



## ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING MINUTES 26 MAY 2021

Minutes of the 356<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Academic Senate held at 9:30am on Wednesday, 26 May 2021 in 20.5 and via Webex.

### PART 1 – PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

#### MEMBERS PRESENT:

Prof Greg Rose (Chair)		
Prof Thomas Astell-Burt	Dr Azdiar Gazder	Prof Nina Reynolds
Dr Jenny Atchison	Dr Belinda Gibbons	A/Prof Ann Rogerson
Ms Ashley Bannister	A/Prof Chris Hyland	A/Prof Montse Ros
A/Prof Stephen Beirne	Mr Damien Israel	Dr David Tan
Prof Sue Bennett	Prof Zhengyi Jiang	Ms Nadia Verrucci
Ms Jaymee Beveridge	A/Prof Julie Kiggins	Prof Wilma Vialle
Dr Kellie Buckley-Walker	A/Prof Konstantin Konstaninov	Dr Elena Vlahu-Gjorgievska
Dr Jane Carey	A/Prof Wanqing Li	Ms Sarah Vogel
Mr Jackson Cocks	Prof Jennifer Martin	A/Prof Margaret Wallace
Prof Julia Coyle	Prof Tracey Moroney	A/Prof Karen Walton
Prof Karen Charlton	Prof Trish Mundy	Dr Marian Wong
Prof Patricia Davidson	Prof Germanas Peleckis	A/Prof Ika Willis
Prof Theo Farrell	Prof Colin Picker	Prof Jiangtao Xi
Ms Madeline Findlay	A/Prof Christian Ritz	A/Prof Yanguang Yu

#### APOLOGIES & LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

Prof Valerie Linton

#### IN ATTENDANCE:

Prof Clive Baldock, Dean of Graduate Research  
Ms Margi Jantti, University Librarian  
Ms Theresa Hoynes, Director, Student and Accommodation Services Division  
Mr Dominic Riordan, Director, Academic Quality and Standards  
Ms Jan Sullivan, Manager, Academic Quality and Policy, Academic Quality and Standards  
Ms Antoinette Faddoul, Academic Senate Executive Officer  
Ms Tori Funnell, Senior Manager, Governance Unit

#### OBSERVERS:

Dr Lisa Slater, Associate Dean (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion), Faculty of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities

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

The Chair welcomed the new Vice-Chancellor Professor Patricia Davidson to her first meeting.

#### \*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 – Academic Senate Elections
- 2.1 - Academic Integrity and Misconduct Report 2020
- 2.2 - Student Complaints and Appeals Report 2020
- 4.1 - Reports from the Senior Executive
- 4.2 - Members' reports
- 4.3 - Student Members' reports
- 5.1 - Business Arising from Academic Senate Committees
- 5.2 - University Research Committee Chair's Report
- 6.2 - Other Business

**RESOLVED 2021/20**

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

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

The Chair noted that there had been insufficient time to prepare the minutes of the special meeting of Academic Senate held 18 May but that the unratified minutes of the special meeting and of today's meeting of 26 May will be forwarded for inclusion in the 11 June Council meeting agenda papers.

**RESOLVED 2021/21**

*that the minutes of the previous Academic Senate meeting held on Wednesday 3 March 2021, as attached to the agenda papers, be confirmed and signed as a true record.*

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

There was no business arising from the minutes.

**\*1.5 Chair's Report**

The Chair advised that in accordance with the University's Return to Campus roadmap future meetings of Academic Senate (Senate) will be held entirely face-to-face. He encouraged members to attend the meetings and offered support to members should they experience difficulty in changing their timetables to do so.

The Chair reported that he had been in meetings with both the outgoing and incoming Vice-Chancellors. He stated that the rolling agenda of Senate will include more reports from different areas of the University as well as more information about academic quality assurance and risk and how these are managed by Senate's subcommittees.

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

The Vice-Chancellor (VC) Acknowledged Country, and welcomed and thanked members for their tenure on Senate. She stated that Senate is integral to strong university governance and acknowledged Senate's strong student representation. She noted that academic integrity involves honesty, trust, fairness and responsibility and acknowledged that there has been a lot of debate and discussion around the new structure of Senate. She asked members to trust the process and monitor outcomes. The VC reported that she is looking forward to engaging in thoughtful discussion with members and the Chair about optimising Senate membership. She commented that the power to change is in the future and noted the need to find ways to make people feel trusted, valued and heard. She stated that Senate is one way of achieving this goal.

The VC reported that she would like to see more collaborative language and a more collaborative working environment across the university. There is a need to look at where UOW is across the sector and to approach the future with agility, speed and intentionality.

She advised that she will lead a revenue generated recovery and will strive for fairness, trust, and responsibility in her leadership.

The VC stated that she would like to have her tenure marked by people – academics and professional staff - and focus on diversity, equity and inclusion and working together for a better purpose. She added that focus on the past will not change the future and stated that the welfare of staff and students is her priority.

The Chair asked about revenue raising with research centres who undertake consulting work in addition to traditional category 1 research grants and what areas of opportunity there might be to generate commercialised research for revenue raising. The VC replied that there will need to be a reallocation of resources to secure grants, and that revenue can also be raised through high margin and high value academic programs. She commented on the need to work together in order to be more impactful and create an environment where we can build programs and generate the opportunity to grow. The VC noted the need to create a more stable and positive environment which will impact the outward focus of the University, in turn attracting opportunities for philanthropy. She also noted the importance of leveraging the University's international campuses to integrate more with Wollongong.

A member asked how the South Western Sydney campus fits into the revenue recovery activities. The VC advised that this is being considered by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global Strategy) and added that it is important to hear from the students at that campus in order to establish what their needs and wants are.

### \*1.7 Membership Business - Academic Senate Elections

The Chair reported that at the close of nominations on Wednesday, 19 May 5pm, the following people were declared elected to their nominated positions;

- Dr Lisa Slater, Associate Dean (Equity, Diversity and Integrity) (ADEDI) representative,
- Mr Jay Joshi, University Internationalisation Committee (UIC) representative, and
- A/Prof Danielle Skropeta and Mr Jay Joshi as University Education Committee (UEC) representatives.

The Chair congratulated those members.

The Chair reported that positions for Deputy Chair and three Senate representative positions on UEC remain vacant. A further call for nominations for these positions will be sent to members via the Governance Unit.

### RESOLVED 2021/22

- (i) *note the outcome and congratulate Dr Lisa Slater on being elected as Associate Dean (Equity, Diversity and Inclusion) for the term 26 May 2021 to 30 June 2023;*
- (ii) *note the outcome and congratulate A/Prof Danielle Skropeta and Mr Jay Joshi, on being elected for Academic Senate representatives on the University Education Committee for the term 26 May 2021 to 30 June 2023;*
- (iii) *note the outcome and congratulate Mr Jay Joshi on being elected as the Academic Senate representative on the University Internationalisation Committee for the term 1 July 2021 to 30 June 2023; and*
- (iv) *note that a further call for nominations will be made for the vacant positions of Deputy Chair and three Academic Senate representatives on the University Education Committee.*

## PART 2: GENERAL BUSINESS

### \*2.1 Academic Integrity and Misconduct Report 2020

The Associate Dean (Education) (ADE) of the Faculty of Business and Law (BAL) introduced the item, reporting that the Report highlighted academic misconduct trends, including an increase in collusion cases occurring during the lock-down periods in 2020.

The ADE/BAL reported that the process for investigating misconduct currently requires students to be interviewed, and this requirement is difficult to achieve across large cohorts of first year students. One of the recommendations in the report is to change this process and provide support to students with poor academic practice which more commonly occurs in the transition of students from high school to university and postgraduate students who transition to university from different backgrounds.

The ADE/BAL stated that this is a challenging space and complex area which changes frequently as new technology and apps are developed.

The Director, Academic Quality and Standards (D/AQS) reported there has been a significant upscale of the integrity unit in TEQSA, a response to enforce the legislation to criminalise contract cheating services. He also noted that there has been an infiltration of malicious code into institution's websites and IMTS have provided assurance this is not the case for UOW. The D/AQS advised that he will provide ongoing intelligence and information in relation to developments around this space. He also stressed the importance of referring students to support services.

A member suggested that recommendation two of the report relating to online exams could be made clearer to students. He stressed that the focus should be on prevention rather than intervention and perhaps teaching students about academic integrity in first year classes would be a way forward.

A member noted that often academic misconduct cases are interrelated with mental health issues, and suggested it would be ideal for intervention to occur before reaching a crisis point.

A member noted that it may be helpful to explain the meaning of 'open book', as reference to this has changed with technological advances.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) (PVCS) commended the report and noted there is some confusion with students and staff about different elements of misconduct. A number of students have expressed their frustration with the process and would like to engage in the discussion. The PVCS recommended that the report be forwarded to the Student Academic Experience Subcommittee for further discussion.

**RESOLVED 2021/23**

*that Academic Senate:*

- (i) note the Academic Integrity and Misconduct Report 2020 as provided in the agenda paper;*
- (ii) endorse the recommendations contained in the report;*
- (iii) refer matters discussed in relation to it for the Student Academic Experience Subcommittee;*  
*and*
- (iv) forward the report to University Council for noting.*

**\*2.2 Student Complaints and Appeals Report 2020**

The D/AQS introduced the item by advising that the Report covers a range of academic complaints related activities including a detailed analysis which shows a significant decline of academic complaints in 2020. He noted that this is largely due to changes made to support students in response to changes in online learning as a result of the pandemic and associated lock-down periods. One of the recommendations in the Report is to work more closely with faculties and schools in terms of quality assurance processes; this work has already commenced. The D/AQS noted that the Report includes a breakdown of issues and cases across the Complaints Management Centre (CMC), the Student Support Service (SAS) and Student Ombudsman. The analysis provided shows there was increase in Stage 2 appeals in the review of academic decisions during 2020.

The Student Ombudsman (SO) stated the Report provides information about how the SAS and CMC, who both provide independent advice to students, and the SO work together on complex matters in order to give students or the complainant the best possible outcome. The SO noted that part of the approach undertaken with complaints is to recognise systemic issues and identify a systemic approach in finding a solution.

The SO noted the current inequity between coursework and Higher Degree Research (HDR) students as coursework students have access to an online complaints reporting system. She added that HDR complaints are usually more complex.

The D/AQS reported that Recommendation 4 as provided on the cover page in the agenda papers has changed since the distribution of the agenda papers, following consideration by the Vice-Chancellor's Advisory Group earlier that week. He advised that there will be a series of staged measures towards a more centralised complaints management model including a better support for triage and a central complaints entry point for students.

In response to a query by the Chair, a member stated that the draft Report on Academic Appeals and Review of Grades Process and Procedures prepared by student members has been delayed and will likely come to the September meeting of Senate.

**RESOLVED 2021/24**

*that Academic Senate:*

- (i) note the Student Complaints and Appeals Report (2020) as provided in the agenda paper and the amendment as provided at the meeting;
- (ii) endorse the recommendations contained in the report; and
- (iii) forward the report to University Council for noting.

### 2.3 Collaborative Delivery Summary Report 2020

#### RESOLVED 2021/25

that Academic Senate note the 'UOW Collaborative Delivery Summary Report 2020' as set out in the agenda paper.

### 2.4 Academic Senate Standing Orders

#### RESOLVED 2021/26

that Academic Senate approve the revised Academic Senate Standing Orders to become effective immediately.

## PART 3: COURSE APPROVALS

There were no course approvals.

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

### \*4.1 Reports from Senior Executive

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Education) (DVCE) reported that UOW will be returning over 80% of teaching to campus for semester two and trimester three.

The DVCE reported that a survey of students undertaken earlier this semester found that over 70% of students reported that their subjects were mostly or wholly online and of these students, one-third were not satisfied with their learning experience. Therefore there has been a focus on increasing on-campus learning and teaching. The DVCE expressed thanks to faculty and school leadership, and to the time-tabling team in Student and Accommodation Services Division (SASD), for their hard work in this space.

The DVCE advised that there has been a steep sector-wide decline in student satisfaction as reflected in the 2020 Student Experience Survey results, and that as a consequence, UOW's position in ComparED has dropped from being rated first to equal third in NSW on most measures. He noted the importance of improving student satisfaction. Return to campus is vital, as is enhancing the quality of online learning and teaching resources, in order to raise student satisfaction. The DVCE reported that the Blended Learning Enhancement Initiative will be launched in June with the goal of digitally uplifting 1200 subjects over 18 months.

The DVCE reported that Proctorio has been confirmed as UOW's preferred solution to provide invigilation of online assessments and examinations. Proctorio will be trialled in three examinations at the end of Autumn session, with the intention of a broader rollout in Spring session. Student perspectives are being captured via the Student Advisory Committee.

The DVCE advised that applications for the National Australian Awards for University Teaching (AAUT) are currently being received and that the application process is being managed by LTC. Final applications are due to be submitted by August 2021.

In the interests of efficient use of time, presentation of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (DVCR&I) report was deferred to item 5.2.

The Chief Operating Officer (COO) reported that the University of South Australia recently experienced a significant cyber-attack which greatly impacted emails and general operations of the university, and added that UOW's IMTS Division are continually vigilant in this space. He encouraged all members to engage in the online security awareness training provide by IMTS.

The COO reported that the easing of public health restrictions will impact return to campus activities and the Human Resources Division is developing guidelines around flexible working arrangements.

### **\*4.2 Members' Reports**

There were no reports.

### **\*4.3 Student Members' Report**

There were no reports.

## **PART 5: ACADEMIC SENATE COMMITTEE BUSINESS**

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

There was no business from Academic Senate Committees.

### **5.2 University Research Committee (URC) Chair's Report**

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (DVCR&I) stated that the main purpose for the portfolio is to create knowledge for a better world. The triple bottom line - people, performance and planet - is imbedded throughout the research strategy with excellence, respect, collegiality and honesty as some of the values that underpin the research strategy.

The DVC(R&I) reported that UOW is ranked equal sixth in the Times Higher Education (THE) rankings across the United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals, having provided a submission for 16 out of the 17 goals and receiving top four ranking for most of those. She stated that everybody should be proud of the gender equity ranking.

The DVC(R&I) reported on ongoing initiatives with the UOW Prioritising Emerging Research Leaders (PERL) Fellowship Scheme and the PERL Indigenous Fellowship Scheme, with 50 applications received so far and an expectation to provide approximately 20 grants. The ReVITALise Research (RITA) Grants Scheme will also open soon.

The DVC(R&I) reported that a whole-of-university research stocktake will be undertaken with the view to identify gaps and opportunities and highlight existing and emerging strengths. The Terms of Reference for this activity are being developed and will be presented to Senate for noting.

A Research town-hall meeting will be held on 23 June and the DVCR&I encouraged all to participate.

A member commented that there are many people who have teaching intensive contracts which sit outside the parameters of the requirements for a PERL Fellowship, and asked what faculties the 20 applicants for the PERL Fellowships have come from. The DVCR&I acknowledged that the PERL Fellowships are targeted towards those academics considered to be more vulnerable, and noted that opportunities exist for other academics to apply for the RITA Grants.

The Chair asked whether the decline in HDR enrolments is across the sector. The Dean of Graduate Research (D/GR) reported that this is the case, with COVID-19 related travel restrictions being a major factor.

A member asked whether there has been an increase in student representation on the URC and the graduate research subcommittee following a discussion about this at the March meeting of Senate. The D/GR replied that while there was a discussion about student representation at the recent graduate research subcommittee meeting, the committee considered the current level of student representation, (one student member) to be sufficient at this time. He noted that HDR students are considered to be junior colleagues and future ambassadors and require nuanced consultation processes. There are other mechanisms for HDR students to provide feedback and input such as surveys, workshops and town-hall meetings.

**RESOLVED 2021/27**

*that Academic Senate note the University Research Committee Chair's Report as provided in the agenda paper and presented at the Academic Senate meeting.*

**5.3 Committee Minutes**

**RESOLVED 2021/28**

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

- (i) UEC Minutes 17 February 2021 – ratified; and*
- (ii) UOWGE Board of Academic Governance Minutes 3 March 2021 – unratified.*

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

**6.1 2021 Meeting Dates**

Wednesday, 21 July 2021  
Wednesday, 15 September 2021  
Wednesday, 17 November 2021

**\*6.2 Other Business**

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global) stated that the UOWGE Board of Academic Governance, the minutes of which are include under Item 5.3, is not a sub-committee of Academic Senate. She noted that there is a new academic governance structure for UOW Global Enterprises and that she will provide more information about this via a presentation at a future meeting of Senate.

The meeting closed at 11.25am.

Signed as a true record:

  
Chair

Date 20 Sept 2021