1. UPDATE FROM ACADEMIC COUNCIL

Sylvia Lang provides an update on the Academic Council meeting held on Wednesday 6 May 2009:

(i) **Summer Session 2009 – Proposed Offerings**
Sylvia noted that several Summer Session units from ALVA, Law and NAS. Sylvia reminded members that summer session unit submissions should be forwarded to the Academic Secretariat as soon as possible.

(ii) **Discipline Groups**
Sylvia noted changes in Discipline Group Chairs for 2009 received from ALVA:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline Group</th>
<th>Chair</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>Mr Marco Vittino (Semester 1, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>Mr Nigel Westbrook (Semester 2, 2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscape Architecture</td>
<td>Ms Tinka Sack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
<td>Associate Professor Ian McLean</td>
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(iii) **Future Framework Implementation – Prerequisite Information for Year 10 TISC Student Brochure**
Academic Council noted the 2012 Table of Prerequisites which has now been submitted for publication.

(iv) **New Units and Deletions**
Sylvia noted that all new units and deletions of units submitted from ALVA, Business, MDHS were approved.

(v) **Minor Change to an Existing Course for 2010 - ALVA - Change to Admission Rule for entry to the Bachelor of Landscape Architecture (Honours)**
Council approved the proposed change to admission rule for entry which requires an overall weighted average of 65% or higher (allowing exceptions to be made in exceptional circumstances), which is in line with other University Honours courses.

(vi) **Rescission of Courses – MDHS – Graduate Diploma in Paediatric Rheumatology**
Sylvia noted that Council endorsed the rescission of this course, the reason being that there was insufficient interest to make the course viable. Sylvia noted that this led to considerable discussion as to what constituted a ‘viable number of students in a course’.

(vii) **New Course – MDHS – Master of Surgery (by Thesis and Coursework)**
This course was approved. It was noted that there has been considerable interest from junior doctors and teaching hospitals for such a research/clinical training postgraduate course.

(viii) **Major Change to an Existing Course – ALVA – Proposed changes to the Urban Design Courses**
Sylvia noted that the proposed changes have been necessitated due to the withdrawal of Curtin University from their association with the Urban Design Centre. It was noted that the proposed modified course structure will be using current and a new UWA units to replace those previously taught by Curtin. The proposal was approved by Council.

(ix) **Future Framework Implementation – Board of Coursework Studies and proposed Interim Boards of Studies for new Undergraduate Degree Courses**
This proposal included the setting up of Interim Boards of Studies with relevant faculty representation to scrutinise proposals relating to first cycle courses before submission to the Board of Coursework Studies. Council endorsed the principle which allows work
to move forward on memberships of the Boards. The SDVC will be contacting faculties to initiate the process.

(x) SDVC report on Implementation of the Future Framework
Sylvia noted that the SDVC issued an All-Staff email on 7 May 2009 with a link to a report on developments regarding implementation of the Future Framework. Sylvia noted that the VC report indicates that a timeframe for implementing the recommendations of the Review of Course Structures is expected to be available in August. The report is available at the following site:
http://www.futureframework.uwa.edu.au/staffnet

(xi) Vice-Chancellor’s Report to Academic Council
Sylvia noted that the VC spoke mainly to the current economic climate and its impact on the University. The VC also noted that he has been invited, along with other Vice-Chancellors, to the budget lock-down in Canberra. The Vice-Chancellor noted there is little optimism for government funding for education, apart from possibly the Education Investment Fund.

The Vice-Chancellor also focused on maintaining ‘efficiencies’ throughout the University and encouraged any suggestions for further improvement, without compromising standards, to be forwarded to him.

(xii) Follow-Up Report
Sylvia noted that the Follow-Up Report from the School of Primary, Aboriginal and Rural Health Care was a very positive one and noted that the School looked forward to developing a positive and close relationship with the new Head of the School of Dentistry.

2. SCANNING OF STUDENT DOCUMENTS TO TRIM – PROPOSED CHANGES TO CURRENT PROCESS

Sylvia noted that Justine McDermott and Debra Paisley from ARMS had proposed a new process for scanning student documents into TRIM, as follows:

Currently, faculty staff are requested to scan and register hard copy student documents to the student file in TRIM. While this process ensures that documentation is captured onto the relevant file immediately, the scanned documents are not uniformly meeting the scanning standards required by the University. Subsequently these documents must be quality checked and often rescanned when they arrive in the Records Office. In order to streamline this process and to reduce duplication of effort, ARMS proposes to undertake the responsibility of scanning hardcopy documents in place of faculty staff.

In cases where hardcopy documents need to be scanned to TRIM urgently they can be sent to RMS with a student scanning note (template available on ARMS website) attached indicating that the documents need to be processed immediately. RMS staff will then give priority to the processing of these documents and forward the TRIM document reference to the staff member once it has been created.

Note that all documents created electronically (email, word documents etc) must still be saved to the student file by the staff member creating or receiving those documents. Please do not print out electronic documents and send them to RMS for scanning. (If this occurs the documents will be returned to senders.)

If this process change is approved by all FAOs, ARMS will send out a notice of the change to all staff dealing with student records. If there are concerns regarding this change an ARMS representative would be happy to attend the next FAO/Sub-Deans Group meeting.

There was general agreement with this proposal.
There was discussion regarding the timeframe for capturing documents to TRIM. Some voiced concerns with uploading to CITRIX, that the process is difficult and cumbersome. AHSS complained of interface problems, particularly as the Faculty predominantly uses MACS.

Sylvia said that she would report back to ARMS and organise for a staff member to attend at a future meeting to discuss these issues.

3. RULES GOVERNING STUDENTS RETURNING TO COMPLETE AN AWARD THAT THEY HAVE EXITED FROM PREVIOUSLY

Sylvia noted that there has been a request to discuss clarification of rules governing students returning to complete an award that they have exited from previously.

University General Rule 1.2.3.6 states as follows:

“A student who withdraws from a course which is part of a continuum of related graduate awards before completing the course concerned but after completing the requirements for a lesser award in the continuum may apply to the faculty to take out the lesser award.”

While this rule was intended to provide for students who did not wish to complete the higher-level course in the continuum to complete the requirements for the lesser award and take out the relevant qualification, it has come to the attention of some faculty officers that students are taking out the lesser award and then immediately seeking to continue in the course for the higher-level award.

The UWA Business School Postgraduate Centre has advised that they have put in place a requirement that students wishing to return to complete an award course from which they have previously exited must reapply to re-enter the course after no less than one teaching period (a trimester in the case of the MBA, and a semester in all other courses) and they will be subject to the fee applicable at that time. They are seeking confirmation that this is acceptable.

There was some discussion concerning changing the wording of the rule to provide an equitable process for managing what may become an increasing occurrence of students taking out additional certificates/diplomas.

It was suggested that the rule be amended to clarify explicitly that a student who exited from a higher level course in a continuum of awards and took out a lesser award in the continuum must not be allowed to re-apply for the higher level course until after the expiration of a specified term. It was agreed that the ‘specified term’ should be no less than six months. Such students would also be liable for the fees applicable at the time of re-application.

It was proposed that the re-wording of the rule should be processed as soon as possible to avoid any possible increase in numbers of students opting to take advantage of the current situation.

Sylvia pointed out that students’ circumstances were liable to change and that it would not be desirable to penalise such students. It was noted that an “exceptional circumstances” clause could be introduced to cater for such students.

It was also pointed out that students who entered a master’s course having completed a graduate certificate and a graduate diploma course could legitimately finally have all three award certificates. It was suggested that this was a different case to students entering direct into the master’s as such students, by enrolling for master’s, were indicating that they intended to complete a master’s course. If they subsequently withdrew completely from the course then they were indicating that they did not wish to proceed with the course
Sylvia noted that any changes to a University General Rule would need to be approved by the Academic Council and that the proposal would be submitted to the next meeting of the Academic Council Steering Committee for consideration.

4. PROPOSED SHOW CAUSE POLICY

Sylvia noted that at the meeting of the FAO and Sub-Deans Group held on 6 March 2009, a number of members indicated that they provided for students in their faculty who had been given a progress status of Suspended or Excluded to make a submission to the faculty explaining their poor performance and why it was likely to improve if they were allowed an opportunity to re-enrol.

Currently there is no University-wide policy to provide for this to occur. Often appeals are lodged because students do not have an opportunity to plead their case and such appeals cannot be dealt with easily under our existing appeals legislation which is designed for appeals against application of process rather than merit-based appeals.

Members were asked to indicate whether they support the development of a University-wide Show Cause policy.

There was some discussion about whether the Appeals regulations could be amended to provide for students to present a merit-based case. Sylvia advised that the appeals process primarily provided for students to appeal on the basis of non-adherence to process or unfair application of process and that to introduce another element might be confusing. There was some discussion about whether the Special Consideration policy could accommodate a show cause policy. However it was agreed that this would not be appropriate particularly given the time limits associated with submitting applications for special consideration. It was agreed that the time-limits for submitting requests for re-consideration of progress status should be the same as those for appeals. Sylvia said that work was currently underway on the appeals and complaints processes and that she would investigate with the Complaints Manager (Gina Barron) the best way of providing for show/cause within the appeals/complaints framework. Sylvia to report progress at the next meeting.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

(i) Appeal and Complaints Process

A member voiced a concern about decisions of the Faculty being overturned at a higher level and stated that this could be demoralising for those making decisions at the faculty level who felt that all their decisions could potentially be reviewed and changed. It also had potential to encourage students to seek to have decisions amended and lead to students being dealt with inequitably. In the case of a student whose complaint had recently been determined, the student had responsibility for dealing appropriately with his enrolment and had not done so. The student had been dealt with in the same way as other students in the faculty who were in similar circumstances.

Sylvia pointed out that appeals and complaints were considered on their merits. She agreed that students should take responsibility as appropriate, however the particular circumstances of the student in question were unusual and well documented and had been deemed to warrant further consideration Sylvia advised that the protocol for consultation with relevant parties would be considered in the current review of the appeals/complaints framework.

(ii) Approved Leave

Harvey noted that Approved Leave online requests were targeted to be available in 2010. Harvey confirmed that information for students about the implications of taking approved leave would continue to be readily available. Faculties would continue to be involved in approving requests.
Harvey asked whether faculties would permit approved leave from a combined course to allow a student who had completed honours to undertake a PhD. It was noted that this would be permitted in some faculties (subject to time-limits for completion of the combined course) but not in others, who took the view that, by embarking on a PhD, a student had decided to take their studies in a different direction.

(iii) Exam Timetable
Harvey noted that the Exam Timetable will be available from Monday 11 May.