

**RECORD OF THE 12TH MEETING OF THE
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
HELD ON 12 NOVEMBER 2009 VIA TELECONFERENCE**

Present:

M John Cameron (Chair)
Mr Chris Sheargold
Ms Di Stevens
Ms Beatrice (BJ) Johnson
Mr John Sinclair
Ms Rachael Bahl
Mr David Keegan

Professor Gabrielle McMullen
Professor Marie Emmitt
Ms Sandra Miles
Dr Tony Stokes
Mr Peter Blakey

Apologies:

Mrs Diana Chegwidden
Professor Peta Goldberg

Professor Gail Crossley

In Attendance:

Ms Pauline Croxon
Ms Junne Kamis (note taker)

1 WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR

The meeting commenced at 3.30pm.

2 & 3 ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed all members to the ACUSCC meeting, asked that attendees be recorded and apologies be noted.

4 NOTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 3 SEPTEMBER 2009

Mr Cameron called for comments regarding the previous notes. Professor McMullen advised that the amendments from the notes of 28 May were still to be amended for point 5.1 which appeared on Page 6 Paragraph 2 of the previous notes. The notes were accepted with the record of changes to be made.

ACTION: Notes to be changed

5 ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

The actions were completed and all were accepted.

6 STANDING ITEMS (attachment 1)

6.2 Occupational Health, Safety and Wellbeing Report

Mr Blakey enquired about the timing for viewing the Montie DVD Rom. Ms Croxon advised that Mr Pumpa is working with IT on loading the DVD and eliminating any access problems through testing, and HR will advise staff once it is loaded and ready to be used.

The Reports were received by Committee.

7 CHANGE MANAGEMENT

7.1 School of Nursing (NSW) Proposal

Ms BJ Johnson commented that the proposal concerned the administrative structure rather than a management re-structure, and there was no information about the potential flow on or impact on academic workloads in the School. Was there any potential flow that would affect academic workloads?

There was general comment that the focus of the Review Report had been on management issues that require resolution, yet the Change Management document focuses on staffing issues, not the management of the School. It was noted that no position appears in the organisation chart for the Deputy Head of the School, and there was a query as to whether the Personal Assistant position will be attached to the Head of School or the Deputy Head of School?

There was discussion about some of the proposed changes in reporting lines including the proposal that the Laboratory Manager report to an overall School Manager at HEW 7 rather than to an academic staff member. It was suggested that there are dangers in having the clinical officers reporting to an HEW 7 and not the academic Clinical Coordinator and communication issues would need to be carefully managed. Ms Miles stated that the issue of coordinating clinical placements was an ongoing one, and that the potential for problems exists as the coordinators would not be reporting to the academic staff member who has overall responsibility for the placements.

Generally it was agreed that having more reporting lines would be an improvement to the previous situation where all staff reported to the Head of School.

The proposed classifications for some of the positions was also discussed and Mr Blakey noted that the anticipated gradings appear to be on the low side. Ms Croxon advised that the School had begun the process of updating its PIQs and PDs and these would be considered by the Classifications Committee in due course. If the Committee needed more information then the Head of School or

Deputy Head would need to be available to provide more detail on the anticipated roles and responsibilities. The Committee requested that the HoS and Deputy HoS be requested to provide the Classification Committee with information about the role and duties of the Deputy Head of School and the interaction of the Deputy HoS position with the administrative managers.

Mr Sinclair said that several staff were employed on contracts which are currently due to terminate at the end of December and what was going to happen to those staff?

Ms Croxon advised that the staff on fixed term contracts will be offered a new contract of employment until approximately March 2010 in order to enable the School to implement the final proposal. Professor McMullen advised that she has just approved a request for the new contracts to be issued.

Mr Sinclair noted that the position of Personal Assistant is currently vacant and asked when it was likely to be filled? Ms Croxon will refer this query to the HoS for advice.

It was noted that in several parts of the document, the School was referred to as the School of Nursing and Midwifery and this was incorrect as the School is now the School of Nursing (NSW). Ms Croxon advised that the document would be amended.

Ms Miles stated that the proposed structure is similar to that of the other Schools of Nursing, and she asked whether the structure will impact on the other Schools, eg. would this structure be used as a model for the other Schools and if so will the other Schools have the opportunity to comment? Mr Cameron advised that this question would be referred to the HoS and the Dean. Professor Emmitt commented that there may be a need for different structures on different sites, and the focus in the proposal was for the School based at MacKillop campus.

In response to a query as to whether the recommendations of the Review Report had been accepted, Professor McMullen advised that not all of the recommendations had been accepted, and many were still being worked through.

Mr Blakey said that the interaction between the Deputy Head with the role of the School Administration Manager would become very important while the HoS is based in Melbourne. He said that the School had had a transient Head and that this lack of stability and availability had impacted unfavourably on the staff. Dr Stokes commented that the HoS had been working across 4 campuses including the ACT. Ms Bahl noted that the proposal does not apply to the Canberra School and that the nomenclature needs to be accurate.

ACTION: Mr Cameron said that the feedback from the Committee would be reported to the Head of School and the Dean for their consideration in finalising the proposal for implementation and advising the staff.

7.2 Research Services – Addendum to Proposal

The Committee thanked the Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research) for the Addendum which clarified the reporting lines to be established.

7.3 School of Business – Change Management Proposal

Dr Stokes noted that there were some good recommendations from Professor Kiel to help the Faculty be set up in a positive manner. The issues of funding and resourcing were less clear from the change proposal document. Dr Stokes observed that the organisational chart in the proposal referred to Heads of School being appointed at Level E or at Level D/E and that this would not be comparable to the Faculties of Education and Arts and Sciences. He also noted that one of the recommendations was for the Faculty of Business to have its own independent workloads policy.

Professor McMullen advised that as the Chair of the Faculty of Business Implementation Working Party, the recommendations were being considered and not all of the recommendations (including the one for a faculty based workloads policy) had been accepted.

Mr Blakey queried the strategy of having staff who are lecturing in statistics, communication skills or IT leave the University when there are still students to be taught. Professor McMullen advised that the University has suspended new enrolments in some disciplines, but it is committed to teaching out those currently enrolled students in order to ensure they are not disadvantaged.

Dr Stokes said that he had had reports from staff that they have been told that they won't be welcome or wanted in the new Faculty and that several staff are very concerned about their future. Professor McMullen stated that although she is Chair of the Implementation Working Party, she cannot take control over what any individual person may or may not have said to any individual staff member of the School. Professor McMullen advised that all of the staff of the School of Business will transfer to the Faculty of Business from 1 January 2010, other than one senior officer who will stay with the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

Ms Johnson queried whether suboptimal class sizes could result in a preference for certain staff to be able to take voluntary redundancy. Mr Cameron confirmed that yes there is a link between sub optimal class sizes, declining student enrolments and voluntary redundancies.

Ms Johnson noted that in moving the School forward to a faculty, there was a heavy investment from the University and are there any ramifications for other areas? This question was taken on notice.

Professor McMullen advised that the exact administrative structure of the Faculty will not be finalised until the Dean is appointed, and that the overall budget will probably not change.

Mr Blakey said that Professor McMullen could not be responsible for rumours, however he had been approached by academic staff who had a lot of concerns about their future employment with the

University. Professor McMullen confirmed that as the proposal states, involuntary redundancies will be a last resort.

Ms Croxon will advise the Head of School of the feedback from the Committee.

(Ms Bahl gave her apologies and departed the meeting).

8 HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND RELATED POLICIES

8.1 Review of the Implementation of the Academic Workloads Policy

Professor McMullen advised that the review of the implementation of the policy was proceeding, including the review of the software. Professor McMullen advised that the document titled “Field Experience” was to be implemented following consultation with the Committee.

Mr Blakey referred to the “Field Experience” section and enquired as to how the hours allocated for travel (including between campuses) had been determined. He advised that the Education field experience could require staff to travel to and from schools for longer periods than were allocated in the document.

Professor McMullen advised that the Working Party had translated the current arrangements into the new “real hours” format, and this had taken longer than anticipated given the complexities involved in the different arrangements for field experience. Professor Emmitt advised that the Faculty of Education avoids asking its academic staff to undertake this sort of work. It is mainly sessional staff who undertake supervisory (of the practicum) duties and the faculty tries to ensure that the sessionals are located as close as possible to the relevant schools. Professor McMullen confirmed that the University tries to use local sessional staff rather than sending out regular staff members as it is not a strategic use of their time to ask full time academic staff to undertake this sort of work.

Ms Miles commented that it has been the current practice for the LICs to do site visits if there is a problem with a student in order to sort things out, and that the Schools of Nursing have more of a presence at the Hospitals.

Mr Blakey said that he thought that the time factors are “skinny” and that the actual amounts of time involved are not necessarily reflected in the document.

Professor McMullen said that feedback about the document is welcome and she noted the feedback that has been provided today from members of the Committee.

9 GENERAL BUSINESS

Mr Blakey requested clarification about the Organisational Structure Policy 2009. Ms Croxon advised that this policy had been updated to reflect the changed structure of the University. Mr Blakey queried the role of the “assistant supervisor” in terms of reporting, and he noted that

assistant supervisors could instruct staff who may be receiving instructions and demands from several senior officers. Mr Blakey enquired as to what assistant supervisor “can” and “cannot do” and Mr Keegan enquired regarding what level is required to be an assistance supervisor?

Ms Croxon advised that there were two main areas within the University’s HR Policies where assistant supervisors have a particular role. The first is mentioned in the University’s performance development and review documents, which indicate that an assistant supervisor may conduct a staff member’s annual performance review and develop the individual learning plan, and recommend an outcome to the relevant supervisor for signature. The second area is that an assistant supervisor may, in consultation, allocate workloads to an academic staff member for final sign off by the relevant Head of School.

On the general staff side, technically a staff member in a role which is classified at HEW Level 3 and above can be required to supervise. Most team leader roles begin at HEW Level 4 or 5, and these can be full supervisory roles for the purposes of the Enterprise Agreement.

Mr Cameron advised that an assistant supervisor does not replace the role of the Supervisor and the different roles need to be clearly understood. The nature of the supervision required will vary according to the line of authority, and role clarity is the major requirement.

As there was no other general business the meeting closed at 4.45pm. Mr Cameron thanked the members of the Committee for their contributions and wished everyone a Happy Christmas and New Year.

10 NEXT MEETING

The next ACUSCC meeting will take place on Wednesday 21 January 2010. Prof McMullen will chair the meeting as Mr Cameron is away on leave.

Action	
Mr Rod Pumpa to work with Mr Paul Campbell to have the MONTIE DVD Rom uploaded and tested on the HR/OH&S website	On 26 November 2009 staff were advised that access to the Montie DVD library was now available
Mr Cameron/HR will refer Ms Johnson and Mr Blakey comments to the Head of School of Nursing	Comments were referred to the HoS on 18 November 2009
Mr Blakey to be advised regarding the PA role in the School of Nursing (NSW)	Response to ACUSCC feedback to be distributed with papers for 21 January 2010 meeting