

**RECORD OF A MEETING OF THE
AUSTRALIAN CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON
3 MAY 2007 VIA TELECONFERENCE**

Present:

Mr John Cameron (Chair)	Professor Gabrielle McMullen
Dr John Barclay	Ms Glenis Davey
Dr Tony Stokes	Dr Marea Nicholson
Ms Robin Fisher	Ms Anne Szadura
Mr Jeremy Gauder	Mr David Keegan
Professor Marie Emmitt	Professor Gail Crossley

In Attendance:

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

Apologies:

Professor Sandy Middleton
Mr Chris Sheargold
Mr Peter May

The meeting commenced at 3:00pm.

The Chair, Mr John Cameron welcomed all committee members and opened the meeting by indicating that during the committee's discussions, silence must be considered as assent, so he encouraged committee members to express their views.

The Chair indicated to the committee that Dr John Barclay will assist the Chair with technical industrial matters as appropriate during the meetings. The introductory meeting began with discussion about the role of the ACUSCC as outlined in the paper distributed prior to the meeting.

1. MATTERS ARISING:

1.1 HEWRRs 2

The Chair noted that consultation is wide ranging and he emphasized that the University is required to consult with all staff not the ACUSCC alone. The Vice-Chancellor will be required to sign a statutory declaration for DEST in August this year to confirm such consultation within the context of HEWRRs complies with government requirements.

1.2 THE ACUSCC - TERMS OF REFERENCE

Dr Marea Nicholson advised that she had been elected as a spokesperson for the seven staff representatives and that they had caucused prior to the meeting.

It was also noted that the staff representatives were elected in their own right either by the academic or general staff of the University. Dr Barclay invited the elected staff members to voice their own opinions if they wished to on any particular matter so as to ensure that all views are canvassed.

1.3 ACUSCC MEMBERSHIP

Dr Nicholson asked the Chair if any resourcing support was available to committee members and if the notion of supported time/time release had been considered.

Dr John Barclay suggested that committee members contribute to the ACUSCC as part of their normal duties; for their own professional development; and, as a service to the University and that this is not different from any other involvement on a University committee. Involvement in these committees being seen as a part of the participant's work responsibilities.

The Chair suggested that the local supervisors of the committee members be advised of their staff attending the committee, and requested to give the staff members due consideration from a work perspective.

The Chair was asked if there were any plans for a face to face meeting. The Chair responded that he did not anticipate organizing any face to face meetings. If there should ever be a need for such a meeting adequate notice will be provided and the University will cover travel and accommodation costs where needed.

It was suggested that ACUSCC members on the same campus might like to assemble together for future meetings where this is feasible.

It was noted that there is representation from the majority of ACU Nationals campuses.

Dr Nicholson asked the Chair if staff of the University could have access to a forum or a website so that staff can contact the ACUSCC member who represents them.

The Chair suggested that a memorandum be sent out to all staff with the contact details of the members of the ACUSCC. This would be within the context of the processes required to obtain consultative input from the ACU National workplace community.

2 STANDING ITEMS

The Chair advised that a further report was available on Academic Staff Development which will be distributed to all ACUSCC members following the meeting.

(This report was provided to all ACUSCC members on 4 May 2007).

The Chair advised the committee that the University will provide reports for the standing items where appropriate.

2.1 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELLBEING REPORT

Ms Glenis Davey asked what “Wellbeing” means. Dr John Barclay responded that wellbeing is a very broad concept concerning the personal health of the staff member, health information programs and work and life balance. From PREOD’s point of view the concept is in its early stages of development and will evolve over time.

Ms Davey told the committee that there is a new Workcover statement in Victoria that covers stress management and she agreed to provide this statement to the committee.

Ms Davey suggested to the committee that the language in injury and incident reports in addition to accidents may need to encourage a wider range of incidents to be reported.

2.2 STAFF EQUITY AND DIVERSITY REPORT

The committee received this report

2.3 GENERAL STAFF ORGANISATIONAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT REPORT

The committee received this report

2.4 ACU CONSULTATION PROCEDURE RE POLICIES

Dr Barclay informed the committee that there are over 140 interim staff related policies in existence at the University and that consultation processes in relation to these will progress inline with the University’s HEWRRs obligations. Related policies are to be brought forward to the committee for consultation, normally in a four to six weekly cycle.

Those policies with little or no comment can be advanced to the next scheduled ACUSCC meeting. Input from staff and ACUSCC members will be considered from a range of perspectives, such as industrial relations, the University Mission, costs, HEWRRs, administrative efficiencies and usability. The University will attempt to respond to comments where possible.

Personnel Relations and Equal Opportunity Matters will be utilized to communicate with staff. Once interim policies have been to the ACUSCC and the consultative process has been completed, the final documents can be approved by the Vice-Chancellor and the word ‘interim’ will be deleted. Policies will then become fully binding until reviewed at a subsequent time.

Ms Anne Szadura suggested that in line with formal consultation, staff representatives on the ACUSCC would need access to staff feedback sent to PREOD.

Dr Nicholson stated that staff representatives need access to staff feedback and suggested having access to a website which would provide a forum. Dr Barclay indicated that there were not resources available in the PROED to support a forum approach and, therefore, that this approach could not be sustained.

Dr Barclay indicated that there will be capacity to put this information on the website for staff to access but this will not be available until after the new University site is operational.

Dr Barclay commented that suggestions for consideration will need to be submitted within the set time frame so that it can be considered and integrated where appropriate before the next ACUSCC meeting.

The Chair suggested that changes be made to the consultation flow chart. Dr Barclay said that the chart could be changed so that it reflects consultation with the University community. The chart will be adjusted prior to the next ACUSCC meeting.

In light of the large number of policies to be considered, the Chair indicated that it may be beyond the University's capacity to reply to both staff and committee members on every comment and that this therefore would need to be recognized to ensure efficiency of process.

Professor Crossley requested that changes be indicated in the documents, and the changes will be tracked or highlighted in some way.

Dr Nicholson asked what policies are being developed and hoped that these were not being developed outside the University community.

A question was posed to the committee about employing the assistance of experts for this process. Dr Barclay replied that the University employs experts and that there is no need to enlist external consultants in this process.

2.5 LIST OF POTENTIAL PANEL OF EXTERNAL CHAIRPERSONS

The Chair advised the committee that he actively encourages input from ACUSCC for other potential Chairpersons to go on to the list. He requested the names be forwarded to the Executive Officer of the ACUSCC Ms Pauline Croxon.

Dr Nicholson responded that they will review the list and provide input into next meeting.

3 OTHER ITEMS OF BUSINESS:

The Chair advised the committee of a casual vacancy in the ACUSCC due to Ms Megan Mullen's resignation. The election process is taking place and there should be a replacement by mid August.

The idea of having reserve committee members in case of resignation was put to the committee.

Dr Barclay suggested that if there is a casual vacancy in a committee perhaps it may be filled by the person who came second or next in the election, on the condition that, the vacancy occurs less than 12 months from the date of the election.

Dr Stokes suggested that an election process should continue because of HEWRRs and that an election might be the safest way to avoid potentially contravening HEWRRs.

Dr Barclay suggested that DEST can be contacted regarding this if needed and that he would explore the issue further and provide advice at a subsequent meeting.

5. NEXT MEETING:

The next meeting date of the Committee was confirmed for 7 June commencing at 3:00 pm.

The agenda for this meeting will not include policy consultation as the time line is too tight.

The Chair informed the committee that a change management proposal will be put forward at the next meeting.

Dr Barclay requested the PREOD restructure be put forward at the next meeting provided that it is approved by the Core Planning Group. Mr David Keegan emphasized that staff in PREOD would want this considered as soon as possible. It was decided that the PREOD restructure documents will be submitted as agenda items at the next ACUSCC meeting subject to approval in principle by the Core Planning Group.

It was noted that the ACUSCC meeting scheduled for 25 October 2007 would need to be rescheduled due to several committee members having conflicting schedules. An alternative date will be brought forward at the next meeting.

The meeting concluded at 4:30 pm.

6. ACTION ITEMS

Actions	Completed
The University undertook to circulate the Academic Staff Development report.	Provided to all ACUSCC members on 4 May 2007
The University undertook to approach local supervisors of the committee members, requesting that they give the staff member due consideration with regard to their ACUSCC role.	Letter to committee members supervisors sent 15 May 2007
The University undertook to adjust the consultation flow chart	The consultation flow chart has been adjusted and approved by the Core Planning Group and will be provided at the next ACUSCC meeting.
The University undertook to send a memorandum out to staff with the details of the elected members of the ACUSCC. This is to be a part of the invitation to staff to comment on the first group of interim policies being advanced for University wide consultation.	To be advised