



ACADEMIC SENATE MEETING MINUTES 21 SEPTEMBER 2022

Minutes of the 362nd meeting of Academic Senate held at 9:30am on Wednesday, 21 September 2022 via WebEx.

PART 1 – PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Prof Nina Reynolds (Chair)	A/Prof Azdiar Gazder	Prof Ann Rogerson
Prof Patricia Davidson	Dr Belinda Gibbons	A/Prof Montse Ros
Prof Gursel Alici	Prof Faisal Hai	Prof Guang Shi
Mr Ahsan Anees	Mr Benjamin Hamill	A/Prof Danielle Skropeta
Prof Thomas Astell-Burt	A/Prof Chris Hyland	Dr Lisa Slater
Dr Jenny Atchison	Prof Zhengyi Jiang	Dr David Tan
A/Prof Stephen Beirne	A/Prof Julie Kiggins	Mr Michael Valceski
Ms Jaymee Beveridge	A/Prof Wanqing Li	Ms Nadia Verrucci
Dr Kate Bowles	S/Prof Eileen McLaughlin	Dr Elena Vlahu-Gjorgievska
Prof Sean Brawley	Dr Kimberley McMahan-Coleman	A/Prof Ika Willis
Dr Kellie Buckley-Walker	Ms Tiana Myers	Dr Marian Wong
Dr Jane Carey	Dr Germanas Peleckis	A/Prof Yanguang Yu
Prof Karen Charlton	Prof Colin Picker	
Prof David Currow		

APOLOGIES & LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

Prof Sue Bennett
Prof Julia Coyle
Ms Cathy Duncan-Ross
Prof Theo Farrell
Prof Louise Hickman
Ms Tarneet Kaur
A/Prof Konstantin Konstantinov
Mr John Littrich
Mr Jack Mansell
Ms Katherine Minns
Prof Trish Mundy
Mr Dominic Riordan
Prof Wilma Vialle
Prof Karen Walton

IN ATTENDANCE:

Ms Paola Ciccarelli, Interim Senior Manager, Governance Unit
Prof Alex Frino, Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Innovation, Enterprise and External Relations
Ms Marcela Herrera, Academic Senate Executive Officer
Ms Theresa Hoynes, Director, Student Services and Accommodation Division (SASD)
Dr Nancy Huggett, Director Governance and Safe and Respectful Communities
Ms Margi Jantti, University Librarian
Dr Niamh Kinchin, Acting Dean, Law (proxy, for Prof Trish Mundy)
Dr Kimberely McMahan-Coleman, Academic Director Regional Campuses
Ms Sally Towse, Academic Senate Executive Officer

OBSERVERS:

Nil

***1.1 Welcome, Acknowledgement of Country, Apologies and Leave of Absence**

The Chair delivered the Acknowledgement of Country and welcomed all members to the Academic Senate meeting. Special welcomes were extended to members attending their first meeting: Mr John Littrich, Student Ombudsman (an apology) and Dr Kate Bowles, Associate Dean International Representative (in attendance).

The Chair expressed thanks to undergraduate student member, Mr Ben Hamill for his contributions to Academic Senate and notified members that Ben has secured a full-time role at UOW and will no longer be a student representative on Senate. This position will be filled in accordance with the Academic Senate Electoral Rules.

The Chair reminded all members of attendance requirement and obligations as per the Academic Senate Electoral Rules section 13.1e.

1.2 Arrangement of Agenda

1.2.1 Conflicts of Interest

The Chair called for conflicts of interest with any matters before the Academic Senate. None were received

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 Welcome, Apologies and Leave of Absence
- 1.2 Arrangement of Agenda
- 1.3 Confirmation of Minutes
- 1.4 Business / Actions Arising from Minutes
- 1.5 Chair's Report
- 1.6 Vice-Chancellor's Report
- 1.7 Membership Business
- 2.1 Presentation - Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health (SMAH)
- 2.2 Presentation - Sports Strategy at UOW
- 2.3 Presentation - Respect Week Feedback
- 2.4 Draft UOW Anti-Racism and Cultural Safety Policy
- 2.5 UOW Respectful Global Footprint
- 2.6 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global) Annual Update
- 2.7 Faculty Academic Governance Policy
- 4.1 Reports from the Senior Executive
- 4.2 Members' Reports
- 4.3 Student Members' Reports
- 4.4 Questions on Notice
- 5.1 Business from Academic Senate Committees
- 5.2 University Internationalisation Committee (UIC) Chair's Report
- 5.3 2023 Academic Senate Meeting Dates
- 6.1 Future Meeting Dates
- 6.2 Other Business

No other items were starred for discussion.

RESOLVED 2022/40

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

***1.3 Confirmation of Minutes**

RESOLVED 2022/41

that the minutes of the previous meeting of Academic Senate held on 27 July 2022, as attached to the agenda paper, 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 reported as follows:

UOW General Elections are currently underway.

Nominations for a Council academic staff member and the postgraduate and undergraduate student members closed on 20 September 2022. Nominations for the Academic Senate and WUSA and WUPA Student Elections also closed on 20 September 2022. Polling for contested positions opens 4 October for Council and Academic Senate and on 5 October for WUSA, WUPA and NUS. The Chair encouraged members to vote.

Academic Senate Review

When Senate membership changes were finalised in 2021, it was agreed that there would be a review of the Role and Function of Academic Senate. The review was to commence in 2022 with recommendations reported and implemented in 2023. A working group will be established consisting of:

- An Executive sponsor, (Chair)
- An external Council member
- An Academic Staff Council member
- The Chair of Academic Senate
- A former Chair of Academic Senate
- Elected member(s) of Academic Senate
- A UG Student Representative
- Executive Officer, Academic Senate

Expressions of Interest from academic members and student members to be members of the working group should be forwarded to the Executive Officer prior to the November meeting.

NSW CoCABS

The Chair attended the September NSW Committee of Chairs of Academic Boards and Senate (CoCABS) meeting. Members discussed two key items:

- External benchmarking of teaching and research and how it can be achieved. There is a current proposal to consider issues and present a paper to TEQSA.
- The need of understanding the common issues post COVID, e.g., expectations, deliverables, impact on technology, resources. Members agreed to take discussions back to their respective institutions.

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

The Vice-Chancellor (VC) asked that her report be taken as read. She welcomed the incoming Chair, Professor Nina Reynolds, and extended her thanks to the former Chair, Professor Greg Rose, for his service to Academic Senate. The VC highlighted the following:

- The success of the UCI Road World Championships event in Wollongong has had a significant impact. It was pleasing to see our community coming together, with several student and staff volunteering for the event.
- Her recent attendance at alumni events in Melbourne, New York and San Francisco and the efforts to reinvigorate our philanthropic processes noting the importance of external engagement.
- In response to feedback received regarding the proposal for annual leave to be taken the week before Christmas, changes have now been made to the proposal and communicated to UOW staff. The revised proposal avoids adversely impacting staff that have been taking annual leave regularly. The VC thanked all staff for their efforts to reduce the annual leave liability.
- A forum is being planned to address procedural issues identified in the VOICE survey results particularly, the ones which related to change processes.

In closing, the VC expressed her appreciation to Senate members and the University community for their hard work, acknowledging how it has been a challenging time for many. The VC noted that, our lead indicators are positive, and it is anticipated that 2023 will bring more certainty and stability.

*1.7 Membership Business

The Chair reported that the two casual vacancies for Academic Senate members have been filled as follows:

- The vacancy for the Business and Law (BAL) Representative, Level E or above, for the term 1 August 2022 to 30 June 2023 has been filled by Professor Lee Moerman, in accordance with Section 13.3 of the Academic Senate Electoral Rules.
- The vacancy for the position of Associate Dean International) (ADI) Representative, for the term 27 July 2022 to 30 June 2023 has been filled by Dr Kate Bowles, in accordance with Section 13.6 of the Academic Senate Electoral Rules.

RESOLVED 2022/42

that Academic Senate:

- (i) note and congratulate Professor Lee Moerman on being nominated to fill the vacancy of Business and Law Academic Representative (Level E or above) on Academic Senate for the term 17 August 2022 to 30 June 2023 and*
- (ii) note and congratulate Dr Kate Bowles on being nominated to fill the vacancy of Associate Dean (International) Representative on Academic Senate for the term 7 September 2022 to 30 June 2023.*

PART 2: GENERAL BUSINESS

*2.1 Presentation – Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health (SMAH)

The Executive Dean of the Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health, provided her presentation and highlighted the following key points:

- The Faculty consists of five schools and is geographically diverse, with courses delivered at regional, rural, metro and global campuses including locations from Broken Hill and Grafton down to Bateman's Bay on the South Coast. The Faculty has a large student cohort in Wollongong, Southern Sydney and Liverpool campuses.
- The Faculty is meeting its obligations with the Department of Health regarding accredited programs.
- Targeted action plans have been established to ensure SMAH's education portfolio is fit for purpose and focussed on leveraging assets to enhance a world class reputation.
- In 2021, the Faculty underwent significant organisational changes as a result of internal and external reviews, this included an external view of the School of Medicine and the School of Nursing
- In relation to industry engagement, the Faculty is working closely on partnerships to achieve goals and continuously looking at improving partner relations and maximising funding for infrastructure.
- Extensive work has been undertaken throughout the pandemic to support students. This is testament to staff working collaboratively, both nationally and internationally.
- Work is underway to investigate possible interdisciplinary programs and upskilling in Nursing and Science to enhance learning environments for students.
- The Faculty's Allied Health and Indigenous Health programs are tracking positively.
- The Faculty is considering further opportunities for pathways into UOW, particularly through the College.

In closing the Executive Dean outlined the strategic priorities for the Faculty for 2023.

RESOLVED 2022/43

that Academic Senate note the presentation on the Faculty of Science, Medicine and Health as provided by Senior Professor Eileen McLaughlin, the Executive Dean of the Faculty.

*2.2 Presentation – Sports Strategy at UOW

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Strategy & Planning) PVC (S&P) spoke to the UOW Sports Strategy and highlighted the following:

- A review of the University's profile in sport has been undertaken to inform strategies for UOW to secure a competitive advantage.
- As per the QS world rankings by subject, sports related studies sit with Civil and Structural Engineering, Nursing and Materials Science are in the 51-100 ranking level and has held this ranking for the past four years.
- UOW is ranked #12 nationally in sports related subjects.
- UOW's focus for our sports studies is on education, research, facilities, communities and alliances.
- Several opportunities have been identified which will be leveraged to further enhance the University's profile.
- The PVC (S&P) is currently working on finalising the draft Strategy, which will be presented to Academic Senate for endorsement and to University Council for approval in Q4 this year.

RESOLVED 2022/44

that Academic Senate note the update regarding the finalisation of the UOW Sport Strategy (“Changing the Game”).

***2.3 Presentation – Respect Week Feedback**

The Director, Governance and Safe Respectful Communities (D/GSRC) provided an update and presentation on UOW's inaugural Respect Week which was held between 29 August and 2 September. She thanked everyone who attended and contributed and noted that the aim of Respect Week is to encourage staff and students to engage in difficult conversations particularly around bullying, sexual assault/harassment and domestic violence. The D/GRSC then highlighted the following:

- A focus of Respect Week on raising awareness of how to access support, who to contact, where to find contact information for support services including the Safe and Respectful Communities team.
- Respect Week is also a celebration of UOW's diverse community.
- There were a range of activities, training and different panels during the week. Each day the theme was different allowing for a broad range of difficult conversations.
- The Disability Inclusion Network was launched with the aim to moving from disability to accessibility.
- There were 827 Registrations: 44.5% from staff, 43.3% from students and 12.1% from the Community.
- Feedback was received from 80 participants: 59 Staff, 13 Student, 8 Community members.
- Of those who participated, 91% commented that the event had met or exceeded their expectations.
- Specific feedback received from domestic violence survivors was positive, suggesting that having these conversations is both validating and empowering.
- Feedback suggestions included the development of an online facility to report sexual violence, accessibility to more training and ensuring the University has linguistically diverse awareness sessions that prioritise awareness.
- The D/GSRC flagged the importance of encouraging more men to attend the sessions, noting most attendees were female.
- Sexual assault and sexual harassment reporting rates need to be monitored and UOW needs to ensure resources keep pace with the increase of reported cases.
- The UOW Close Personal Relationships Guidelines is currently being reviewed by the SARC team with advice from Human Resources and the Office of General Counsel to strengthen the policy framework around staff/student relationships
- It was flagged that accessibility audits of our facilities involving people with visible and invisible disabilities would be a great development.
- The next Respect Week will be held at the start of 2023 as part of orientation and will include regional and metropolitan campuses with live sessions at Shoalhaven and Sydney campuses.
- The University community is encouraged to educate themselves about responding to disclosures and finding out more about diversity cohorts. Actions such as using students' preferred names and pronouns and responding compassionately on disclosures can have a big impact. If in doubt, staff should contact SARC for support and advice.

An Academic Senate member stated that Respect Week was a great event and thanked the D/GSRC for the presentation and summary. The Academic Senate member also noted that the feedback received highlights where the University can make improvements. A question was raised around support for staff, noting that SARC provides support for students only. The D/GSRC advised that SARC supports students and can also help if the matter is between staff and students. If the matter is specifically related to staff, it is dealt with by the Complaints Management Centre or HR. SARC works closely with these teams.

The VC asked the PVC(S&P) to advise on what is envisaged from the Integrity Unit as the member's question goes to the interrelationships between different units and the importance of building resilience. An emphasis on integrity has been a concern particularly around serious incidents. The PVC(S&P) advised that the proposal under consideration is to have an Integrity Division within the Strategy and Assurance Portfolio bringing smaller units together and enhancing responses. Consultation is underway including consideration about what responsibilities will fall under the Integrity Division. Feedback thus far is positive, and it is hoped that recruitment will commence soon for a Chief Integrity Officer position.

A member asked the PVC(S&P) what relationship the Integrity Division will have with Academic Integrity. The PVC(S&P) advised that consultation is underway to ensure alignment with conduct and integrity and research and academic integrity, considering sector best practice, benchmarking and stakeholder consultation.

The VC advised that the vision is not to take over core functions but to have a focal point for integrity and conduct matters. She noted that the Officer of Legal Counsel will be a part of the same portfolio. She notes that, often, there is fine line between Research misconduct and other issues of bullying and harassment. All feedback, suggestions and discussions were encouraged.

RESOLVED 2022/45

that Academic Senate note the information provided about Respect Week and feedback received as set out in the agenda paper and at the meeting

***2.4 Draft UOW Anti-Racism and Cultural Safety Policy**

The Executive Director, Indigenous Strategy (ED/IS) outlined the following key points in relation to the draft Policy:

- In 2018, “You Can’t Say That” resource was launched to educate and engage community members to reduce racism
- However, racism and ignorance persist. In 2020, a senior member of staff commented that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Island people did not experience racism, unlike Indian, Asian and Pakistani people suggesting more work must be done to educate and bring more awareness to this matter
- In the last 18 months, improvements have been made to create inclusive pathways and celebrate diversity but there is still a lot of work to be done
- In 2022, there are still weekly disclosures of unsafe practices and experiences of racism
- The purpose of this new policy is to ensure staff, students, community, guests, suppliers etc are aware of their responsibilities and about what racism is with the aim for everyone to be safe from racism
- A desktop review has been completed against policies nationwide and these is clear guidance about how to respond to racism and about rights, obligations and responsibilities
- The policy is in draft form and feedback closes on 23 September 2022. Everyone is encouraged to read and share the policy and provide feedback

An Academic Senate member suggested seeking student feedback in the consultation process, including from the Student Advisory Council (SAC). The ED/IS undertook to do that.

An Academic Senate member thanked ED/IS for drafting the new policy, noting it provides clear principles and is a positive move in the right direction institutionally. The Chair echoed these sentiments and mentioned it is useful the policy as it includes how we need to respond. The VC acknowledged the critical work carried out by the ED/IS noting everyone's responsibilities to eliminate racism.

RESOLVED 2022/46

that Academic Senate note and provide feedback on the draft Anti-Racism and Cultural Safety Policy as provided in the agenda paper.

***2.5 UOW Respectful Global Footprint**

The Vice-Chancellor (VC) highlighted the following key points:

- COVID-19 has had a huge impact on the higher education sector. Universities have had to react and respond quickly to manage the crisis. One UOW was a response to this crisis, however, the VC acknowledged the impact it has had on the University community. Despite the huge global challenges faced by the sector, UOW is returning to a more proactive approach, making better, data-informed decisions, and understanding the risk environment and appetite.
- The University has listened to its stakeholders and is focused on students as partners, student safety and wellbeing and the student experience.
- The PVC(S&P) and the DVC (Health and Sustainable Futures) have been appointed to enhance the University's strategic capability.
- UOW has a strong global and regional presence which are significant assets.
- The VC's scholarships will continue next year, with dedicated scholarships for Indigenous students, Indian nationals, and a targeted scholarship for our regional campuses.
- Competition for domestic students across the sector is intense. Universities are competing for students; student numbers are decreasing, and marketing efforts have been intensified.
- The University needs to refocus its approach to international education to engage respectfully with the international student market and to attract students. The University needs to be guided by its principles of diversity, respect and inclusion in attracting and retaining students.
- 30% of the University's students are offshore which has been a challenge throughout the COVID-19 pandemic but provides an opportunity now.
- The VC attended the graduation day at UOW's Bateman's Bay campus. It was a very impactful event, she acknowledged that 10% of graduates were First Nations people.
- The VC acknowledged that Wollongong is also an international community, and the University must interact respectfully and inclusively.
- The VC acknowledged the importance of reviewing its policies around technology and cyber security and responding quickly to emerging threats.

RESOLVED 2022/47

that Academic Senate note the information on UOW's global footprint as provided in the agenda paper and the Vice-Chancellor's presentation.

2.6 Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global) Annual Update

The Acting Associate Dean (Research) Faculty of Engineering and Information Sciences was in attendance to speak to the agenda item and answer any questions. No issues were raised.

RESOLVED 2022/48

that Academic Senate note the update provided by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global) as set out in the agenda paper.

2.7 Faculty Academic Governance Policy

RESOLVED 2022/49

that Academic Senate endorse the revised Faculty Academic Governance Policy as set out in the agenda paper.

PART 3: COURSE APPROVALS

There were no course approvals.

PART 4: MEMBERS' REPORTS

*4.1 Reports from Senior Executive

The Chair invited Senior Executive members to provide portfolio reports to Academic Senate.

The Interim Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Innovation), [DVC/R&I] highlighted the following key points:

- He congratulated colleagues for recent research awards received. Specifically, those who were awarded 2022 Future Fellowships, including Professor Karen Charlton, Professor Thomas Astell-Burt, Dr Fuchun Guo and Associate Professor Jiakun Liu.
- The Excellence in Research for Australia (ERA) exercise has been delayed by the Government until a new research assessment system has been put in place. The Australian Research Council (ARC) is implementing a new digital system for recording research impact. The new Minister has made it clear that this needs to be more efficient.
- In terms of the National Interest Test for research funding, a letter has been received from the Minister affirming the Government's ongoing commitment to the process. However, the Minister has acknowledged that the approach needs to encompass translational and blue-sky research. This is the challenge put to the CEO of the ARC.
- The ARC has announced two new industry partnership awards with details to follow
- UoW is initiating three Academies to optimise competitive grant performance: ARC; Health Medical Research and Innovation and Commercialisation

The PVC(S&P) highlighted the following key points:

- Strategy and Planning have been working on shaping the new Strategy and Assurance Portfolio. He thanked the Strategy team and Governance team for their work and support
- The PVC(S&P) acknowledged and thanked D/GSRC and the SARC team for their work around Respect Week
- Work is being undertaken with regional campuses to finalise the regional campus strategies. This is currently in consultation state and will come back to Senate as a full strategy

*4.2 Members' Reports

There were no reports.

*4.3 Student Members' Report

There were no reports.

*4.4 Questions on Notice

There were no questions on notice.

PART 5: ACADEMIC SENATE COMMITTEE BUSINESS

*5.1 Business from Academic Senate Committees

There was no business from Academic Senate Committees.

*5.2 University Internationalisation Committee (UIC) Chair's Report

The Senior Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Innovation, Enterprise and External Relations), [(SDVC(IE&ER))] welcomed the incoming Chair and outlined the following key points:

- Due to the pandemic, it has been a busy period in the portfolio. The portfolio has been working on many new initiatives and collaborations across the University and university campuses.
- International recruitment is top of the list for the portfolio. Before the pandemic, the University had approximately 10000 international students at the Wollongong campus. At the start of 2022, there were approximately 5000 mainly because of the pandemic and border closures. In September 2021, with the notion that borders would reopen, the recruitment team was increased. Through their work,

applications have increased dramatically from 8/9 per week to 500 per week in October 2021. It was a significant increase, but the team was ready.

- Approximately 2500 students have been recruited this year. In comparison to pre pandemic, where there were 3500 by same time. Had the Government announced the border opening two months earlier, we would have equalled 2019 numbers. 2019 was a record year for international student recruitment at UOW. It is pleasing to note the interest from offshore students to come to UOW has returned to pre pandemic levels almost immediately
- Prior to Covid, UOW staff were travelling overseas visiting high schools and attending student fairs in Dubai, Malaysia and Hong Kong. One of the changes implemented has been to coordinate recruitment in different regions around the world to represent our campuses as a local level. The new model will see allocation of recruiters in different parts of the world which greatly assists with different time zones. This increases our ability to respond quickly to enquiries.
- The portfolio has been looking at the length of time it takes to process applications. Half of our applications were taking 30 days turn around, from application to an offer, which is not adequate. Our competitors are doing this in 2 – 5 days. Recent work on this has improved our turnaround time to 17 days. The University needs to enhance, expedite and automate the workflow on straight-forward applications, automating and centralising to improve workflow. In future, it would be beneficial to implement artificial intelligence to make it easier for international applicants.

An Academic Senate member commented about the difficulty in trying to find application forms and processes in UOW website. The Academic Senate member asked whether the staff at the international recruitment hubs have been provided with accurate information specifically regarding degrees and the information that's in the Course Handbook. The SDVC (IEER) advised that the Hubs will be coordinated out of Australia and the team has been working to ensure all correct information is available. The Director Academic Quality & Standards commented that the Student Accommodation and Services Division has also been working to ensure that the Global Enterprises team has the correct information to progress.

RESOLVED 2022/50

that Academic Senate note the University Internationalisation Committee Chair's Report as provided at the meeting.

5.3 2023 Academic Senate Meeting Dates

RESOLVED 2022/51

that Academic Senate note the proposed Academic Senate meeting dates for 2023, as provided in the agenda paper.

PART 6: FUTURE MEETINGS AND OTHER BUSINESS

6.1 Next Meeting

Wednesday 9 November 2022

2023 Meeting Dates

Wednesday 8 March 2023

Wednesday 31 May 2023

Wednesday 26 July 2023

Wednesday 20 September 2023

Wednesday 8 November 2023

***6.2 Other Business**

The meeting closed at 12 noon

Signed as a true record:

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'N. G. S.', written over a dashed horizontal line.

Chair, Academic Senate

Date: 22/ 11 /22