applicants.

Although Academic Senate approved the proposal, revisions were made at the meeting and the final outcome is not known at the time of distributing the minutes. When notification regarding the final outcome is received, it will be forwarded to members via email for information.
2.3 Information Literacies Introductory Program (ILIP009)

The Postgraduate Information Literacy Introductory Programme (ILIP009) is compulsory for postgraduate coursework students. On the request of Academic Senate, the University Research Committee (URC) considered the implementation of ILIP009 for all incoming Postgraduate Research Students, with exemption to be granted to any Wollongong Graduate whose academic record shows completion of ILIP100 in the last five years.

The URC considered this matter at its meeting of 10 December 2002 and recommended that the completion of ILIP009 in the first session of enrolment is highly recommended (not compulsory) for Postgraduate Research Students and that the program be promoted as part of Orientation and considered as part of the Research Proposal Review process in faculties.

The Postgraduate Research Policy Committee will review the take up rate and implementation of ILIP009 in late 2003.

Academic Senate approved the recommendations from URC.

Members noted that it was concerning that these changes were not referred to Faculty Research Committees for comment prior to approval by Academic Senate. Although the above changes appear appropriate, it is concerning that similar items appear to bypass faculties on a regular basis.

3. RESEARCH INFRASTRUCTURE BLOCK GRANTS (RIBG) POOL 2 RANKING

Each member present at the meeting provided a preliminary ranking prior to the meeting.

The Chair discussed the process to be undertaken and noted that Professor John Fulcher was not allowed to rank his own application, but that a method had been devised where his application could be appropriately compensated for this disadvantage. The Chair explained the manner in which compensation should be determined and the Committee agreed that the method used was fair and equitable.

The Committee agreed that each application would be discussed in reference to the guidelines and the ranking (as provided by each member prior to the meeting) be revised accordingly, if deemed necessary. Professor Fulcher was asked to leave the room during the discussion of his application.

At the conclusion of discussions, the final ranking and recommended $ were approved.

[Rankings and recommended $ omitted due to confidential nature]
4. **BUSINESS CASE – FRC ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

The Deputy Chair spoke briefly about the draft proposal and the need for administrative assistance for research matters in the Faculty, in the form of a limited-term Research Project Officer for 3 days a week. It is envisaged that this role will primarily be responsible for revising the research section of the Faculty website and setting up an online database for publications, grant applications and consultancy details which can be accessed at different levels. In addition, the proposal highlights the need for a restructure of the FRC to create a proactive, rather than reactive, research environment.

The following comments were made about the proposal:

- The plan has been well structured, however, it should also include information about what is being done in the University Office of Research to ensure that the Faculty will not be reproducing what is already done elsewhere.
- The document should be considered as two: a proposal for a restructure of the Faculty Research Committee and a request for administrative support.
- Some members agreed the role and structure of the FRC needs to be determined before consideration of administrative assistance.
- Some members agreed that the Faculty should wait for the results of John Hughes’ report on the Faculty restructure and for Margaret Sheil’s green paper on research in the University before considering implementation of a restructure of FRC.
- It was suggested that the Chair could use FRC funds to pay for casual administrative assistance until a decision is made at the Faculty level regarding restructure and the possibility of funds for additional assistance.

It was also noted that the role of postgraduate coordinators (both School and Faculty-level) needs to be reviewed, and should be discussed at a future FRC meeting.

5. **FACULTY PLANNING AND RESOURCE PROCESS – DRAFT RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

The draft extract from the Faculty Planning and Resource Report was provided for information, and it was noted that any feedback was welcome.

6. **OTHER BUSINESS**

There was no other business for noting.

7. **NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 3 July, 2003 Faculty Meeting Room, Building 39/105A

Professor Jim Hill
Chair