

**RECORD OF A MEETING OF THE
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON
27 NOVEMBER 2008 VIA TELECONFERENCE**

Present:

Mr John Cameron (Chair)	Professor Gabrielle McMullen
Ms Diana Chegwiddden	Professor Gail Crossley
Mr David Keegan	Associate Professor Marea Nicholson
Dr Tony Stokes	Mr Chris Sheargold
Mr Geoff Woodward	Ms Glenis Davey
Professor Marie Emmitt	

In Attendance:

Ms Pauline Croxon (Executive Officer)
Ms Sybilla Wells (Note taker)

Apologies:

Mr Peter May	Mr Jeremy Gauder
Ms Robin Fisher	Ms Anne Szadura

The meeting commenced at 3:30pm.

The Chair, Mr John Cameron welcomed all committee members to the ACUSCC meeting took attendances and asked that apologies be noted.

1. MATTERS ARISING:

1.1 NOTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair, called for any comments regarding the notes of the previous ACUSCC meeting. The committee accepted the notes of the 20 October 2008 meeting.

1.2 ACTION ITEMS FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Chair informed the ACUSCC that suggested dates for ACUSCC meetings in 2009 had been distributed to the committee and would be discussed as other business.

2. STANDING ITEMS

2.1 EQUITY AND STAFF DIVERSITY REPORT

Ms Pauline Croxon told the committee that she had been informed that White Ribbon Day had been well received on all campuses. The White Ribbon day champions and Kim O'Brien, Coordinator, Equity and Diversity said that the event was a success with a high turnout of staff on all campuses.

Ms Croxon thanked Mr John Cameron for speaking at the White Ribbon day function on the North Sydney Campus. Professor McMullen indicated that White Ribbon day on the Melbourne Campus was also very well received.

2.2 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT

The committee received this report.

2.3 GENERAL STAFF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The committee received this report.

3. CHANGE MANAGEMENT PROPOSAL – RESTRUCTURE OF ACUONLINE

The Chair invited Mr Chris Sheargold to discuss this change management proposal. Mr Sheargold informed the committee that the changes to ACUOnline would improve service delivery to clients and improve the overall performance of the Unit. Moving from the old structure would benefit and provide opportunities for staff.

Mr David Keegan commented that it was good that this change would provide staff career paths and asked whether there would be any extension of hours? Mr Sheargold responded that there would not be an extension of hours required as the HelpDesk is open after hours and could provide assistance.

The committee supported the proposal.

4. HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND RELATED POLICIES

The Chair informed the committee that there were two items to discuss, the substantive item being the Workloads Policy. The Chair invited Professor Gabrielle McMullen to discuss the Workloads Policy.

Professor McMullen indicated that members had the Associate Deans comments to the feedback received from staff about the Academic Workloads Policy. The Associate Deans have considered the feedback and responded in some detail. The Deans and Professor McMullen were consulted and a list of changes agreed. These changes are tracked in the updated policy that was also included with the agenda papers. Professor McMullen offered to go through each point and said there was also a spreadsheet with worked examples provided by the Associate Deans.

The Chair asked if there were any comments on the academic workloads policy. Dr Tony Stokes responded that the spreadsheet was very useful. He also stated that the implications of classes with lower numbers should be considered as small classes will equate to a lower workload. For example a class of 10 students results in a 0.5 workload for a lecturer and if staff have classes of the same size they would have to teach 14 units per year. Professor McMullen responded that the policy is not to run classes of less than 15 students and the Vice-Chancellor's task force will implement this.

Professor Emmitt commented that you would balance load with small and large classes. Professor McMullen responded that the University is looking to minimise the number of Units with smaller numbers.

Ms Glenis Davey said that some post graduate courses have enrolments of 9 or 10 students. They will be phased out, but there will be issues of conversion to equivalent units including how do we transition these staff members? Professor Emmitt responded that this is a performance management issue. We rely on Heads of School to use discretion and manage staff effectively.

Associate Professor Marea Nicholson informed the committee that page 5 of the policy states that a lecturer can only obtain half of their work load allowance for part time higher degree supervision. These are often researched and written by part time students. The supervisor is challenged when working with time poor students but she or he only receives half the workload. Reducing the amount of workload allocation for part-time higher degree students should be re-considered.

Professor Gail Crossley responded that the university gets funds when a PhD student completes their doctorate. It is the same amount received for full-time and part-time students. If the University gave the same workload allocation to the supervisors of part time students as it does to the supervisors of full time students, it would be equal to giving the supervisor double load and therefore inequitable. Those staff supervising full-time PhD students would feel hard done by.

Associate Professor Nicholson responded that there is very mixed implementation – is there a link between the frequency of units running and the supervision of part-time or full-time students? The University gets the same amount of funding for students so it is not clear what monetary value comes to school to cover staffing costs.

Professor McMullen stated that data from RSD shows that on average part-time students take twice the length as full-time students for completion. The funds are the same for part-time as full-time students and the spread of load over the duration of the completion time is an equity issue.

Professor Emmitt said that we can't say that some students are more challenging than others. There is a need to adapt load as it is expected that the intensity of work will vary over the different stages of the degree. Associate Professor Nicholson responded that it would be useful to bench mark this. Professor Emmitt stated that at other universities they pro rata load for part-time students. Professor McMullen said that part of professional learning for academic staff is to develop supervisor training and time management skills. Associate Professor Nicholson responded that she is worried that people will be taking on more work than they need to or should.

Professor Gail Crossley stated that the policy has to support the strategic direction of the university. Dr Tony Stokes responded that the overall impact of the policy on individuals had to be compared to other units, eg. 200hrs per year for staff for completing a PhD, out of a 500hrs allocation. In such circumstances it would be unlikely that staff will be putting out publications if they need to do another 300 hours of teaching. In other universities completing a PhD equals less workload. Professor Crossley responded that there has been no recognition of this in the past and most staff take study leave while completing a PhD. Associate Professor Nicholson suggested changing the hours down to 900.

Professor McMullen stated that the previous model was 1000 x 336 contact hours which included prep time. The new policy discounts that model and takes away prep time as such saving on the available hours. Professor Crossley said the major reform of this policy is to acknowledge research and by and

large staff will be better off under the new policy. To change the hours again and pull it back would be detrimental.

Associate Professor Nicholson responded that she was not saying that the policy should pull back on research hours allocated or change values. For first time gone from counting 100 hrs added 50%, there is an embedded saving from move of 336 to 1000. Dr Stokes stated that most staff are unable to produce a book in 500 hrs and as many staff will not be able to reach this the 500 hrs target is too high.

Professor Emmitt said the target is low and we have to try and reach it. Professor Crossley responded that she has been receiving PDPs and has been pleasantly surprised by what is being achieved.

Associate Professor Nicholson responded that as repeat lectures and tutorials will have half the value staff will need to pick up the load from somewhere else. Professor McMullen stated that the modelling does not show this. Professor Emmitt responded that these staff members will become teaching intensive. Some may need to pick up more teaching and will have a year to organise this. Ms Chegwiddden stated that provision for teaching intensive roles has always been in the MSALs but this is the first time clear values have been put in the policy.

Associate Professor Nicholson said that the change where the 100 hrs that used to be counted as 336 will have an impact on what would have been a full load 6 months ago as this will only be 75% of a load. Professor Crossley indicated that when you look at the spreadsheet from the Associate Deans the argument that staff will be disadvantaged is incorrect.

Ms Davey said that she wants to support the research agenda however there may be some unanticipated outcomes and the policy needs to be open to revision. Professor McMullen responded that the policy would be open to revision in line with all HR management policies.

The Chair informed the committee that the recommendations would be noted and the Academic Workloads policy will proceed to determination for implementation in Semester 2 2009.

The Chair called for any comments on other human resource management and related policies. There are three more policies that have been recommended for determination.

Associate Professor Nicholson asked if we could build a review date in the Workloads Policy. Professor McMullen responded that this could be considered and she will need to talk to her colleagues. Ms Davey said that it is better if a review date is a designated time not a review from time to time. Professor Marie Emmitt stated that she would prefer a review to be after 2010, which would allow for the operation of the policy over a workload year. Professor McMullen responded that she will consider adding a review date to the policy.

4. OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS:

The Chair informed the committee that some members were concerned about the change of the ACUSCC meetings to a Friday. He said that he is happy to consider a change if Friday is not convenient for the majority of the committee and there is a preferred day and time. He asked for any comments.

Professor Crossley indicated that Fridays were not suitable for her. Ms Davey said that timetable requested had been already been submitted. Professor McMullen indicated that she was happy with Thursdays as long as the meeting is not set on a Senate date.

The Chair responded that he was happy to go with the suggestion of Thursday afternoons. We will try to set a January meeting date and bring suggested dates for 2009 to the January meeting.

The meeting concluded at 4:40 pm.

5. NEXT MEETING:

To be advised.

6. ACTION ITEMS

Actions	Completed
The Chair committed to bringing suggested dates for ACUSCC meetings in 2009 to the next committee meeting.	The availability of ACUSCC members was sought and suggested dates will be included in the agenda.