

**RECORD OF THE 10TH MEETING OF THE
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 9 JULY 2009 VIA TELECONFERENCE**

Present:

Mr John Cameron (Chair)
Mr Chris Sheargold
Dr Tony Stokes
Ms Sandra Miles
Ms Jennie Beck

Professor Gabrielle McMullen
Mr John Sinclair
Ms Glenis Davey
Mr Peter Blakey

Apologies:

Mrs Diana Chegwidden
Professor Marie Emmitt
Ms Rachel Baal

Professor Gail Crossley
Mr Geoff Woodward
Mr David Keegan

In attendance:

Mrs Pauline Croxon
Ms Junne Kamis (note taker)

1 WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

The meeting commenced at 3.20pm.

2 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

The Chair, welcomed all members to the ACUSCC meeting, asked that attendees be recorded and apologies be noted. The Chair advised that Mr Blakey is now a member replacing Mr Woodward, and he welcomed Mr Blakey, Ms Miles and Ms Beck as new members of the Committee.

4 NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 28 MAY 2009

Mr Cameron called for any comments regarding the notes of the previous meeting. With a minor amendment made to the last paragraph on page 4, the notes were accepted.

5 ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Professor McMullen advised of a change needed to the last paragraph on page 4 of the notes which was raised by Professor Crossley. The change records Professor Crossley's concerns regarding Lecturers-in-Charge allocating and reallocating marking. The sentence will be corrected and a corrected version of the note will be circulated to members.

6 STANDING ITEMS (ATTACHMENT 1)

The Reports were received by the Committee.

7 REPORTS OF BULLYING AND HARRASSMENT – MS DAVEY

Ms Davey advised that there is a need for the University to more actively prevent bullying and harassment of staff as the union is getting more reports of staff feeling distressed, bullied and intimidated. Ms Davey thought that these calls have arisen due to tensions involved in changes to timetabling, often imposed with short timelines, which put pressure on both staff and students. Ms Davey was also concerned about the long hours being worked by some staff, and she advised that the VOICE Survey should provide information about the views of staff about bullying and harassment issues in their workplace.

Mrs Croxon inquired if there were any patterns to the complaints of bullying and harassment and was advised by Ms Davey and Mr Sinclair that they were happening at all levels and in all places so there was no pattern of groups of particular staff, disciplines or geography. However one common factor referred to is the short timeframes being imposed by different parts of the University (eg. to request information from Schools) which has led to pressure on staff and frayed tempers.

There was also a general discussion about the needs of staff in coping with demands from students while dealing with the rollout of change. Mr Sinclair noted that the relationship between staff and students can be problematic. Generally staff want to minimise negative feedback as they are worried that poor student evaluations will impact on their probation, and/or applications for OSP and Promotion.

Ms Davey advised that there is a need for the University to look at strategies and to adopt an OH&S risk management approach. One important factor is advice about where staff can direct their complaints and have someone to talk to about bullying issues without them necessarily having to lodge a formal grievance.

ACTION: Mr Cameron said that no amount of pressure should lead to bullying and that he will be looking into these issues. He also advised that the Vice-Chancellor will be bringing out a regular newsletter which will provide information about a range of strategic initiatives.

ACTION: Ms Croxon will be looking into the training given re the Code of Conduct and other training from HR which may assist.

8 IMPLEMENTATION OF ACADEMIC WORKLOADS POLICY – MS DAVEY

Ms Davey raised several issues including:

- The policy will need to be amended to take into account the various software issues;
- Clarification is needed regarding the “complexity of course” allocations of workload for Course Coordinators. In particular firm Indicators are needed as there are differentiations emerging. For example a course may need to meet 3 out of 5 Indicators in order to meet the definition of a complex course;
- The academic administrative area also needs Indicators as parts are too broadly defined.

Professor McMullen advised that the Policy will be reviewed in September 2009 and that the IT Unit is continuing to refine the software.

Dr Stokes noted that he supported Ms Davey’s comments and also that Professor McMullen is organising a review of the Policy and its implementation.

9 Human Resources Management and Related Policies

Professor McMullen advised that the Academic Probation policies will be amended to require probationary staff to establish and maintain a teaching portfolio commensurate with the level of their appointment.

Further the Performance Review and Planning for Academic Staff pro forma has also been updated in time for the Academic PDP window in Semester 2. Dr Stokes advised that the updated pro forma should be a good document as it gives staff greater guidance.

10 General Business

Mr Sinclair inquired about students having access to Tutorial Direct prior to results being issued. This has led to a situation where students have rushed in to select the best tutorial times and some of the students end up not being eligible to progress, but if they do not un-enrol, there is a problem sorting the tutorials out for the progressing students. The culture seems to be one of students getting the best spots first before new students enrol.

Ms Smith advised that there have been problems with the Clinical Practice where a lot of manual checking has been required to see if students are enrolled prior to be allocated a practicum. If the students do not un-enrol and are allocated a place, the University has to pay for the place anyway. This has caused a lot of pressures for the Clinical Office.

ACTION: Mr Cameron advised it was his understanding that Tutorial Direct was opened early to assist with Planning Purposes and he will investigate the matter further .

As there are no other general business the meeting closed at 4.00pm.

11. NEXT MEETING:

The next ACUSCC meeting will take place on 3 September 2009.

12. ACTION ITEMS

Actions	Completed
Professor McMullen to organise a review of the Academic Workloads Policy in September 2009	
Chair of the ACUSCC to look into the issues raised by Ms Davey re reports of bullying and harassment from staff	
Ms Croxon to review training re the Code of Conduct and other HR training and initiatives to deal with bullying and harassment issues	Review in Progress
Chair of the ACUSCC to investigate the timing of opening the Tutorial Direct system for students.	Advice Provided to ACUSCC members via email on 13 July 2009

