21 September 2011

The Board of Trustees met on Wednesday 21 September 2011, in the Boardroom, Building AD, Werrington North campus. A summary of matters discussed is provided below.

Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the 8 June 2011 meeting of the Board of Trustees were confirmed.

Resolutions from the Board of Trustees Strategy Day 2011

The Board approved the resolutions from its 20 July 2011 Strategy Day.

Preamble
The University has a legislative mandate to achieve academic excellence in higher education and in the conduct of research "having particular regard to the needs and aspirations" of the community of Greater Western Sydney. It prides itself on its commitment to social justice and equal opportunity, opening its campuses to those who would not traditionally have had access to a university education.

These objectives underpin the University's strategic planning and frame its response to the increasing opportunities for growth. The University has already experienced substantial expansion since 2009. At the same time UWS has achieved significantly higher levels of student demand and student satisfaction, improved student retention, increasing productivity and scale in research as well as encouraging outcomes in the first Excellence in Research Australia (ERA) assessment.

With the 'uncapping' of Commonwealth funded places in 2012 the Board of Trustees has determined that UWS will adopt an ambitious but managed growth strategy – where the opportunities, challenges and risks of growth are carefully examined and prudently managed. Our goal is to widen participation in our University, to continue the transformation of UWS as a highly respected institution and to ensure that the quality of the academic program is not compromised. It is in this context that the Board of Trustees passed the following resolutions to guide the University's activities in the next year.

Resolution 1:
To build on earlier decisions of the Board of Trustees by:

1. confirming the ongoing relevance and currency of the Making the Difference Strategy 2010-2015 as the guiding planning framework for the University; and

2. noting that the underlying plans and frameworks will be refined to reflect the Board's decisions as set out below.

Resolution 2:
To continue to give life to the University's strong commitment to providing greater higher education opportunities to the communities of Greater Western Sydney, growth in student load will be addressed by:

1. targeting growth in selected disciplines;

2. selectively making campuses more comprehensive in their academic offerings;

3. providing greater academic flexibility in course design and delivery and enhancing student choice; and

4. the rigorous and equitable allocation of research, teaching and administrative responsibilities.

Resolution 3:
To pursue its commitment to social justice and educational access the University will:

1. progressively expand UWSCollege;

2. diversify entry pathways;

3. increase participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students from our region;

4. continue to improve access to students with a disability by ensuring high standard support services; and

5. continue to advocate for public transport accessibility to the University's campuses.

Resolution 4:
To pursue greater scale, impact, critical mass and strength in research, as achieved through the previously established Hawkesbury Institute for the Environment and the Institute for Culture and Society, the University will:

1. establish the Institute of Human Communication Science (or similar name);

2. establish an Institute in Infrastructure Engineering, subject to further development of the proposal (or similar name); and

3. continue the planning of a Western Sydney Institute of Health.

Resolution 5:
To continue to build excellence in the student experience and in the quality of our teaching and research, the priorities for expenditure in 2012 will be:

1. increasing the number of academic staff to meet teaching demands and reduce casualisation;

2. ensuring adequate professional staffing and resources to support students and academic staff;

3. investing strategically in high achieving researchers;

4. building honours, doctoral and postdoctoral programs;

5. seeding new and expanded graduate coursework programs;

6. developing the 'Horizons 1000" concept; and

7. undertaking essential capital refurbishment, IT infrastructure and building development.

Resolution 6:
To maintain the University's leadership in community engagement in 2012 UWS will:

1. engage eminent international leaders in university engagement to review our achievements in regional engagement, partnerships and sustainability and to provide expert advice on ways in which the University can remain a global leader in serving its communities;

2. consult widely with community, industry and government bodies in Greater Western Sydney to inform its future programs, plans and initiatives;

3. further develop a strategic framework for collaborative engagement over the next 5 years; and

4. develop a blueprint for a centre for Western Sydney urban and social research which would be the major authority on the development of Greater Western Sydney.

Resolution 7:
To improve student engagement and success and to support research, academic programs and business requirements, UWS will develop a contemporary, efficient and effective IT environment across its campuses to:

1. enhance our e-learning and e-research capability and capacity;

2. minimise internal investment in facilities that are better provided externally; and

3. invest strategically to achieve continuous improvement in IT services.

Resolution 8:
To fund essential University campus facilities and infrastructure the University will aim to achieve an operational surplus of 5% of revenue in 2012 ($30m on revenue of $600m).

Resolution 9:
To fund necessary capital developments to enable growth (where this cannot be achieved by using our buildings, equipment, facilities and resources more effectively and efficiently) the University will use:

1. accumulated annual operational surpluses;

2. external capital grants;

3. commercial income from campus developments; and

4. borrowings, primarily for income-earning projects, but only when supported by well developed and robust business cases.

Resolution 10:
To advance the standing, reputation and image of the University a revised branding strategy will be developed for consideration by the Board of Trustees to:

1. include integrated promotion of the University by and with its affiliated entities such as research institutes and centres, CADRE, Whitlam Institute and TVS; and

2. require that any distinct branding and logos for institutes, centres and entities must be approved by the Vice-Chancellor in accordance with this policy.

Resolution 11:
To provide more and diverse opportunities for students and to enhance educational opportunities in the Greater Western Sydney region the University will undertake a comprehensive review of its relationships with TAFE and assess:

1. further opportunities for articulation agreements between UWS and TAFE;

2. the development of new and innovative collaborative partnerships with TAFE which will benefit students;

3. leveraging the advantages of the co-location of TAFE colleges and University campuses;

4. the integrated provision of joint educational programs for key industries, community and demographic groups, mobilising the strengths of both sectors.

Chancellor's Report

The Chancellor reported to the Board about his recent activities for the University, which included:

- Panel member at the annual Macquarie University Vice-Chancellor's Lecture on 24 August, which was broadcast on Radio National on 4 September. The topic was "Beyond Skills, Towards Wisdom"
- Interviewed by Radio National about the NSW State Government's trial of 'social benefits bonds' as part of NSW 2011 Budget
- Panel member at the Generation One discussion about Aboriginal training, which was hosted by UWS
- After-dinner speaker at a function of Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand
- Attendance at a meeting of the UWS Foundation
- Met with the Head of the Urban Research Centre, Professor Phillip O'Neill

Vice-Chancellor's Report

The Vice-Chancellor's report to the Board of Trustees included the following items:

- Opening of the UWS Crime Scene Investigation, Research and Training Facility on Hawkesbury campus
- Peer Assisted Study Session (PASS) Winners: UWS students Neha Kullar (Outstanding Senior Leader/Mentor) and Mark O'Toole (Outstanding New Leader)
- Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC) Awards: UWS academic staff received 12 awards and citations for teaching excellence including Associate Professor, Roy Tasker from the School of Natural Sciences receiving the Prime Minister's Award for Australian University Teacher of the Year
- Governor General Quentin Bryce visited Parramatta campus on 8 July
- UWS achieved EOWA Employer of Choice Status for 10th consecutive year
- Professor Annemarie Hennessy has been appointed as the new Dean of the School of Medicine
- UWS hosted the 2011 Medical Deans Australia and New Zealand Annual Conference held 6-8 September
- A Scholarly Life Conference (as part of the UWS staffing strategy)

- UWS and TVS were cultural and media partners for the 2011 Sydney Writers' Festival, with TVS filming suburban and regional Festival events
- UWS Student Community Cookbook
- Christian Tietz, an Industrial Designer from the School of Engineering, was part of the winning team of a World Habitat Award for 2011
- UWS Open Day 2011
- The Quacquarelli Symonds (formerly Times Higher Education) World University Rankings – for the first time one of the discipline areas at UWS has been ranked in the top 400 universities in the world, with Humanities being placed in the 351-400 band
- The University's restructure is ongoing. Deans have been appointed to all 10 Schools, all organisational and consultation steps have been carried out and the communication strategy is ongoing. The Vice-Chancellor acknowledged the work of Associate Professor Paul Wormell, Chair of Academic Senate, in leading the development of the necessary academic governance arrangements for the new schools and at the University-wide level. In light of the organisational changes, delegations revisions will be submitted to the Audit and Risk Management Committee for endorsement, prior to them coming to the December Board meeting for approval.

ALTC Teacher of the Year
Associate Professor Roy Tasker, recipient of the 2011 ALTC Prime Minister's Award for Australian University Teacher of the Year, gave a presentation about his teaching and the award.

The Board were very interested in Associate Professor Tasker's innovations in his use of technology in his lectures to both make Chemistry more accessible to students, particularly those who are first in family to attend university or did not do Chemistry in years 11 and 12, and also in his use of 'clickers' as a teaching and assessment tool.

At the end of the presentation, the Vice-Chancellor advised Associate Professor Tasker that the University has a High Performance Recognition Policy which enables it to "confer the title of Professor in circumstances where an academic staff member has achieved exceptional international or national recognition for excellence or distinction in teaching". In accordance with this policy, the Vice-Chancellor advised Associate Professor Tasker that it had been approved that he be awarded the title of a full Professorship. This was heartily endorsed by the Board.

The Board agreed that it would like to meet other ALTC award winners and arrangements will be made for a suitable function or for presentations to future Board meetings.

Student Representation and Participation at UWS
The Board of Trustees resolved to approve the revised structure for Student Representation and Participation, for implementation in 2012, with a review of the structure's effectiveness to be conducted at the end of 2012. This decision is subject to the model being compliant with proposed Federal legislation.

Finance and Investment Committee
The Board passed resolutions relating to the University's Investment Policy & Long Term Liabilities and Climate Change and Ethical Investments. In regard to the latter, the Board resolved to support the principles of ethical investing, using the accepted industry standard definition, with a caveat that high risk or non-performing funds be avoided. A policy will be developed to provide guidance on ethical investing.

The revised policy will be available on the Policy DDS in the near future

The Board also approved a price increase for parking permits for 2012. This has been communicated separately.

Academic Governance Policy
The Board of Trustees approved the revised Academic Governance Policy, providing for changes to the ex-officio membership of Academic Senate, thus:

a) the position of Deputy Vice Chancellor (International and Development) is removed

b) the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching) is replaced by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)

c) the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement) is replaced by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and International)

d) the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Quality) is replaced by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students)

Academic Gowns – Medicine and Honorary Doctorates
The Board approved the colours for the new hood regalia for the UWS Medical awards and changes to the Honorary Doctorate regalia. These will come into effect at the December 2011 graduation ceremonies.

Transition to New Academic Structure
The Board approved the following arrangements which will be brought forward in light of various Dean and PVC appointments:

1. The current management arrangements for the College of Health and Science with the heads of school reporting to and working with the Deputy Vice-Chancellors continue. (This would mean, in effect, for all intents and purposes the College ceased to operate from 1 September.)

2. The new School of Business be established now. This will allow the new Dean to lead during the transition to the new structure with the authority to continue 'business as usual' as necessary. This would also mean that for all operational purposes the College ceased to operate from 1 September, or the date the Dean commenced, whichever is the earliest.

3. The heads of school in the College of Arts move to the same arrangements as the College of Health and Science (reporting to the Deputy Vice-Chancellors) once the Executive Dean takes up the role of Pro Vice-Chancellor (Engagement and International) on 1 October.

4. Budget, strategy and performance reporting continue to be presented in the College format pending the transition to the new structure and to a new budget and reporting framework from the beginning of 2012.

5. New academic governance arrangements, delegations and responsibilities are implemented as soon as practicable.

Other Reports and Items Considered by the Board

- UWS AUQA Cycle 2 Audit
- New South Wales Universities' Legislation
- Audit and Risk Management Committee, including OH&S report
- Report from the Chair of Academic Senate
- Board Standing Committee and Remuneration and Nominations Committee
- Honorary Awards
- UWS Foundation
- Staffing Matters
- UWS 25 Year History Project
- Upcoming Board of Trustees Elections
- Libyan Students in Australia

Next Meeting
Board's next meeting will be held at 9am on 7 December 2011 at the University's Werrington North Campus.