

## ACADEMIC SENATE

Circulated: 15 March 2013

Confirmed minutes of meeting 13/01 of the Academic Senate of the University of Western Sydney held on Friday 22 February 2013 at 9:30am in the Boardroom, Building AD, at Werrington North.

### Present:

Associate Professor Paul Wormell (Chair)	Professor Michael Adams
Professor Janice Aldrich-Wright	Professor Ian Anderson
Dr Catherine Attard	Professor Les Bokey
Professor Andrew Cheetham	Dr Bronwyn Cole
Professor Donna Craig	Ms Sue Craig
Professor Gabriel Donleavy	Professor Kevin Dunn
Associate Professor Craig Ellis	Dr Betty Gill
Professor Rhonda Griffiths	Mr Elie Hammam
Assoc Professor Cecily Hengstberger-Sims	Dr Cindy Kersaitis
Professor Gregory Kolt	Mr Angelo Kourtis
Professor Kerri-Lee Krause	Mr Terry Mason
Ms Shaneen McGlinchey	Associate Professor Jane Mears
Dr Mary Mooney	Dr Terri Mylett
Dr Michael O'Connor	Dr Awais Piracha
Associate Professor Anne Power	Mr Michael Richardson
Associate Professor Leanne Rylands	Dr Seyed Shahrestani
Associate Professor Terry Sloan	Professor Clive Smallman
Professor Kate Stevens	Professor Deborah Stevenson
Ms Maxine Veale	Dr Greg Whateley
Professor Steve Wilson	

### In Attendance:

Mr Martin Derby (Secretary)	Ms Gillian Brown
Mr James Fitzgibbon	Mr Richard Kindness
Ms Deirdre Lee	Dr George Morgan

### Apologies:

Dr Susan Armstrong	Professor Annemarie Hennessy
Professor Peter Hutchings	Dr Peter Mauch
Professor Donald McNeill	Professor Janice Reid (VC)
Professor Lynette Sheridan Burns	Professor Simeon Simoff
Professor Gary Smith	Professor Deborah Sweeney
Professor Zhong Tao	

### Absent:

Ms Soumaya Alaouie	Associate Professor Berice Anning
Mr Robert Coluccio	

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## **1 PROCEDURAL MATTERS**

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### **1.1 INTRODUCTION, WELCOMES, CONGRATULATIONS, FAREWELLS AND APOLOGIES**

#### **Welcome**

The Chair of Academic Senate Associate Professor Paul Wormell chaired the first 2013 meeting of the Senate, and opened it by reading an Acknowledgment of the Traditional Owners, as follows:

“As a matter of Indigenous cultural protocol and out of recognition that its campuses occupy their traditional lands, the University of Western Sydney acknowledges the Darug, Gandangarra and Tharawal peoples and thanks them for their support of its work in Greater Western Sydney.

In particular I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we are meeting today, and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present, and to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are here today.”

He welcomed a number of new Senate members, as follows:

- Ms Sue Craig who had been appointed to the position of University Librarian commencing on 18 February 2012. The Library plays a central role in the University’s academic programs, research and the student experience.
- Dr Mary Mooney, who had been appointed as Acting Dean of the School of Education, and was a longstanding colleague with a wealth of curriculum experience and extensive involvement in the University’s last AUQA audit.
- Associate Professor Terry Sloan, who was elected to the position of “one person who is a Level D or E academic staff member of the School of Business” for a term which ends on 31 December 2013.
- Professor Les Bokey, who was elected to the vacant position of “one person who is a Level D or E academic staff member of the School of Medicine” for a term which ends on 31 December 2013.

#### **Congratulations**

He congratulated several members of Senate who were promoted following the 2012 academic staff promotions round, as follows:

- Dr Peter Mauch – promoted from Lecturer to Senior Lecturer. Dr Mauch was unable to attend the meeting.
- Associate Professor Bronwyn Cole – promoted from Senior Lecturer to Associate Professor
- Professor Ian Anderson – promoted from Associate Professor to Professor

He observed that a number of former Senate members had also been promoted, and contributions to academic governance were among the achievements that they brought to the promotion process. Recent changes to the promotion policies now give more weight to contributions to governance, especially for promotion to Level D, and this was a positive development.

## **Farewells**

The Chair acknowledged the contribution of Emeritus Professor Michael Atherton, who had recently retired from the University, for his experienced, sensible and humane contribution to Academic Senate and its committees; his role as a Chair and Deputy Chair, and his work as Associate Dean (Research) and a member of our Research and Higher Degrees Committees.

He thanked Martin Derby, the Senate's Executive Officer and Secretary, who was supporting his last Senate meeting before leaving UWS.

Martin had made an outstanding contribution to academic governance at UWS through his work with Senate and its Standing Committees. He had made important contributions to the development of the University's academic committees and policies; had been a great fount of corporate memory and perspective; a source of wise and diplomatic advice; and an excellent and very perceptive minute taker.

Worthy of note had been the huge volume of very sensitive work he had done with student unsatisfactory academic progress exclusion appeals, which are life-changing decisions for many students.

## **Apologies**

Apologies as listed were noted.

## **1.2 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Chair reminded Senate members that in addition to the Board of Trustees' standard requirements for declarations of interest, Senate Standing Orders require that "If a member of the Senate has a direct personal or pecuniary interest or involvement in any item considered by the Senate, then that member must immediately declare his or her interest or involvement."

A very large number of Senate members had a direct involvement in the development and delivery of the University's academic programs. Members did not have to declare this interest and involvement, as it was obvious. However, if there were other direct personal interests it was important that they should be declared, either at the beginning of the meeting, or when they become apparent.

## **1.3 STARRING OF ITEMS**

It was agreed that items 3.1 Chair's Report, 3.10 *Enrolments Policy* and 3.11 *Special Consideration Policy* be starred, as well as the items already starred on the agenda, as follows:

- 3.3 Australian Qualifications Framework Compliance
- 3.4 Senate Work Plan
- 3.5 Curriculum Planning
- 3.12 Blended Learning Update
- 4.1 Senate Executive Committee
- 4.2 Research Committee
- 4.3 Research Studies Committee
- 4.4 Education Committee
- 4.5 Academic Planning and Courses Approvals Committee

- 4.6 Bachelor (Honours) Committee
- 4.7 Academic Appeals and Integrity Committee

**It was resolved (AS13:01/01):**

*that the documents for all unstarred agenda items be noted and, except where alternative action is noted as appropriate, all recommendations contained in those items be endorsed.*

**1.4 ORDER OF BUSINESS**

There were no changes to the order of business.

**1.5 OTHER BUSINESS**

Academic Year Review

At the request of the Chair, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Planning) updated Senate members on the Academic Year Review.

The initiative for the review came from the Board of Trustees and was premised on the need to maximise the use of resources as the University grew. The next Senate meeting would have a paper on the proposal, but he was able to report the Deans had been canvassed about two possible models – firstly, a three equal trimester pattern, and secondly, an extended summer session.

The School of Business had favoured the three equal trimester pattern, while all the other schools supported the extended summer session, and it was proposed that both models would operate.

The School of Business trimester pattern would commence in 2015, and the extended summer session in 2013-4. The current assumption was that 61 undergraduate and postgraduate units would be offered in two teaching periods: one before Christmas, and one after Christmas, with flexibility about how the units were taught – in both periods, in one period only. It was thought that the units would be delivered at one campus (though several units would be exclusively on-line). A prospectus would be published in April.

Units would be taught in different modes – with intensive face-to-face periods over a few days, or on-line, or through a mix of blended learning delivery modes.

A number of issues were under discussion, including census dates, assessment and results processing timelines, and graduation, where it was hoped that students completing in summer session could graduate at the April ceremonies.

With trimesters and extended summer session operating in parallel, thought needed to be given to how double degrees were offered.

The University hoped to increase student load by offering summer sessions – currently, many UWS students studied elsewhere during summer, often at Sydney University.

In discussion the following points were made:

- Student services – catering, the library etc. – would need to be available for summer sessions.
- The proposed arrangements would have staffing and work load implications, and it was suggested that many staff currently used the summer period for preparing research grant applications.
- The School of Business School Academic Committee had supported the extended summer session model, not the trimester pattern. When this had been reported to the Chair of Senate, he had passed this information on to the Academic Year Review Group.

## 1.6 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Senate had before it the unconfirmed minutes of the Senate meeting held on 26 October 2012.

**It was resolved (AS13:01/02):**

*To confirm the minutes of the Senate meeting held on 26 October 2012 as an accurate record.*

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## 2 BUSINESS ARISING

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### 2 BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

#### 2.1 MINUTE 3.4 - ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE MATTERS

At the 26 October 2012 Academic Senate meeting the following two resolutions were passed:

**“It was resolved (AS12:05/04):**

*That the Academic Senate make the following recommendations to the Board of Trustees regarding the proposed Academic Governance changes:*

1. *That the previous terms of current elected and appointed members of Academic Senate be counted for the purposes of determining the number of consecutive terms that each member has served, except where the previous terms were for truncated periods of less than twelve months.*
2. *That the Academic Governance Policy be amended to provide for one postgraduate student member of Academic Senate to be elected by and from the postgraduate students and one postgraduate student to be elected by and from the higher degree by research students of the University.*
3. *That the Delegations clause of the Academic Governance Policy be extended to include the Executive Committees of the School Academic Committees, allowing them to approve the conferral of degrees, diplomas and certificates for undergraduate, honours and postgraduate coursework programs, in cases where it is not practicable for the School Academic Committee to meet. Any exercise of this delegation*

would be reported to the next appropriate meeting of the School Academic Committee and Academic Senate.

4. That the membership of Academic Senate be amended to include one elected academic staff member from a UWS Research Institute.
5. That the proposed amendments to the Academic Governance Policy be recommended to the Board of Trustees for approval.

**It was resolved (AS12:05/05):**

*That, subject to the Board's approval of the proposed amendments to the Academic Governance Policy, the Academic Senate approves a consequential amendment to the Academic Senate Standing Committees Policy to reflect the delegation for Executive Committees of School Academic Committees to approve the conferral of degrees, diplomas and certificates for undergraduate, honours and postgraduate coursework programs."*

Without discussion, it was noted that the Board of Trustees had approved these recommendations at its 21 November 2012 meeting and the revised *Academic Governance Policy* and *Academic Senate Standing Committees Policy* had been published. The *Academic Senate Standing Committees Policy* would be repealed following publication of this final version.

## **2.2 MINUTE 4.3 - RESEARCH STUDIES COMMITTEE**

Without discussion, it was noted that the revised *Doctor of Philosophy Policy* and *Research Masters (Honours) Policy* had been published on the Policy DDS.

## **2.3 MINUTE 4.4 - EDUCATION AND ASSESSMENT COMMITTEES (INCORPORATING STUDENT EXPERIENCE AND ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE)**

Without discussion, it was noted that the revised *Referencing Styles Policy* and the change to the *Academic Senate Standing Committees Policy* had been published on the Policy DDS.

As noted at item 2.1 above, the *Academic Senate Standing Committees Policy* would be repealed following publication of this final version.

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## **3 GENERAL BUSINESS**

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### **3.1 CHAIR'S REPORT**

Senate had before it a written report from the Chair covering activities undertaken on behalf of the Senate since 26 October 2012.

The Chair offered to answer any questions on his report.

Speaking to the report, the Chair said that he was continuing to work closely with the State and National committees of Academic Board Chairs, and these links were proving to be very useful. The University's work around academic standards, the AQF, learning spaces and technologies, blended learning (however named),

academic years and academic policies, was very much common currency across the sector. The National Committee of Academic Board Chairs was next meeting on 1 March 2013.

Board of Trustees policy is that all of its committees should move to electronic agenda papers. The Board had done this now that all members have an iPad or similar reading device. Academic Senate, as a committee of the Board would phase in these arrangements. For this Senate meeting hard-copy agendas and papers were sent out, following past practice, but one consequence of the University's iPad strategy is that this will facilitate the move to electronic meeting papers. Obviously there will be some members for whom alternative arrangements may need to be made, and where necessary, these will be put in place.

### **3.2 HIGHER EDUCATION STANDARDS AND TEQSA REGULATORY RISK FRAMEWORK**

Without discussion, Senate noted a report prepared by the Chair which provided an update on developments in relation to the Higher Education Standards, TEQSA regulation and Quality Assessments.

Further information and regular updates are available from the UWS Understanding the AQF and TEQSA website at:

[http://www.uws.edu.au/learning\\_teaching/learning\\_and\\_teaching/australian\\_qualifications\\_framework\\_tertiary\\_education\\_quality\\_and\\_standards\\_agency](http://www.uws.edu.au/learning_teaching/learning_and_teaching/australian_qualifications_framework_tertiary_education_quality_and_standards_agency)

### **3.3 AUSTRALIAN QUALIFICATIONS FRAMEWORK COMPLIANCE**

The Chair updated members about recent developments in relation to the University's compliance with the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

He, together with the Academic Registrar, had briefed each of the School Academic Committees about AQF requirements, and they were arranging to meet each of the School Academic Committee Chairs for a general update, including about the AQF.

An AQF Project Officer, Ms Lisa Davison, had been appointed in the Academic Registrar's Office, and she was progressing the preliminary mapping of every UWS course, to include some further information the University recently received from the AQF Council and TEQSA.

Complying with the requirements of the various agencies involved in the higher education regulatory framework – the AQF Council, TEQSA (the regulator of the tertiary sector), the Higher Education Standards Panel (the body which sets the standards, which are approved by the Minister), and DISSRTE – was challenging. There were still a number of areas where the requirements for universities remained unclear.

He said that recently, the AQF Council released some Explanations about some key questions, and TEQSA had followed up with its own advice. Even more recently, the Higher Education Standards Panel had reminded universities that they are the body who set standards, so there may be further developments, but nevertheless, the University had to continue to develop, advertise and teach courses despite the fluid regulatory context.

The National Committee of Academic Board Chairs was meeting on 1 March 2013 and he hoped to get an understanding of what other universities were doing to comply with regulatory requirements.

For the University, the main issues were:

- First, although Graduate Certificates and Graduate Diplomas were still in the AQF, the University had to ensure they produce Level 8 learning outcomes. Course length would be an issue for some Graduate Diplomas.
- Secondly, it was becoming very clear that one-year Masters courses were highly problematic, and TEQSA is likely to take a conservative view of course length. A major driving force behind the new AQF was a concern that many Masters courses were too short, and lacked academic depth, and some information about this issue was contained on the TEQSA web site.
- Thirdly, although almost all of the University's Bachelor degrees complied with many aspects of the AQF, the University needed to be able to show that graduates meet the AQF descriptors in terms of their knowledge, skills, and capacity to apply what they have learned. The survey of course documentation being undertaken as part of the preliminary mapping of every UWS shows a small number of courses which have clear learning outcomes that map very well to the AQF, but many that did not. Schools will be approached to ensure that where course learning outcomes exist – often as part of professional accreditation – they are added to the approved course documentation, and where they do not exist, they are developed. Basically, the University needs to be able to say what a graduate from a particular degree was expected to be able to do, show that the assessment processes confirm that they can do it, and that this is appropriate for a Bachelor graduate.

The AQF Council had published a set of "Explanations" at: <http://www.aqf.edu.au/>

TEQSA had recently published a set of responses to frequently asked questions about the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) at:

<http://www.teqsa.gov.au/news-publications/news/teqsa-and-australian-qualifications-framework>

In relation to the AQF, it was suggested that the AQF appeared to be emphasising the quantity rather than the quality of teaching and learning and this was frustrating and had implications for how the University would compete with other providers.

In response to a question about the development of integrated multi-faceted courses that comprise a Masters degree and a Doctor of Philosophy, the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) reported that the University had established a working party to review the so-called "Macquarie Model". This consisted of a three-year bachelor degree, followed by a two-year Masters degree (which included research training) as preparation for a three year doctorate – with the expectation that the doctorate not extend into a fourth year. It was possible that an exit qualification of M.Phil. would be incorporated into the model for students who did not complete a Ph.D.

This model was closely aligned to the Bologna Model and envisaged the replacement of honours programs, but he observed that in some disciplines with embedded honours and/or professionally accredited courses – for example, Engineering and Psychology – the "Macquarie Model" may not be applicable.

The model, or variants of it, was being adopted across the sector including at the University of Western Australia and the University of Melbourne. The model was potentially attractive for international students coming to Australia for research higher degree study who had not completed honours courses in their own countries, and whose prior study had to be assessed for equivalence.

It was suggested that the adoption of the Model would raise issues about scholarships, RTS places and concerns about how students might pay to study, with a Masters degree of two years replacing a one year honours course.

It was envisaged that in due course, there would be extensive consultation about any proposal to adopt the “Macquarie Model”, and there were clearly academic and financial issues involved. Although there was a desire to introduce this for 2014, it was more likely that this would be adopted for the 2015 intake of students.

### **3.4 SENATE WORK PLAN**

Senate had before it the latest draft iteration of the Senate’s Work Plan prepared by the Chair of Senate and a report “Raise and Enhance” written by the Deputy Chair of Academic Senate.

Introducing the item, the Chair said that the item encompassed two components which were very different in style, but with a common purpose, to guide Academic Senate’s work this year, and hence to guide him as Chair in setting the Senate’s agendas and items for discussion.

He said that as Chair of Senate, he was accountable to the Senate, as well as to the Board and Vice-Chancellor. Accordingly, he was seeking clear guidance about what Senate wanted to do this year, in the context of the Senate’s terms of reference and discretionary powers to give advice.

As well as setting the University context, which included the Our Futures projects, the Work Plan contained suggested priorities, which might be influenced by the outcomes of discussions of the Deputy Chair’s paper. Senate could choose to change, or add to, the suggested priorities in the Plan which was:

- Benchmarking in relation to research, academic standards and assessment
- Curriculum renewal including the UWS Blended Learning Project
- Collaboration to ensure that UWS demonstrates that it meets the Higher Education Threshold Standards – noting that the Standards prescribe that there should be a “clear and discernible separation” between academic and corporate governance, with Senates and Academic Boards having defined responsibilities. The important role of all Academic Boards and Senates under the regulatory arrangements had been emphasised by Carol Nicoll, Chief Commissioner of TEQSA at last year’s Quality Forum.
- Promotion of ethical scholarship and academic honesty in research and teaching – in 2011 Senate had made this a high priority, but because of the AUQA audit, and the University restructure, there had been less progress than anticipated, although an Academic Integrity Working Party was active with Associate Professor Craig Ellis as Chair.

In discussion, it was suggested that taking into account agenda item 4.5, curriculum planning should be added to the list of priorities. Curriculum planning should be informed by better, timelier graduate destination survey data (which provided information about courses that were offered several years ago) and more refined survey tools. For example, student satisfaction / dissatisfaction with course offerings measured quantitatively might have little to do with the academic quality and relevance of the course, but could be influenced by extraneous factors like their experience of using iPads, or perceptions of campus facilities, or financial pressures etc.

The Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) reported that considerable work was being undertaken to refine data collection, including improvements to the annual course reports exercise, and the development by a consortium of a student survey instrument that was intended for use across the higher education sector.

Summing up the discussion of the Draft Work plan, the Chair noted that members had not commented on academic integrity as a suggested priority.

Senate considered the paper “Raise and Enhance” written by the Deputy Chair of Academic Senate.

In introducing his paper, the Deputy Chair of Academic Senate said that the Academic Senate was composed of academic managers, academic staff, professional staff and students, each with their own agenda. His aim was to initiate a discussion about how those individuals who were Senators might collectively “raise and enhance” the University’s Academic Senate by debating and discussing academic issues and influencing the development of the University. In essence this was about ensuring the Senate discharged the extensive functions bestowed on it by Board of Trustees and defined in the *Academic Governance Policy*, as the peak body representing the academic community.

The University was an organic entity with a defined mission to serve the Greater West and communities beyond, in a political and economic context. Increasingly, the University (and the higher education sector) faced competition from other providers who potentially could quickly offer courses delivered on-line, cheaply and cost-effectively.

However, a good student experience ideally should also provide social interaction and engagement, and universities needed to incorporate this into the experience they offered to students – even though there was a cost impost to do this.

Within the University, Senate was the custodian of academic standards, quality and values, and should exercise what authority and influence it had to enhance the learning experience and advance the standing of the University.

In his paper, he stated that the University’s Senate operated as a “functional” Senate using Minor’s<sup>1</sup> framework – i.e. a Senate which has:

“... minimal influence over "non-academic" areas of university decision making. Often such influence is merely a matter of being consulted when the administration deems it necessary.”

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<sup>1</sup> Minor, James T, (2004), “Understanding Faculty Senates: Moving from Mystery to Models”, *Review of Higher Education* 27:3 343-363, Spring.

and...

“Functional senates are not particularly assertive and usually do not set their own agenda. Instead, they respond to the initiatives and actions of the administration or issues that arise from the environment.”

The Academic Senate had no authority to manage resources and to become an “influential” Senate (Minor’s terminology) which:

“... drive issues and promote policy changes that result from having an agenda concerned with the entire university, not just faculty issues.”

He said that while Senate was performing well in assuring the quality of academic policies and the curriculum, to “raise and enhance” the Senate’s role necessitated adopting the spirit of his motion. In seeking to enhance the influence the Senate had about the future directions of the University, the intent was not to usurp the roles of the Board of Trustees and Executive Management. Rather, the intent was that greater cognisance should be given to the debates and deliberation of the Senate in University decision making, and he recommended the establishment of a steering group to take this forward.

In discussion, members expressed the following views:

- Some recent decisions about the cancellation of courses and majors had bypassed unit coordinators who had considerable expertise and experience in delivering curriculum. These changes had become contested industrial matters and the subject of change proposals. Better consultation with academic staff might have led to better outcomes, and less dissatisfaction.
- The University had made a very sudden decision to cease offering Arabic. This had been poorly communicated and students told that to complete their majors, they would have to enrol elsewhere. This seemed an incomprehensible decision given the background of many students at the Bankstown Campus who spoke but could not write in Arabic, and where the Arabic units were popular. Moreover, the decision was made without the knowledge of Senate members.
- Decisions to remove course and unit offerings, sometimes at short notice, were not new. There had been a number of cycles of rationalising the curriculum over many years. Recent discussions at the Academic Planning and Courses Approvals Committee and elsewhere, and referred to in the paper for item 3.5, acknowledged that the University did not have a comprehensive curriculum strategy, or a curriculum profile tailored to meet the needs of the communities the University served. Often, decisions about cutting course and unit offerings were dictated by financial considerations, rather than by how those offerings fitted with any explicit University strategy.
- The School of Business had made a decision that Unit Coordinators set assessments in such a way that all the assignments submitted by a student for the unit could be marked in 45 minutes. A decision had also been made that to increase the threshold class size to 45 students before a two hour tutorial could be permitted. These changes had been promulgated without the involvement of the School’s School Academic Committee and after Learning Guides had been prepared, and time tabling arrangements finalised. It was suggested that these changes were short sighted, and likely to lead to higher student fail rates.

- Students made a significant commitment to the University when they signed up to study, and aspects of blended learning, and the iPad initiative served to alienate them. It was important that decision making provided for the student voice to not only be heard, but listened to. A framework of student forums needed to be established.
- The Deputy Chair's paper raised important issues about the role of the University. The emphasis on blended learning was understandable but the University would be failing if it did not recognise the continuing importance of creating and delivering a vibrant curriculum to include critique, dialogue and analysis in its offerings.
- It was suggested that the quality of academic decision making would be improved if Unit Coordinators had a strengthened presence on the Senate's committees. The Chair of Senate observed that the membership of School Academic Committees provided for broad representation, and there were places for elected staff and students at different levels. All academic staff are able to request that items be placed on agendas, and committee members could star items for discussion. Although some Senate committees were already large, committee membership could be expanded. As stated in the Senate Work Plan, "Monitor and review academic governance arrangements" was included as a 2013 activity for Senate.
- It was suggested that the aspirations for the Senate contained in the paper were laudable, but in practice, staff were very busy with lots to do, and Senate met infrequently. Managing and prioritising the Senate's work was a significant challenge, and the practicality of following up the suggestions in the paper was questionable.
- Several of the activities the paper's author had suggested Senate would "...discuss, and form an explicit view on, before any such proposal is implemented within the University" i.e.
  - "Any change to the length or frequency of the UWS teaching semester"; and
  - "Any replacement of traditional teaching methods by online instruction howsoever the latter may be named"

... were within the domain of the Our Future Projects which had been endorsed by the Board of Trustees. It was apparent that the committees established to oversee the Our Future Projects were not related to the Senate and its committees.
- It was apparent that the paper raised very important principles about internal communication and decision making and these were critical to the health of the University and had been identified as concerns in the My Voice survey.

In making points in the discussion, a number of speakers commended the Deputy Chair of Senate for his thoughtful, well written and incisive paper, and for stimulating an important debate.

In summing up the debate, the Chair said that a theme of the paper, and discussion of it, was the establishment of channels of communication and empowering the academic community. He would be guided by Senate as to how to proceed and how the topics covered in the resolution might be incorporated into Senate's plans.

However, he was concerned that the Academic Senate must not act outside its terms of reference, and suggested that points 3 and 4 in the motion i.e.:

“Senate will discuss, and form an explicit view on, every proposal of the type listed, before any such proposal is implemented within the University.

3. Any significant change to the establishment or portfolio of any academic unit; and
4. Any proposal whose effect could foreseeably be to change the ratios of staff, whether full time to casual or academic to professional, so significantly in any unit that there are clear academic issues raised over and above any resource, cost or other issues.”

... crossed the separation of powers between Academic Senate and the executive management, potentially involving Senate in resource allocation decisions and industrial issues. While Senate should be consulted and able to express its views on matters that impacted on academic standards and policy it should not try to involve itself in management decisions that lay outside its purview.

The motion was put to a vote, and with 19 for, 5 against and 7 abstentions...

**It was resolved (AS13:01/03):**

***Given that***

*The Senate is “the primary custodian of academic values and standards for the University” per Section 20 (2) (b) of the University of Western Sydney Act 1997 No 116 Part 2 Section 8:*

***And that***

*“ The Academic Senate (Senate) is the peak academic body in the University, and as a forum for academic debate, policy development and decision-making, is responsible to the Board of Trustees (Board) for:*

- a. monitoring academic standards, values and quality assurance;*
- b. advising on the development of and performance against academic plans;*
- c. monitoring academic collaborations and partnerships;*
- d. promoting and monitoring academic quality, standards and values of the University's academic activities;*
- e. advising on the University's academic plans and academic risk management;*
- f. advising the Board and Vice-Chancellor as appropriate;*
- g. deciding academic policy and approving related procedures;*
- h. accrediting and approving courses, programs and units;*
- i. promoting the quality and development of research in the University.*

*(4) Subject to the By-law and University Rules, and to any decision of the Board, the Academic Senate will decide the University's policies and procedures on:*

- a. *the monitoring and review of the key parameters and performance indicators for academic planning and academic quality improvement processes;*
- b. *courses and units;*
- c. *University academic scholarships and prizes;*
- d. *University academic awards, including minimum standards and credit points for units;*
- e. *admission, enrolment, assessment and examination of students;*
- f. *student progress;*
- g. *student academic discipline;*
- h. *course and program structures, titles and component names.”*

*(Section 3 - Policy Statement - Part A - Functions of the Academic Senate, as updated in January 2013)*

***And further that***

*per subsection 6 of the Policy, (underlining added in the extract below),*

*“Subject to the By-law and to any decision of the Board, the Academic Senate will, at the request of the Board or at the discretion of Senate, advise the Board and the Vice-Chancellor on:*

- a. *the formulation and regular review of the University's academic plans and related academic development and evaluation strategies;*
- b. *reports on the University's academic activities, including those to outside agencies;*
- c. *issues relating to, and affecting, international academic collaboration and partnerships;*
- d. *issues relating to external regulatory frameworks of academic standards;*
- e. *establishment and disestablishment of academic organisational units, such as schools, research institutes and research centres;*
- f. *the University's academic profile;*
- g. *development, maintenance and enhancement of high standards in learning and teaching, research, and community and industry outreach;*
- h. *principles and guidelines for the conduct and enhancement of academic activities;*
- i. *improvement of the student learning environment and opportunities, including postgraduate supervision;*
- j. *development and review of standards for the appointment and promotion of academic staff;*

- k. *academic priorities and policies for consideration in University planning for academic activities;*
- l. *development of quality and standards in the links and affiliations with other academic institutions or other organisations; and*
- m. *development of codes of academic conduct for students and staff of the University.”*

*The Senate affirms its commitment to the spirit and the letter of the above, both in general, and also with special reference to the approval and/or implementation of the following types of proposals, wheresoever they may have originated:-*

1. *Any change to the length or frequency of the UWS teaching semester;*
2. *Any replacement of traditional teaching methods by online instruction howsoever the latter may be named;*
3. *Any significant change to the establishment or portfolio of any academic unit; and*
4. *Any proposal whose effect could foreseeably be to change the ratios of staff, whether full time to casual or academic to professional, so significantly in any unit that there are clear academic issues raised over and above any resource, cost or other issues.*

*Accordingly, in order to discharge its mandate, Senate will discuss, and form an explicit view on, every proposal of the type listed, before any such proposal is implemented within the University.*

### **3.5 CURRICULUM PLANNING**

Senate had before it a paper “Curriculum Planning” prepared by the Chair of Senate.

Speaking to the paper, the Chair reported that the Academic Planning and Courses Approvals Committee (APCAC) were discussing the University’s academic profile and program planning, from the perspective of taking an overall strategic view of student and industry demand, and the Region’s needs for graduates. The paper referred to the leadership that the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Planning) is providing in this area. As stated in the paper:

*“While recognising that the majority of new course proposals would originate from the Schools, APCAC considered that it would also be useful to compile a list of possible courses by consulting the wider academic community, and consider them on a ‘why not?’ basis.*

*APCAC agreed that it was important to ensure that broad conversations occurred during course development, encompassing a range of perspectives, to produce well-rounded courses. It was also proposed that the course life cycle should be mapped, accepting that course renewal is inevitable, and developing systems to accommodate the inclusion and removal of units as required.”*

APCAC was also seeking to promote greater choice and flexibility in the academic program by encouraging cross-University degrees, majors, sub majors and electives.

He stated that courses should be reviewed creatively, to ensure continuing quality and relevance. However, it was apparent that while some courses had not been fully reviewed for many years, other courses seemed to be over-reviewed with changes made every year.

Changes to courses would be driven by many factors, as listed on the agenda:

- Development and implementation of blended-learning models for each School;
- Potential outcomes of the Academic Year Review;
- Development and implementation of School Course Management Plans within the framework of the *Our Future Academic Program and Pathways Project*;
- Professional accreditation processes, where relevant;
- Continued implementation of the UWS Indigenous Graduate Attribute;
- Development of English language and mathematical proficiencies throughout the curriculum;
- Compliance with the Australian Qualifications Framework, and more broadly with the Higher Education Standards Framework.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic Planning) said that the University had recently met with local state parliamentarians who questioned why some courses and units were only offered at particular campuses, and therefore not easily available to their constituents. It was hoped that a move to making some offerings available on-line would increase access to the University's curriculum.

It was suggested that as the sector became increasingly competitive, the University was not well served by the somewhat cumbersome process for courses approval, and in particular, the requirements for course concept proposals which were repetitive and cumbersome. The Chair reported that APCAC were reviewing the *Award Courses and Units Approval Policy* and as stated in the paper:

“Aspects of the Course Concept Proposal, including the resourcing components, and the pathways for exchanging information between the UWS Executive, the Schools and APCAC, were being reviewed.”

### **3.6 MEMBERSHIP OF ACADEMIC SENATE AND ACADEMIC SENATE STANDING COMMITTEES - ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE POLICY**

Without discussion...

**It was resolved (AS13:01/04):**

*To note the changes to the membership of Academic Senate contained in the Academic Governance Policy, and the changes to the membership of the Academic Senate's standing committees.*

### **3.7 HONOURS IN BACHELOR AWARDS POLICY**

Without discussion...

**It was resolved (AS13:01/05):**

*To approve the changes to the Honours in Bachelor Awards Policy, from the date of publication of the revised Policy.*

### **3.8 ARTICULATION PATHWAYS POLICY**

Without discussion...

**It was resolved (AS13:01/06):**

*To approve the changes to the Articulation Pathways Policy, from the date of publication of the revised Policy.*

### **3.9 GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES**

Without discussion...

**It was resolved (AS13:01/07):**

*To approve the changes to the Graduate Attributes, from the date of publication of the revised Policy.*

### **3.10 ENROLMENT POLICY**

Although this item had been starred, it was agreed that no discussion was necessary.

**It was resolved (AS13:01/08):**

*To approve the proposed minor amendments to the Enrolment Policy relating to eligibility for leave of absence, effective from the date of publication of the Policy.*

### **3.11 SPECIAL CONSIDERATION POLICY**

Although this item had been starred, it was agreed that no discussion was necessary.

**It was resolved (AS13:01/09):**

*To approve the proposed minor amendments to the Special Consideration Policy related to the introduction of the e-form, effective from the date of publication of the Policy.*

### **3.12 BLENDED LEARNING UPDATE**

The Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) provided an update on developments with Blended Learning, including the iPad initiative, and reported that:

- Curriculum mapping was in progress, with efforts being made to incorporate blended learning – face-to-face, online, and technologically enhanced delivery - into courses, in accordance with the Learning and Teaching Plan.
- Funding to implement the blended learning strategy had been released, with staff appointed to work with schools to provide advice and support
- iPads had been distributed to commencing students in January and a roll out of iPads to academic staff, and associated training was in hand. This had been a challenging logistical exercise, and there had been much goodwill and patience shown by staff as the initiative was launched. 400 staff had been trained in the previous week, with the University's professional staff playing a critical role in assisting, with on-line resources and FAQs being prepared.
- It was apparent that iPad champions in academic units were helping out their less experienced colleagues, fixing problems and helping to provide a University context to the basic training.

In discussion, the following points were made:

- Lecturers would have to teach classes where some students had iPads, some students had other devices – tablets or telephones - and some students would not have any technology with them. This would be challenging for staff and students.
- It was suggested that as students received Library induction sessions, these could be extended to incorporate iPad familiarisation.
- Schools might have to arrange to have iPads for casual staff, who had not been issued with University iPads.

### 3.13 APPROVAL OF SCHOLARSHIPS

Without discussion...

**It was resolved (AS13:01/10):**

*To approve the proposed William Chiu International Exchange Scholarship (Business).*

*To approve the proposed William Chiu International Exchange Scholarship (Arts/Asian Studies).*

*To approve the proposed Delta Electricity Engineering Scholarship.*

*To approve the proposed Robert Hayes Memorial Scholarship.*

### 3.14 AWARDS OF THE UNIVERSITY MEDAL

Without discussion...

**It was resolved (AS13:01/11):**

*To note the awards of the University Medal, approved by the Chair of Academic Senate, on behalf of the Senate.*

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**4 REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM SENATE COMMITTEES**

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**4.1 SENATE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

The item was not considered and was carried forward to the next meeting.

**4.2 RESEARCH COMMITTEE**

The item was not considered and was carried forward to the next meeting.

**4.3 RESEARCH STUDIES COMMITTEE**

The item was not considered and was carried forward to the next meeting.

**4.4 EDUCATION and ASSESSMENT COMMITTEES (incorporating Student Experience and Engagement Committee)**

The item was not considered and was carried forward to the next meeting.

**4.5 ACADEMIC PLANNING AND COURSES APPROVALS COMMITTEE**

The item was not considered and was carried forward to the next meeting.

**4.6 BACHELOR (HONOURS) COMMITTEE**

The item was not considered and was carried forward to the next meeting.

**4.7 ACADEMIC APPEALS AND INTEGRITY COMMITTEE**

The item was not considered and was carried forward to the next meeting.

**4.8 UWS COLLEGE ACADEMIC COMMITTEE**

Without discussion...

**It was resolved (AS13:01/12):**

*To note the minutes of the UWS College Academic Committee meetings held between 12 and 19 September, and on 13 November 2012.*

**4.9 BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

The Board of Trustees met on 21 November 2012.

The next meeting was scheduled for 27 February 2013. Summaries of Board of Trustees meetings, and minutes of Board of Trustees meetings, are available on the web-site at: <http://www.uws.edu.au/boardoftrustees>.

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**5 FOR INFORMATION**

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**5.1 ACADEMIC PROMOTIONS PROCESS REPORT**

Senate received without comment a report prepared by the Office of Human Resources on the 2012 promotion process for academic staff.

## **5.2 ATTENDANCE AT ACADEMIC SENATE AND ACADEMIC SENATE COMMITTEE MEETINGS 2012**

In preparing the 2012 Annual Reports of Academic Senate's Standing Committees (Research, Education, Research Studies, Academic Planning and Courses Approvals, Bachelor (Honours)) authors were asked to provide attendance records for the various committee meetings.

Senate received without comment a report providing attendance records for the Senate and its committee meetings.

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## **6 NEXT MEETING**

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The next Academic Senate meeting was arranged for Friday 3 May. Senate meeting dates for 2013 are as follows:

- Friday 3 May
- Friday 21 June
- Friday 16 August
- Friday 25 October
- Friday 6 December (provisional meeting – to be held if necessary)

All the meetings start at 9.30 AM, and will be held in the Board Room, Building AD, at Werrington North