

## ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING MINUTES 8 JULY 2020

Minutes of the 351<sup>st</sup> meeting of the Academic Senate held at 9:30am on Wednesday, 8 July 2020, in 21.G08, the Early Start Building and via WebEx.

### PART 1 – PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Prof Greg Rose (Chair)	Prof Zhengyi Jiang	Prof Melanie Randle
Prof Nan Seuffert (Deputy Chair)	Prof Lisa Kervin	A/Prof Ting Ren
A/Prof Shirley Agostinho	A/Prof Julie Kiggins	Prof Nina Reynolds
Dr Stephen Beirne	A/Prof Tracey Kuit	Prof Christian Ritz
Dr Kate Bowles	Mr Felix Lanceley	A/Prof Ann Rogerson
Prof Peter Caputi	A/Prof Wanqing Li	Prof Glenn Salkeld
Dr Jane Carey	Prof Valerie Linton	A/Prof Neaz Sheikh
Dr Paul Chad	Dr Claire Lowrie	A/Prof Danielle Skropeta
Prof Joe Chicharo	Dr Xiaoping Lu	Dr Marcelo Svirsky
Mr Jackson Cocks	Dr Catherine Mac Phail	Dr Christopher Sykes
Dr Robyn Coman	Prof Jenny Martin	Prof Lip Teh
Prof Julia Coyle	Prof Tracey Moroney	Prof Wilma Vialle
A/Prof Hoa Dam	Prof Allen Nutman	A/Prof Rodney Vickers
Dr Anura De Zoysa	A/Prof Germanas Peleckis	Dr Pawel Wagner
Prof Theo Farrell	Dr Dana Perlman	A/Prof Margaret Wallace
Ms Lorraine Fields	Prof Colin Picker	A/Prof Karen Walton
Dr Azdiar Gazder	Ms Olivia Poate	Prof Paul Wellings
Dr Michael Griffiths	Prof Fiona Probyn-Rapsey	A/Prof Ika Willis
Dr Keith Horton	Dr Sanja Pupovac	Dr Tracey Woolrych
Ms Theresa Hoynes	Dr Sharon Quah	Prof Shujun Zhang
Mr Damien Israel		

#### APOLOGIES & LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

Prof Annette Braunack-Mayer	Prof Will Price
Dr Christine Eriksen	A/Prof Montse Ros
Dr Luis Gomez Romero	Dr Oriana Price
Ms Margie Jantti	Prof Simon Ville

#### IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms Antoinette Faddoul, Academic Senate Executive Officer  
Ms Tori Funnell, Senior Manager, Governance Unit  
Ms Cherry Siu-Ho, Director, Governance & Legal Division  
Mr Dominic Riordan, Director, Academic Quality and Standards  
Mr Paul Vaartjes, Strategic Planning Unit  
Ms Abbie Worthington, Academic Quality & Policy Specialist, Academic Quality & Standards

#### OBSERVERS:

Mr Isaac Luntungan, Social Work student  
Ms Jan Sullivan, Manager, Academic Quality and Policy, Academic Quality & Standards  
Ms Kate Riordan, Social Work student

**\*1.1 Welcome, Apologies and Leave of Absence**

The Chair welcomed all members, attendees and observers to the meeting.

As the meeting was running both virtually, via WebEx Meetings and physically in a face-to-face capacity, the Chair explained how the meeting would run, then asked members to be patient with proceedings in the blended environment. He also provided instruction on how to use the technology in the case of a vote.

**\*1.2 Arrangement of Agenda**

**1.2.1 Conflicts of Interest**

There were no conflicts of interest.

**1.2.2 Confidential Items**

There were no confidential items.

**1.2.3 Starring of Items**

The following items were starred for discussion:

- 1.1 - Apologies and Leave of Absence
- 1.2 - Arrangement of Agenda
- 1.3 - Confirmation of Minutes
- 1.4 - Business Arising from the Minutes
- 1.5 - Chair's Report
- 1.6 - Vice-Chancellor's Report
- 1.7 - Membership Business
- 2.1 - University Strategies 2020-2025: Draft Education Strategy,  
Draft Research and Innovation Strategy
- 2.2 - Proposed Change to Use of WD, WS and WH Grades
- 4.1 - Reports from the Senior Executive
- 4.2 - Members' reports
- 4.3 - Student Members' reports
- 4.4 - Questions on Notice
- 5.1 - Business Arising from Academic Senate Committees
- 6.2 - Other Business

**RESOLVED 2020/38**

*that Academic Senate adopt the draft resolutions for the unstarred items.*

**\*1.3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED 2020/39**

*that the minutes of the previous Academic Senate meeting held on Wednesday 20 May 2020, as attached to the agenda papers, be confirmed and signed as a true record.*

**\*1.4 Business Arising from the Minutes**

A member asked for an update on the Lifelong Learning Position Statement and Microcredentials Framework paper presented at the 20 May meeting of Senate. The Chair replied the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) would provide an update under the Senior Executive Reports.

**\*1.5 Chair's Report**

The Chair stated that being officially in the role for seven days there was little to report. He thanked Professor Wilma Vialle for her six unsurpassed years of dedicated service as the Chair of Academic Senate, and invited Professor Vialle to the floor.

Professor Vialle, outgoing Chair of Senate reported that Council frequently undertakes a self-review and the results often raise questions about the level of confidence and understanding of how academic matters are dealt with. At its recent meeting, Professor Vialle provided an update to the University Council about the key role Academic Senate provides in academic governance at UOW. She provided a presentation to Council which outlined the steps undertaken during the course approval process. The presentation aimed to demonstrate the step-by-step process and scrutiny that occurs at the sub-committee level and to highlight the robust processes that are in place to support course approvals. The presentation was well received by Council.

Professor Vialle chaired her final Chairs of Academic Boards and Senates (CABS) meeting. Discussions were around the experience with rapid decision making around course deliveries that has occurred at all universities. The focus was mainly about integrity of decision making; to be clear on what has been done and why. Each university took a different approach and all universities struggled with the delivery of online courses in such a short timeframe, other than those that have offered online courses for a length of time, such as UNE. Some universities have a smaller Senate or Board and used those to implement their changes. Record keeping has been critical across all universities as this is necessary for transparency but also for TEQSA's consideration. UOW's faculty processes support robust record keeping.

CABS received a report from the NSW Scaling Committee highlighting the challenges of scaling this year with the differential impact of COVID-19 where some students are advantaged and others disadvantaged. NESAs are progressing with work to ensure that high-school students are not disadvantaged by remote delivery of study. CABS noted that universities will need to be mindful of the likely differential impact, particularly during Early Admissions processes. The discussion will continue in that space and Professor Greg Rose will continue to represent UOW at CABS meetings.

### **\*1.6 Vice-Chancellor's Report**

The Vice-Chancellor (VC) reported that COVID-19 is still a major issue for all Australian universities with a lot of work being done regarding procedures for return to campus at UOW. There are ongoing discussions about the return of international students by the NSW Vice-Chancellor's Committee (NSWVCC) and its sub-committees. The NSWVCC is working closely with the NSW Treasury. There had been work done for the return of a small number of international students to return in 2020 however with the increase of COVID-19 cases in Victoria along with various border controls in place across the country and internationally, fewer international student cohorts will return than was originally anticipated. As a result of these issues, along with the probability of a vaccine not being developed until 2021, the number of international student enrolment numbers for 2021 will be modest. This will have substantial impact on all universities' budgets from 2020 to 2022. Information about these impacts have been circulated to all UOW staff with regards to meetings held with the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) which is due to meet again several times in the coming days.

The Vice-Chancellor reported on the Commonwealth reforms recently announced regarding changes to the Commonwealth grant system, noting that these still need to be passed through the Senate in order to be enacted. There are a lot of political discussions happening in the background considering the details of the changes required to occur. UOW has a small Working Group already looking at the specifics of the changes coming from the reforms. The Commonwealth's reforms will be reflected in the May 2021 budget. The Vice-Chancellor provided an overview of how the changes to funding will be calculated and allocated, noting that the reforms have been designed in a variegated way for metropolitan and regional universities, based on campus location.

The Vice-Chancellor reported that there have been many research success to celebrate, which the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (DVC R&I) will talk to. He congratulated those involved in the research hub for Australian Steel Innovation, and reported on league table results and accolades for Wollongong in the top universities under 50 years old. The Vice-Chancellor also reported for the first time in a long period, UOW ranked in the top 200 in the QS League Table, commenting that this is testament to the hard work of many colleagues over the years.

**\*1.7 Membership Business**

The Chair provided background information on the recent realignment of faculties which has necessitated the agenda paper, as the faculty split of Law, Humanities and the Arts (LHA) into the Faculty of Business and Law (BAL) and the Faculty of the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences (ASSH) has direct implications on Academic Senate's membership composition. The Chair noted that the original paper which was circulated in the agenda pack on 1 July raised some discussion and concerns from members about the need for a more democratic approach, hence the additional proposal found in the addendum membership paper circulated the day before the meeting, which provided an alternative course of action. Members of Senate are asked to indicate their preference for whether the Executive Deans (EDs) will fill the vacant positions created by the faculty realignment, or whether the impacted faculties should hold new elections.

The Chair provided an overview of the requirements and constraints of the Academic Senate Electoral Rules (the Rules) in dealing with the current circumstances, and outlined considerations for each of the approaches presented, including advantages and disadvantages of each approach.

A member spoke with a proposal to broaden both approaches, A and B. He stated that Senate rejected a proposal to a structural change of Senate at a meeting last year which would have reduced its total members. He raised concern with the proposition that the existing elected members from the affected faculties are no longer qualified to hold positions because they are representatives of faculties that no longer exist, commenting that while these faculties no longer exist, the staff who elected those members continue to exist within the framework of the faculties, and as such, these members should continue to represent those people. The member added that the Winchester review included a recommendation that any changes recommended to Senate about its composition should seek to preserve the ratio of 40/60 of ex officio and elected officio members. The member believed, that reducing the ratio of members even for a short period will negatively impact the capacity of Senate to have democratic debate.

The member suggested that both Approaches A and B are problematic in that they don't take into account how the faculty changes impact Senate's membership composition, and proposed a motion for a third approach; Approach C, namely that elected members of Senate continue to serve out their current terms while Senate establishes a Working Group to propose a new Senate structure to start mid-2021. Approach C also provides time for the Rules to be amended and for a review of Senate's composition to be undertaken with Senate's input. A member seconded the proposed motion.

A debate ensued, with the following assertions raised or points discussed:

- The two approaches set out in the agenda papers focus on changing the existing total of 45 elected faculty academic members (nine elected members in each of previously five faculties).
- Preservation of the ratio of elected and ex officio members is key. The current proposals do not support this ratio, nor do they support the recommendations from the Winchester review.
- The Chair advised that ratios have been maintained, as provided in the Addendum agenda paper, due to the reduction of ex officio roles of Executive Dean and Associate Deans. Any representatives appointed to elected positions are still notionally elected representatives.
- A member commented that whether ex officio or not, there is still a reduction of elected positions under Approach A because new members will be appointed rather than elected to the positions. The issue is about the creeping imbalance of the membership ratio of elected to ex officio positions.
- Consideration could be given to increasing the number of faculty representatives to 12 each in total in order to maintain the ratio of elected and ex officio membership.
- The proposed changes provide less academic representation per capita. There are more implications to consider insofar as some of the current elected members' also occupy positions on Senate's sub-

committees and various working parties. The ramifications of membership changes are much wider than Academic Senate's membership.

- Section 10.1.G in the Rules state “The office of a member of Academic Senate becomes vacant if the member ceases to be qualified for election or appointment”. The agenda papers outline the changes to faculties as approved by Council where three faculties cease to exist and have merged into two, which means that 27 elected roles cease to exist and 18 new roles need to be created. It is important to consider these provisions as there is a danger of having a Senate with not properly constituted membership.
- The Rules have not been structured to accommodate a university re-structure, which is where the ambiguity lies. The proposed new Clause 10.2 is intended to provide clarity should this instance occur again in the future. Members noted this new clause would give a great deal of power to a Chair. The Chair replied that the power provided to the Chair would not be exercised in this instance, however would be to assist in addressing possibilities into the future where there might be an emergency to respond to, such as COVID-19.
- Senate is subordinate to the University Council, it is Council that has the delegation to approve Senate and its membership. Senate cannot establish its own TORs and membership.
- A Working Group led by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (SDVC) was established earlier in the year and could continue to consider options with the view to commence the new membership for 1 July 2021. The SDVC reminded members that Council has already noted the establishment of a review group to look at Senate and its composition. Rather than Senate establishing a separate Working Group, the SDVC confirmed that the SDVC-established Working Group will consult and collaborate with Senate and its members during the review process.
- The SDVC-led review of Senate including its size and membership has been on hold due to the crisis and potential structural changes that would impact such a review, with a plan to go back to it at the end of the year.

The Chair summarised the points outlined in the meeting thus far and noted that the resolutions provided in the papers refer to two approaches, Approach A and Approach B, with a third approach, Approach C, having been proposed during the meeting.

The proposer of Approach C responded to the previous discussion on the interpretation of the Rules, 10.1G where members cease to be qualified for election or appointment, suggesting that this clause should not apply to the current members in the current circumstances.

The Chair explained the polling process to vote for the preferred approach and summarised the proposed approaches:

- Approach A – the Executive Deans appoint members.
- Approach B – recommend to Council an amendment to the Rules which would enable an election.
- Approach C – no change to Academic Senate TOR or Rules at this point, with the current membership to continue for the remainder of the current term, and the Working Group to review the membership.

A vote was conducted through the Webex polling function. The voting results were a majority (40 members) in favour of Approach C.

A: Approach A – Executive Dean Appointments = 5

B: Approach B – Faculty-run Elections = 17

C: Approach C – Current membership continue until mid-2021 = 40

An alternative resolution, in line with Approach C was put to the meeting;

**RESOLVED 2020/40**

*that Academic Senate recommend to Council that elected members of Senate impacted by the Faculty Realignment continue to serve their current terms whilst the Working Group established by the Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor and noted by Council considers, with the participation of Senate members, a new structure for Academic Senate to commence in July 2021.*

A majority of members voted in favour of the resolution.

A: Yes, I support the resolution = 50  
B: No, I do not support the resolution = 3  
C: I wish to abstain = 4

The Chair reiterated that Senate does not have the authority to make a determination but does provide advice to Council which has the authority to approve changes to the Academic Senate Terms of Reference and the Academic Senate Electoral Rules.

**PART 2: COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

**\*2.1 University Strategies 2020-2025: Draft Education Strategy, and Draft Research and Innovation Strategy**

The SCVC reported that the strategies have been developed around a set of values which were approved by Council, with a focus on a global outlook, building trust in relations, and a focus on change that matters. The three core goals are Empowering students for their future; Creating Knowledge for a Better World; and a Making a difference for our communities. The three Strategies which underpin the strategic plan 2020 – 2025, Education; Research and Innovation; and Civic University, will go to the 14 August meeting of Council for final approval, with implementation to follow.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) (DVCE) reported the Education Strategy has been developed in consultation with stakeholders and the feedback incorporated. As a result of that feedback the strategy includes prominent recognition of the importance of Indigenous knowledges and learning, imbedding this in curriculum, and an inclusive and culturally safe education environment.

The strategy emphasises all those things that will be transformative and take UOW into the future. Each goal starts with a capstone statement, as provided in the agenda papers.

A member asked if existing strategies such as Jindola would be considered to be a part of the strategy. The DVCE replied that other strategies and plans such as the Reconciliation Action Plan, and the Civic Engagement Strategy, include a commitment to continue to imbed Indigenous knowledges and learnings in the curriculum, which is outlined in Goal 1. The Education Strategy doesn't necessarily speak to all the things currently being done, but points out critical areas which are new with a focus on transformation going into the future.

Another member spoke about the importance of Aboriginal perspectives and noted that there don't appear to be any metrics alongside of it, so it is difficult to gauge how it is performing. She asked if the strategy would include looking at how to employ and retain Indigenous teaching staff. The member stated that there can be a creep where digital learning turns into blended learning and suggested rewording which seeks to widen and deepen digital learning.

Another member referred to Goal 1.4 of the Education Strategy, noting that this provides a data rich environment. Noting that typically staff do not see the results or what they need from this data, he asked if staff access to data could be added to the strategy.

Another member spoke about staff and culture which is critical to the education strategy. The comments made by this member were difficult to hear as the technology experienced a glitch, therefore the DVCE asked the member to email him directly. He thanked the members for their good suggestions.

The DVCR&I spoke about Goal 2; Creating knowledge for a better world with three priorities; performance; people; and planet. The goal is about measuring research impact but also about how research supports people and the footprint they leave on the planet. The Goal has been developed through a planning retreat, responses to a survey which included 46% response rate from HDR students, podcasts and morning teas held. The revised strategy focuses on cross-disciplinary rather than cross faculty research and broadened industry partnerships to include industry, government and community partnerships. UOW has made a commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and these have been imbedded in the objectives of Goal 2.2; Research with Global Impact. UOW is ranked 31<sup>st</sup> in the world of 766 universities of THE Rankings. The DVCR&I reported that Goal 2.3 Best Practice Graduate Research speaks to the implementation of the Graduate Research School Review recommendations.

**RESOLVED 2020/41**

*that Academic Senate note and comment on the Draft 2020-2025 Education Strategy and the Draft 2020-2025 Research and Innovation Strategy, as provided in the agenda paper.*

**\*2.2 Proposed Change to Use of WD, WS and WH Grades**

The Academic and Quality Officer took the paper as read, and stated that the proposed changes impact major policies and are not due to COVID-19. The changes seek to provide greater clarity of the uses of interim grades.

**RESOLVED 2020/42**

*that Academic Senate:*

- i. endorse the proposal to change the application of the interim grades of WD (withheld deferred), WS (withheld supplementary) and WH (withheld);*
- ii. endorse the recommended changes to the:*
  - a. Coursework Rules,*
  - b. Standards for the Finalisation of Student Results, and*
  - c. Supplementary Assessment Procedures; and*
- iii. forward the policy changes, as required, to the delegated authority for approval.*

**2.3 Mid-Session Subject Feedback Survey Findings**

**RESOLVED 2020/43**

*that Academic Senate note the findings from the Mid-session Subject Feedback Survey and the further actions proposed to make use of these findings.*

**PART 3: GENERAL BUSINESS**

**3.1 Bachelor of Information Technology International  
Proposal-10675  
Course Discontinuation**

**RESOLVED 2020/44**

*that Academic Senate approve the proposal to discontinue the Bachelor of Information Technology International (368), as outlined in the agenda papers, to become effective from Autumn Session, 2021.*

**3.2 Bachelor of Science (Materials)  
Proposal-09794  
Course Discontinuation**

**RESOLVED 2020/45**

*that Academic Senate approve the proposal to discontinue the Bachelor of Science (Materials) (1853), as outlined in the agenda papers, to become effective from Autumn Session, 2021.*

**3.3 Bachelor of Medicine Bachelor of Surgery  
Proposal-09228  
Course Discontinuation**

**RESOLVED 2020/46**

*that Academic Senate approve the proposal to discontinue the Bachelor of Medicine Bachelor of Surgery (888), as outlined in the agenda papers, to become effective from Autumn Session, 2021.*

**3.4 Master of Education Advanced  
Proposal-10324  
Course Discontinuation**

**RESOLVED 2020/47**

*that Academic Senate approve the proposal to discontinue the Master of Education Advanced (1441), as outlined in the agenda papers, to become effective from Autumn Session, 2021.*

**3.5 Information and Communication Technology in Education and Training Specialisation  
Proposal-10269  
Discontinuation of Specialisation**

**RESOLVED 2020/48**

*that Academic Senate approve the proposal to discontinue the Information and Communication Technology in Training and Education specialisation, available in the Master of Education, as outlined in the agenda papers, to become effective from Autumn Session, 2021.*

**3.6 Course Review and Re-Approval  
Postgraduate Applied Finance Cluster**

**RESOLVED 2020/49**

*that consequent upon the review of the Postgraduate Applied Finance Cluster, Academic Senate re-approve the courses within the Postgraduate Applied Finance Cluster, as outlined in the agenda papers, to be offered for an additional five year period until 2025.*

**3.7 Course Review and Re-Approval  
Postgraduate Education (Interdisciplinary Studies) Cluster**

**RESOLVED 2020/50**

*that consequent upon the review of the Postgraduate Education (Interdisciplinary Studies) Cluster, Academic Senate re-approve the course and specialisation within the Postgraduate Education (Interdisciplinary Studies) Cluster, subject to Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) approval, as outlined in the agenda papers, to be offered for an additional five year period until 2025.*

### 3.8 Delayed Commencement of the Postgraduate International Relations and Communication and Media Suites

#### RESOLVED 2020/51

*that Academic Senate note the delay to the commencement of the Postgraduate International relations and Communication and Media suites to Autumn Session 2022, as attached to the agenda papers.*

## PART 4: MEMBERS' REPORTS AND QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

### \*4.1 Reports from Senior Executive

The SDVC reported that he and the DVCE are Co-Chair of a Working Group formed to analyse the impacts and financial implications of the higher education package which will come into effect in 2021. This includes changes to the web which will impact how students will navigate their courses and course calculators. There are questions around how to optimise what is on offer at UOW's regional and metropolitan campuses and the product range there. The SDVC reported that the Working Group is active with strong faculty representation, with its first priority being how to position UOW in 2021 to ensure it is able to recruit students and compete in a new landscape.

The DVCR&I reported on recent funding success with five ARC Industrial Transformation Research hubs recently announced. UOW leads one of these for the Australian Steel Innovation with \$5M granted over a five year period and is also involved in two of the other four Hubs. The DVCR&I informed Senate of the University's success with Medical Future Fund Grants, with a study to increase the number of Aboriginal women breastfeeding awarded funding of \$1.5M over 18 months being lead by Dr Rowena Ivers. UOW is also participating in medical research future fund projects looking at severe and chronic skin wounds, and reducing vulnerability and improving health outcomes for children from disadvantaged environments.

The DVCE reported on the return to campus with Phase 1 planning completed for next semester. There will be 163 subjects returning to campus next semester with priorities given to courses that are challenging to teach in an online capacity such as labs. Phase 2 planning has commenced with consideration of subjects coming back to campus in the later part of the semester. This will give time for students to prepare their return. Information for students about the Phase 2 return to campus will be provided to students on 25 August before census date. Students will have seven weeks to plan their return.

The Education Business Continuity Group will continue to look at special academic consideration because students continue to be disrupted. While exams overall went well, there was a significant number of issues which were triaged. A key point that emerged was that training was provided for all academic staff conducting online examinations but only 86 attended out of 180 who were registered. Therefore lack of training has been identified as a key cause for the problem issues; training for online exams will now be mandatory.

The DVCE provided an update on the Higher Education short courses where UOW offered the largest number of courses offered out of the 54 providers, with a total of 24 short courses. This was very successful with 782 applications for these courses.

The Microcredentials Task and Finish Group is due to meet next week to review an updated version of the framework covering all lifelong learning activities, and to also provide feedback on the requirements for the operational solution to deliver these learning activities. Both of these items will then proceed to broader consultation. The DVCE is anticipating rapid progress on the operational solution once requirements have been agreed by all stakeholders.

### \*4.2 Members' Reports

There was no business to report.

### \*4.3 Student Members' Report

There was no business to report.

**\*4.4 Questions on Notice**

There were no Questions on Notice.

**PART 5: FINAL BUSINESS**

**\*5.1 Business from Academic Senate Committees**

There was no business from Academic Senate Committees.

**5.2 UEC Chair's Report**

**RESOLVED 2020/52**

*that Academic Senate note the University Education Committee Chair's report (2019), as provided in the agenda paper.*

**5.3 Committee Minutes**

**RESOLVED 2020/53**

*that Academic Senate note the minutes from the following Academic Senate Committee meetings, as attached to the agenda papers:*

- i. UEC Minutes 22 April 2020 – ratified; and*
- ii. SCDC Minutes 13 May 2020 – unratified.*

**PART 6: FUTURE MEETINGS AND OTHER BUSINESS**

**6.1 2020 Meeting Dates**

Wednesday, 23 September  
Wednesday, 18 November

**\*6.2 Other Business**

The meeting closed at 11.54am.

Signed as a true record:



Chair

Date 3 November 2020