UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG
FACULTY OF INFORMATICS RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting 3/05 held at 1:30pm on Thursday, 23rd June 2005 in the Faculty Meeting Room, Building 39, room 150A.

PRESENT: Prof D Steel (Chair), Prof S Bouzerdoum, Prof J Fulcher, Mr A Krishna, A/Prof T Marchant, Dr M Nelson, Prof R Safavi-Naini, Dr D Stirling and A/Prof M Zhang.

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms K Sheridan

1. PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

1.1 Apologies/Leave of Absence

Apologies were received from: Mr T Coltman and A/Prof F Naghdy.

1.2 Confirmation of Minutes for the Meeting of 28 April 2005 and for the Special Meeting of 13 May 2005

The minutes of the meeting held 28 April 2005 and special meeting held 13 May 2005 were confirmed.

1.3 Business Arising from Previous Meeting/s

There was no business arising.

2. REPORT FROM CHAIR – VERBAL REPORT

2.1 Report from URC meeting of 22 June

2.1.1 Research Quality Framework (RQF)

The roll out of the RQF has been delayed by 12 months, so should be implemented by end of 2006. In the meantime, a UOW research quality and impact assessment trial will be conducted to collect research quality and impact data for two research strengths and two faculties. It is expected that the following units will be assessed:

• Engineering Manufacturing
• Institute for Conservation Biology & Law
• Faculty of Education
• Faculty of Creative Arts

The Chair circulated a copy of the trial’s proposed guidelines.

2.1.2 RIBG Pool 2 Results

Successful applications should be announced this week. A/Prof Tim Marchant attended the URSC ranking meeting and will provide a report to members about the process after the announcement.
2.1.3 **ARC Linkage – Projects Outcomes**
UOW had a success rate of 30% with 8 grants awarded a total of $1.169M which is disappointing and will be examined in more detail. The Faculty success rate was 50%, with 2 of 4 applications successful.

2.1.4 **2004 DEST Publications**
The Chair noted that 264 refereed publications were submitted for Informatics, which is significantly more than the 2003 result. Staff should now concentrate on increasing the number of journal publications.

2.1.5 **Upcoming Grant Opportunities**
The Chair circulated the dates of upcoming grant opportunities, noting:
- ARC Discovery Project Assessor Reports will be available on 24 June;
- Rejoinders are due to the ARC by 8 July;
- URC Small Grant guidelines and application are now available online (see further discussion under item 5).

2.1.6 **URC Strategic Research Initiatives (SRI) Guidelines**
The SRI aims to support the development of the research capability of individuals or small teams. This scheme provides an opportunity for the Faculty to grow research groups outside the current Research Strengths, with a view to eventually becoming Research Strengths.

We should be focusing on ensuring groups such as Health Informatics and DSL are ready to apply for funding under this scheme in the next 12 -18 months. Applied Mathematics and Statistics groups essentially already (or are hoped to) receive funding through various schemes. In particular, there is a proposal for support of the Mathematics in Industry Study Group (MISG), to be located at Wollongong for 2007-2009.

The Chair circulated both the SRI Guidelines and the guiding principles for the determination of research strengths.

2.1.7 **Honours Scholarships**
The Chair circulated a proposal for Honours Year Scholarships, tabled at the URC meeting.

The Chair noted that Informatics Honours students would be ineligible under the proposed scheme, as it requires students to be enrolled in an Honours degree with a research component of at least 50% of the Honours year or final year of study. It was argued at the meeting to revise the percentage to 37.5% (equivalent to 18cp of 48cp), which would open the scholarship to most students within Informatics. It is hoped that this revision will be accepted.

2.1.8 **HDR Scholarships**
The Chair circulated the proposed 2006 scholarship assessment procedures timetable and copies of the new Supervisor Declaration and FRC Declaration to be completed during the process.

The Chair highlighted that the closing date for submission of applications has moved to 30 September. The Faculty process and timeline will be discussed at a future FRC meeting.
2.2 **FIRDS Update**

The Chair noted that one application was received and circulated since the last meeting; a decision regarding funding will be made soon. Two more applications have been received and will be forwarded to members next week for comments.

The Chair thanked members for their feedback, particularly regarding the format of the application form. The form may be revised in light of the feedback received.

2.3 **Progress on Faculty Research Groups**

The Chair tabled a draft Faculty Research Structure document. The Committee discussed the draft, noting:

- The inclusion of the Centre for e-Business Applications Research (CeBAR) within Decision Systems Laboratory (DSL) appears to be misplaced. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) will notice this anomaly.
- CeBAR and the Centre for Software Engineering (CSE) should be two separate entities.
- All other groupings work well.
- A number of minor alterations are required.

The Chair agreed to speak again with Professors Ogunbona, Ghose and Hyland regarding the proposed structure.

The Chair reported that he had recently received performance data from the Research Services Office, which will be one factor considered when allocating funds to Faculty research groups outside research strengths. Interim funding has already been distributed to all groups except DSL. The Chair will:

- Discuss and finalise the structure of DSL;
- Determine the performance funding of each group;
- Meet with the Dean to determine the final funding allocation.

3. **REPORT FROM POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH POLICY COMMITTEE (PRPC)**

A/Professor Tim Marchant reported on the following matters discussed at the last PRPC meeting:

3.1 **PhD Enrolment**

As a result of recent revisions to the Research Training Scheme (RTS), only PhD in-time completions within the government allocated enrolment quota will count for the RTS. Over enrolments will no longer count. Consequently, the University now requires additional information, such as supervisor names and research strength, before approving the enrolment of domestic PhD students.
3.2 University HDR Conference

The Research Student Centre is struggling to find enough students to present at the Annual HDR Conference. Supervisors are asked to encourage students to become involved. FRC members noted that:

- Many students have indicated they do not wish to take part as they believe there are many other more beneficial opportunities to present.
- The conference needs to be ‘sold’ as an opportunity to learn how to talk about their research with a wider audience who do not have the same background, and an opportunity to meet and/or collaborate with other PhD students from across the University.

4. REPORTS FROM FRC WORKING PARTIES AND STANDING COMMITTEES

4.1 Postgraduate Research Coordination Standing Committee

The standing committee met last week and discussed:

- Processes related to upgrade seminars, scholarships, plagiarism, ethics in research, initial research proposals and progress seminars;
- Targets listed in the Faculty Plan;
- Proposal for professional doctorate; and
- University HDR Conference.

4.2 Industry and Community Linkages Standing Committee

The standing committee met last week and discussed:

- Collection of data regarding what UOW industry partners, linkages and networks the Faculty has been involved with over the last 5 years;
- A Faculty register of expertise (noting that a University register exists);
- The Informatics MICD position and confusion about who is currently assisting the Faculty; and
- Community engagement via public lectures or similar.

4.3 HDR Student Recruitment and Support Working Group

The working group met recently and its Chair, Professor Ogunbona, intended to submit a summary of discussion to the FRC Chair. In his absence, A/Professor Zhang reported the working group discussed methods for attracting high quality research students, such as:

- Conversion of Hons I and Masters by Research students to PhD;
- Identification of strong international universities followed by a focused recruitment campaign; and
- Faculty-supported scholarships for excellent Masters students.

But the working group also noted that the conversion of Masters by coursework students to Masters by Research is not always successful.

Professor Fulcher requested that the working group focus on increasing quality rather than number of research students, particularly for SITACS.
4.4 Impact and Quality Working Group

The working group met on 1 June and 15 June. Professor Bouzerdoum tabled a list of matters discussed at the meetings. In summary, the working group discussed:

- Working party aims and terms of reference;
- The definitions of ‘quality’ and ‘impact’ in the context of the Federal Research Quality Framework and University-level discussions regarding quality and impact. In particular:
  - measuring research quality and impact;
  - using the same measures for staff and student outputs; and
  - distinguishing between implementation and capacity building strategies and research output.
- Identification of reputable conferences (and journals) and encourage staff to attend these conferences; and
- University of Queensland assessment of the Quality Research Outcomes paper.

4.5 Internationalisation of Research Working Group

This working group is yet to meet. The FRC Chair noted that the UOW list of targeted international links partners is being reviewed by a subcommittee of the University Internationalisation Committee and that a call for applications will go out soon for the International Links Grants Scheme.

5. URC SMALL GRANT SCHEME PROCESS

The Chair lead discussion on the URC Small Grant Scheme application ranking process, noting the final timetable is available and the applications will be ranked at the next FRC meeting.

After some discussion, the Committee agreed to follow the same process employed when ranking the last round of RIBG Pool 2 applications, namely the applications are discussed, final individual rankings are provided at the end of the meeting and consolidated, and the Associate Dean (Research) decides on the final ranking for submission.

As the process requires a line to be drawn between those applications to be funded by the Faculty and those to be funded from the common pool, the Committee agreed to the Associate Dean (Research) recommending where the line should be drawn via email after the final individual rankings are consolidated, providing FRC members with the opportunity to discuss and debate the matter electronically before the final decision is made and submitted to URC.

6. ITEMS FOR NOTING

6.1 Research Quality Framework

The following report was forwarded electronically to members for information:

7. OTHER BUSINESS

7.1 Faculty Website

Professor Fulcher highlighted that the research groups information on the Faculty website is out of date. The Chair noted that now the agreed Faculty research groupings were close to finalisation, the webpage can be updated in the near future.

8. NEXT MEETING

Thursday 25 August, 2005 Faculty Meeting Room, Building 39/105A

As mentioned above, it is likely that URC Small Grants will be ranked at this meeting.

Professor David Steel
Chair
14 July 2005