UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG
FACULTY OF INFORMATICS RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting 3/03 held at 12:30pm on Wednesday, 2nd July 2003 in the Faculty Meeting Room, Building 39, room 150A.

PRESENT: Professor J Hill (Chair), Dr S Gower (Deputy Chair), Mr M Freeman, Professor J Fulcher, Dr J Getta, A/Professor T Marchant, A/Professor J Rayner, Professor F Safaei and A/Professor T Wysocki.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms K Sheridan

1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1.1 Apologies/Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from: Dr S Perera and Professor R Safavi-Naini.

The following members are on leave: A/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.
- Dr J Getta is the Faculty Postgraduate Coordinator representative.
- A/Professor J Rayner and Professor F Safaei represent two of the three key research institutes in the Faculty.
- Mr M Freeman is the student representative.

1.3 Confirmation of Minutes for the Meeting of 1 May, 2003.

The minutes of the meeting held 1 May 2003 were confirmed.

1.4 Business Arising from Previous Meeting

1.4.1 RIBG Pool 2 Success

The Committee noted the success of three Faculty applications:
- Chicharo & Xi - Photonics Research Laboratory
- Seberry, Susilo & Yu - Security in a Wireless Environment
- Cooper - PDAs and Mobile e-Health Research Lab

The Chair noted that the Faculty was very lucky to have three successful applications and that members of the University ranking committee were most impressed by applications which request large amounts of money for large projects.
2. REPORT FROM CHAIR – VERBAL REPORT

2.1 University Research

The Chair noted that Professor Sheil had requested feedback on her Research Funding paper. The Chair opened the discussion regarding the impact of the proposed changes. Members made the following comments:

- The Faculty should have three institutes, and should push hard to obtain three recognised groupings.
- Professor Sheil is reportedly having trouble keeping the number of identified research strength groupings below 14 – more than the proposed 10 – 12.
- In SMAAS, a more focused group that IMMaCs has been proposed. The grouping is more logical and focused on strengths, which will hopefully lead to inclusion in the proposed structure.
- SITACS staff will be meeting with Professor Sheil next week to discuss the proposal for an area of research strength in SITACS. They have missed out in the past, but it is hoped that numbers and an organised structure will assist with their case.
- In putting forward a SITACS proposal, must ensure that there is evident cohesion within the grouping and that it is framed such that it does not appear to be an aggregation of researchers simply for the sake of it.
- After some discussion of the SITACS grouping, it was clear that, in addition to the proposed cooperative model, a definite leader is required to ensure a cohesive and united grouping.

2.2 Practising Research Supervision

The Chair noted the report of the ESDF-funded project on research supervision. It was recommended that all FRC members obtain a copy of the report and that it be listed as an agenda item for the next FRC meeting for discussion.

ACTION:

- Faculty Officer to obtain copies of report and circulate to FRC members prior to next meeting.
- List report as agenda item for next FRC meeting.

3. ITEMS FROM SCHOOL OF ELECTRICAL, COMPUTER & TELECOMMUNICATIONS ENGINEERING

3.1 University Postgraduate Awards (UPAs)

A/Professor Wysocki spoke to the concerns raised by SECTE regarding the distribution of UPAs within the University, noting that most UPAs are awarded to candidates located in Faculties with little research output. SECTE proposes that UPAs be distributed according to research output.

It was suggested that perhaps this is an issue that will be considered as part of the current proposal from the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) [PVC(R)], which focuses on University research strengths. However, it was noted that the proposal should be put forward based upon research output not based upon research strengths.
The Committee discussed the second part of the recommendation from SECTE - regarding the comparable ranking of applications from the same institution - and concluded that it would be very difficult to manage.

The Committee agreed that the proposal regarding the distribution of UPAs based on research output be forwarded to the University Research Committee (URC) for consideration.

**ACTION:** FRC Chair to forward proposal to PVC(R) for consideration by URC

### 3.2 Procedures for Ranking Research Grant Applications and Postgraduate Scholarships

A/Professor Wysocki noted that there had been some delay in forwarding this item to FRC, in which time the issue appears to have been resolved. Other members agreed that a consultative process had been agreed to and adopted for the ranking of the last round of RIBG applications. This process involves the following steps:

- Members rank applications prior to the meeting
- A preliminary ranking list is formed by the combination of individual rankings
- The Committee agrees to a final ranking list, after consideration of the merits of each application and any other arguments for variation to the preliminary ranking.

### 3.3 Faculty of Informatics Research Student Conference Day

SECTE proposed the introduction of a Faculty Research Student Conference Day, based on the successful model used by SITACS.

Professor Fulcher spoke about the SITACS Conference Day and noted:

- It was proposed at the recent SITACS planning day that the conference day become a national conference, however there is not enough time to organise a 2003 national conference.
- That the SITACS Conference Day will be held on Thursday 27 November this year, and that a keynote speaker has already been organised.
- That SITACS would be happy to be involved in a Faculty Conference Day, however, a two-day conference may be more appropriate.

The Committee endorsed the proposal to hold a Faculty Research Student Conference Day over a two-day period (26-27 Nov or 27-28 Nov), requesting that each Head of School form a program committee and consult with Professor Fulcher about organisational issues.

**ACTION:** Memo to be sent to Heads of Schools regarding proposal for a Faculty Research Student Conference Day.

### 4. R&D DISCUSSION PAPER #2: ENHANCING INTERNAL PROCESSES FOR RESEARCH FUNDING AT UOW – FOCUSING ON STRENGTHS

The Committee agreed that issues relevant to the Faculty had already been discussed under Item 2.1.
5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES – FACULTY PLANNING & RESOURCE REPORT

Professor Fulcher noted that SITACS discussed the Faculty planning document at their recent planning retreat. He raised the following points:

- The objective to increase the number of quality research students should be qualified with a note that SITACS cannot accommodate an increase in the number of research students.
- The *Practising Research Supervision* Report should be referred to when implementing strategies that relate to the improvement of quality supervision.
- Supervision workshops for new or inexperienced staff should be implemented as a strategy to increase the number of quality supervisors.
- Very few students move from Honours degrees in SITACS to research degrees, therefore strategies that focus on recruiting current Honours students, such as internal advertising campaigns, may be wasted effort.

All members are asked to provide feedback on the Faculty Research Objectives directly to Kristine Sheridan or Solveig Dewhurst.

6. FACULTY RESEARCH AND POSTGRADUATE STUDIES WEBSITE

Dr Gower spoke about the Research and Postgraduate Studies section of the website, which is currently under development. He noted that it has been put together in a very short time period, and that further information is required from FRC members and researchers in the Faculty to ensure that the website is up-to-date. In particular, members are asked to provide any information regarding collaborative links and areas of research strength. This information should be provided directly to the Faculty Executive Officer, Ms Solveig Dewhurst.

The URL is:

http://webdev.informatics.uow.edu.au

7. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was raised.

8. NEXT MEETING

Thursday 4 September, 2003  Faculty Meeting Room, Building 39/105

Professor Jim Hill
Chair