Minutes
School Meeting
12.00noon, 26 July 2011, Blakers Lecture Theatre

Present: Andrew Bassom (Chair), Ed Cripps, Alice Devillers, Jenny Hopwood, Kevin Judd, Nazim Khan, Robin Milne, Kevin Murray, Tony Pakes, Melanie Roberts, Gordon Royle, James Springham, Thomas Stemler, Lucho Stoyanov, Steve Su, Berwin Turlach, Song Wang

1. Apologies
Kathleen Chindarsi, Michael Giudici, Les Jennings, John Lau, Cheryl Praeger, Phill Schultz

2. HOS Report

- Jenny Hopwood has circulated the latest workload allocation model for the School. Please let the HOS know if there are any problems.

  The University is asking Faculties to have workload models in place for 2012. The Faculty has been working on this. Due to the different way of working in M&S compared to the Engineering Schools we may end up with a separate School workload model. Academics will be consulted once a preliminary model is available.

- Ed Cripps’ contract has been extended until April 2013.

- A new travel procedure is coming online called Trobexis. All travel will need to be booked through this system.

- The Faculty Research Allocation is made up of three parts – the number of papers in the last three years, ARC and general grant income for the last year, and the number of PhD completions in the last three years. Monies have been distributed for the grant allocation and PhD completions. The allocation for publications is still being finalised so these funds are yet to be distributed. All funds distributed under the Research Allocation will be paid into staff grants.

  Gordon queried how equipment for Postdocs is to be funded. Previously it has been the responsibility of the School. The Faculty are working on a Faculty-wide policy but in the meantime the School will continue to fund basic equipment. In the future it will probably be funded either by the Faculty or by research grants.

- Information and nomination forms have been sent out for ERA2012. The University is encouraging staff to put their names forward. It does involve quite a bit of time – a panel Chair could expect an extra 9 weeks’ worth of work a year and a panel
member an extra 7 weeks’ worth of work. This would be included in the workload model though and support would probably be given from the University.

- The Research Room in 2.19 is well under way. We have received various quotes and expect work to start in the next couple of weeks. We hope it will be finished by the end of semester.

- The Research Themes in the Faculty have now been established. There was a tremendous response to the request to join research themes with a 90% response rate. Each research theme will be holding a workshop in the coming months where staff can meet and discuss ideas. The workshop for the maths research theme will be in November. The Research Theme leaders are also organising a series of seminars. There will be a monthly general seminar which aims to be of interest to everyone. The first one will be in August. The other research theme leaders will also be holding regular seminars and will be looking for suggestions for speakers.

- Over the next six months our main focus will be preparation for New Courses 2012. There will be an incredible amount of work involved and all Teaching and Research staff are expected to participate. Until the end of the summer break Conference Leave of more than 10 days will not be approved unless there are exceptional circumstances. Annual Leave can be taken as usual.

3. IBoS Developments

Des Hill reported. We have been told by IBoS that we are unable to move our first year bridging maths units and that complementary units can no longer be added in as they aren’t allowing any further changes for 2012. This creates a problem as FLPS were behind the other Faculties in developing their complementary units so their majors don’t include any complementary maths units. This is just an administrative problem which we are trying to sort out at the moment.

Under the current structure students can’t graduate from UWA with a Science degree without the equivalent to Applicable Maths. Under the new 2012 structure the level of maths required for a general science degree is very low. We can’t change this for 2012 but we are trying to have this changed for 2013. There are some exceptions such as Physics, Genetics and Chemistry where a higher level of maths is required.

From next year FNAS will be embedding statistics in their units and will incorporate maths with online tutoring. FNAS will be holding a workshop on 8 August to discuss this and we have been invited to attend. The Dean, Cara MacNish and the HOS had a meeting with Lyn Abbott from FNAS a couple of weeks ago where they explained this new procedure. We have been encouraged by the Dean to assist FNAS. Nine months ago FNAS were told that they have to include mathematics and statistics in their degree but rather than having separate units taught by Maths they have chosen to embed the material in their own units.
Kevin Judd and Thomas are building the new Masters programmes. Volunteers will be asked to help with this. Kevin Murray and Nazim are in charge of developing the Quantitative Methods Masters.

4. Update on New Units (Kevin Judd)

Kevin Judd reported on the work done over the last 6 months towards new courses and the work still to be done over the coming 6 months. The syllabus for MM1 and MM2 is currently being developed and MM3 is being prepared for the physicists. Each topic has been broken down into sub-topics and they have then been labelled low, medium and advanced difficulty. The physicists have been consulted and are pleased with what has been developed so far. The Engineers are going from 3 units of maths down to 2 which presents some difficulties, except for EE and Civil who are having 3 units. Working parties are looking at the preparation of teaching materials, streams, tutorials etc. Kevin has had discussions with publishers about textbooks. He has just taken delivery of some books and will be looking at their suitability. Two students will be helping out with the development of Calmaeth for the new units. All staff should expect to be involved in the development of these materials over the next 6 months. All material will be placed on the web for comments.

Kevin has been concerned that we are trying to fit material from 3 units into two units to satisfy the engineers. Under the new structure we currently have 2 fixed units in level 1, 2 out of 3 in level 2 and 4 out of 6 in level 3. This structure was agreed upon because we thought we had the constraint of only having honours level. Now that we do have Masters other options might be suitable. Kevin suggested looking at some of those options, in particular the structure of 4 fixed units plus a complementary unit. This is similar to the standard structure of a degree and would include a lot more material giving a broader degree. Kevin will also be putting this material on the website for comments.

Berwin expressed concern that the unit MM3 contained statistics material from M1020 instead of M2209. Des suggested that now would be a good time for the statisticians to meet with the physicists regarding their statistics requirements.

Progress is also being made on the broadening unit.

5. Committee Reports
   a. Teaching & Learning Committee (minutes attached)
      Refer to Minutes.
   b. Outreach Committee (minutes attached)
      Refer to Minutes.
   c. Research and Postgraduate Committee
      Nothing to report.

6. Faculty Strategy document (attached)
The Dean presented the Faculty Strategy document at the recent Full Faculty Board meeting. The Dean’s presentation is available on Lectopia if you were unable to attend the meeting. This document is the mission statement of the Faculty. The Faculty are now seeking feedback on the goals and principles included in the document. The HOS suggested that each Section Head organise meetings over the next couple of weeks to discuss this and start pencilling in some strategies. Once the sections have done this the document will be discussed further at another School Meeting which the Dean will address.

7. Any Other Business

Nazim Khan requested some help with Open Day on 14 August 2011. Posters for the different disciplines will be needed as well as volunteers to help on the day. A quick guide to New Courses will be provided to helpers and Kevin Judd will also prepare information specific to Maths.

a. Travel funds

Andrew discovered about 2 months ago that Heads of School receive an allowance each year which is ½ the salary of a Level A postdoc which is intended to keep the HOS’s research going. As Andrew hasn’t used this, the PG now has about $80,000 in it. Andrew doesn’t currently have a postdoc so he is proposing to make an allocation of these funds across all members of teaching and research staff. These funds would be to support travel, purchase of computers etc.

The funds could be distributed in two ways – either a flat distribution across all T&R staff or a tiered distribution as follows:
Staff under probation - $3,000
Level B&C staff not under probation - $2,000
Level D&E staff - $1,000

with the lower level staff receiving more as the higher level staff should have more access to other funds such as research grants. Postdocs would be treated as one-off cases and could put forward a request for up to $1500 towards computer equipment.

This would be a one-off allocation and in no way commits any future HOS to make a similar allocation of funds.

All staff supported this proposal and supported the tiered system as favoured by Andrew. The funds will be distributed in the next 6-8 weeks to staff PGs.

Meeting closed 1.25pm.