25 July 2007

The Board of Trustees met on Wednesday 25 July 2007, in the Boardroom, Building AD, Werrington North. A summary of matters discussed is provided below.

Board Membership

The Board welcomed Mr Gang Zheng, newly elected Postgraduate Student member of the Board of Trustees. Mr Zheng's membership term is from 1 July 2007 until 30 June 2009. He is a doctoral candidate at UWS writing a thesis entitled 'Development and applications of new NMR diffusion experiments for measuring magnetically inhomogeneous samples'.

The Board recorded its thanks to Ms Linda Burney, whose term on the Board ended in June 2007.

The two year term of elected Undergraduate Student member Mr Luke Fomiatti was due to end on 31 December 2007. However, he has completed his final exams at UWS and his term on the Board was curtailed. The Board thanked Luke for his contributions as a Board member and wished him well for the future. Elections for the new Undergraduate Student member will be conducted later in the year, along with the elections for Academic and General Staff members.

Vice-Chancellor's Report

The Vice-Chancellor spoke to her report and advised that the recent annual visit from DEST was very positive, reflecting the regular liaison between University and DEST representatives.

The Board commended Alexis Wright on receiving the prestigious Miles Franklin Literary Award for her novel Carpentaria and the 2007 Australian Literature Society Gold Medal and strongly endorsed Professor McKenna's conferring on Alexis Wright the title of Distinguished Fellow. The Vice-Chancellor advised that the University's Writing and Society Research Group is arguably the best of its kind in Australia.

UWSSA Presentation

On behalf of UWSSA staff and the SRC Mr Phil Rigg, UWSSA President, spoke to a tabled document which covered the following:

- Background – the services UWSSA provides to students; its governance structure and the impact of VSU.
- Financial Outlook – the difficulties and costs of providing services across seven offices, the steps UWSSA has taken to review its expenditure and its potential insolvency.
- UWS Support for UWSSA Welfare Services.
- Funding Request – for Administration Officers, Research Officer, Communications/Marketing Officer and some secondary funding.
- Community Support for UWSSA.

In later discussions, the Board affirmed its support for a viable undergraduate student representative association and the importance and essential nature of welfare services currently provided by UWSSA. However, the Board reserved its decision on any further funding without greater confidence in UWSSA's capacity to administer the funds and provide the relevant services in an effective and efficient manner. Discussions on this matter are ongoing.

Vote of Appreciation to Professor Nigel Bond

Professor Nigel Bond, formerly the Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic, has recently returned to teaching and research. The Board invited Professor Nigel Bond to attend the meeting and expressed to him its appreciation for his work as PVC Academic. In particular, the Board commended Nigel's substantial achievement with respect to the course restructuring and reconfiguration.

Proposal to Change Procedures Related to the Use of the UWS Seal

The Board approved minor changes to the use of the UWS Seal.

Report of 13 June 2007 Strategy Day

The report of the 13 June 2007 Strategy Day covered the following topics:

- UWS 2007 – Where are We Now?
- International: Partnerships, Profile and Resources
- Powering Ahead – Community Engagement and Research
- Our People 2015
- Issues in Teaching and Learning
- Campus Profiles and Development
- Reputation: UAI, Scholarships and Pride.

The Board also noted a progress report on the response to the decisions relating to Blacktown campus and a report on Clinical Schools negotiations.

National Governance Protocols

The Board authorised the Chancellor to finalise any UWS response to the Issues Paper, having regard to the input from Board members.

The Board noted that UWS remains compliant with the requirements of the National Governance Protocols.

Board Standing Committee and Remuneration and Nominations Committee

The Board approved the conferral of an Honorary Fellowship.

Indigenous Advisory Council

Ms Linda Burney recently advised that she is no longer able to continue as Chair of the University's Indigenous Advisory Council due to her Ministerial commitments. The Board expressed regret at this decision and its gratitude for the most valuable role that Ms Burney had played. The University is in the process of recruiting a new Chair for the IAC; meanwhile, Professor Michael McDaniel has been appointed as interim Chair.

Matters Raised by Board Members

Mr Luke Fomiatti raised with the Board the concerns of Bachelor of Performance students and referred to a letter from Jonathan Bollen, President of the Australasian Association for Theatre, Drama and Performance

Studies. The letter queried the closing of the courses when some other universities were able to fund similar courses.

He also sought further information on the potential closure of some UWS Arts courses. The Board had been advised previously that the Bachelor of Performance and also Contemporary Art were not viable due to the high cost of providing the necessary facilities and the cross-subsidy from other courses. He believed that the reasons for the University' decisions had not been communicated clearly and in a timely fashion to students and staff. Mr Fomiatti said he understood they had only been notified a month ago of the discontinuation of the Bachelor of Performance course, whereas the Board had been advised of this possibility in November last year.

On the former point, Professor Ingleson explained to the Board the different funding arrangements enjoyed by other universities and NIDA compared with UWS.

On the latter, the Vice-Chancellor undertook to provide information on decisions concerning an intake in Performance and Contemporary Art in 2008, noting such decisions mainly reflected demand. A paper on the Arts courses will be provided to the next Board meeting and the Vice-Chancellor will ensure that the information is communicated clearly to relevant staff and students.

Meeting Dates – Board of Trustees 2008

The dates scheduled for meetings of the Board of Trustees in 2008 are as follows:

Wednesday 27 February 2008
Wednesday 9 April 2008
Wednesday 11 June 2008 (Strategy Day – all day meeting)
Wednesday 30 July 2008
Wednesday 8 October 2008
Wednesday 3 December 2008.

Other Reports and Items Considered by the Board

- Report on Callista
- Television Sydney (TVS)
- Critical Incident – Werrington South Campus
- Strategy and Resources Committee
- Audit and Risk Management Committee
- Academic Senate
- Campus Development Committee
- University Engagement (including report of the Regional Council)
- Occupational Health and Safety
- Staffing Matters
- Infrastructure Development – New School of Medicine Building, Campbelltown campus
- UWS Medical School
- Research Developments
- International Activities
- Development and Fundraising Program
- Postgraduate Board Member Election
- Ramadan Iftar 2007