A meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee was held on Thursday, 15 December 2005 at 10.00am in Room N54 2.01, Bray Centre, Nathan Campus.

Minutes

PRESENT:
Professor John Dewar (Chair)
Professor Stephanie Short
Professor Neil Dempster
Professor Lex Brown
Professor Paul Turnbull
Dr Heather Alexander
Dr Alf Lizzio
Dr Rodney Stuart
Professor Lorelle Frazer
Ms Carmen Vassallo
Ms Elizabeth Davies
Dr Michael Crock
Professor Joy Cumming
Mr John Swinton
Dr Joseph McDowell

Present by invitation
Dr Lyn Holman
Dr Linda Conrad

Secretary: Christine Grimmer
Karen van Haeringen

APOLOGIES:
Mr Dave Edwards
Professor Michelle Barker
Mr Paul Jolly
Professor Bill Shepherd
Professor Royce Sadler

1.0 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of the 3/2005 meeting were circulated at the meeting and are taken to be read and confirmed.

SECTION A: RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS TO ACADEMIC COMMITTEE AND ITS SUB-COMMITTEES

2.0 DEFINITION OF RESEARCH-BASED LEARNING AND IMPLEMENTATION

2.1 The Academic Plan 2 sets priorities and targets that 70% of programs will show identifiable components of work-integrated learning and research-based learning by 2010. At the 3/2005 meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee, members discussed the definition of research-based learning, and the challenges of meeting such targets and identifying and assessing that courses meet the definition of RBL. The definition (2005/025029) was approved by a majority of the committee by a flying
minute. It was noted that the definition contains both an explanation of research-based learning and a mechanism for its measurement against targets expressed in the Academic Plan.

2.2 The Learning and Teaching Committee was asked to consider a proposal for extension of the course outline system to capture research-based learning in courses, Course Outline System: Proposed extensions to capture Research-Based Learning (2005/0035294).

2.3 The proposal recommends that radio buttons indicating the Research-Based Learning status of the course be added, to require Course Convenors to indicate whether or not the course incorporates a research-based learning component. In submitting Course Outlines for publication, Course Convenors will be required to indicate whether or not the course incorporates a research-based learning component after assessing the course against the categories and criteria set out in the Definition of Research-Based Learning.

2.4 In further discussion of the definition and its implementation, members noted the following points:

- That the primary intention of the policy is to ensure that students are exposed to research-based learning to the extent specified.
- Point 4.1 is very specific about what students should experience in their courses.
- That courses that currently employ enquiry based methods of teaching (methodologies endorsed and encouraged by University) should already meet these requirements.

2.5 The committee discussed mechanisms for measuring and reporting on the content of research-based learning in courses and programs. Dr Lyn Holman noted that Program Convenors need to deal with the implementation as a first stage and then report back to the Learning and Teaching Committee on the process. It was suggested that the initial implementation could be regarded as an investigation from which benchmarks could be developed.

2.6 A member asked which courses within a program might be targeted for inclusion in the 20% and it was noted that this could not be limited to core courses as electives are often more advanced and contain research components.

2.7 The committee discussed a schedule for implementation and reporting and noted the following:

- While overall data can be collected only after two semesters, data might be collected earlier by requesting a School or program to pilot the system using the proposed extension on the course outline system. It was suggested that the School of Arts Media and Culture may trial the reporting system, as it will be reviewed shortly.
- The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) noted that robust data is required by Council as soon as possible. It was noted that the process would be lengthened if the definition was to be sent to Faculty Boards.
- As the reporting is on Programs, it will be incorporated into Annual Program Monitoring reports for the Strategic Plan.
- There was agreement from the Committee that the definition should be sent to Faculty and Portfolio Deans for comment with a response to the Head of Secretariat requested by January 30. The Chair and the Head of Secretariat will give some thought to how this will be reported.
Recommendation

2.8 The Committee resolved to recommend that:

- The definition of research-based learning (2005/0025036) be forwarded to Academic Committee for approval.

- That the course outline system be extended as outlined in the proposal Course Outline System: Proposed Extensions to Capture Research-Based Learning (2005/0035294) and be forwarded to Academic Committee for approval.

3.0 WORK-INTEGRATED LEARNING - DEFINITION

3.1 The Learning and Teaching Committee was asked to develop definitions and targets for work-integrated learning and research-led learning to support priorities and targets in the Academic Plan 2 that 70% of programs will show identifiable components of work-integrated learning and research-based learning by 2010.

3.2 At the 3/2005 meeting of the Committee, members considered a definition of work-integrated learning (2005/0035278) and made suggestions for significant revision. The Chair requested the Head of Secretariat, Karen van Haeringen, to redraft the definition in the light of these discussions. A revised, Definition of Work-Integrated Learning (2005/0025025), was circulated via the Committees Quickplace for consideration by members. Feedback from members (2005/0035297) was circulated.

3.3 The committee considered feedback which expressed general approval of the revised definition. Several members expressed concern that the quantity of work-integrated learning to be included within programs was not clear. It was noted in response that the key issue was the availability of work-integrated learning to students rather than the amount. A member suggested that the wording “students are given the opportunity to experience ...” be included. It was noted that activities recognised as work-integrated learning will be linked to the University’s WIL website.

3.4 In further feedback, the Chair noted that a key element of whether an activity is considered work-integrated learning is that it is assessable, and recommended that the “and/or” between structured and assessable under section 4.0 be removed. The Chair suggested the following change (in bold) to the definition:

For a program to contribute to meeting the University’s strategic performance indicator for work integrated learning it should include at least two work-integrated learning activities that form a significant part of the assessment for a course/s and are recognised by the University through inclusion in the WIL Programs listing on the Office of Community Partnerships website and are available to all students in the program who wish to take advantage of it.

3.5 The Deputy Vice Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) noted that an audit of work-integrated learning would be funded through the Office of Community Partnerships. This may be useful as a benchmark for future years.

Recommendation

3.6 The committee resolved to recommend that the revised definition of work-integrated learning (2005/0025033) be forwarded to Academic Committee for approval subject to the inclusion of amendments outlined in 3.3 and 3.4 above.
SECTION B: ACTION UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

4.0 HONOURS ANNUAL REPORT

4.1 Following the disestablishment of the Honours Sub-Committee, the Learning and Teaching Committee considers annual reports about the conduct of honours programs (eg. demand, enrolments, progress, assessment outcomes) with a view to monitoring the standards implied by the classes of honours degrees awarded and examining the comparability of those standards across Faculties.

4.2 The Learning and Teaching Committee was asked to consider data on the overall performance across the University for the period Semester 2, 2001 to Semester 2, 2004.

4.3 It was noted that the data shows a pattern of increase and decline each two years. The years 2004/2005 represented a downturn in the four year cycle. The years 2006/2007 are likely to represent an upturn if the pattern continues. However, the data does indicate a decline in the number of students taking honours as a portion of the total student body.

The data indicates the following trends:

- That students have a better chance of attaining first class honours results if they undertake an ‘end-on’ honours degree rather than an ‘embedded’ honours degree.
- That the proportion of honours students as a proportion of all students is not very good, but the rate of completions is good. It may be that the number of students undertaking honours is declining because students are not performing as well, but it should be noted that the number of students graduating each year is increasing.
- That the rise of dual degrees can be seen as a different way of expressing excellence.

For noting

SECTION C: OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS AND REPORTS
(TO PERSONS/COMMITTEES OTHER THAN THE PARENT COMMITTEE(S))

5.0 HONOURS POLICY & RELATED DEGREE POLICIES

5.1 The Working Party to Review the Structures of the Honours and Coursework Degrees was convened to review the structure of the honours degree and its relationship to the Bachelors and Masters degrees to provide a more effective approach to research training; including identification of the signature experience for honours.

5.2 At the 1/2005 meeting of the Working Party it was agreed that the key outcomes be:
- Amendments to the four policies - Structure and Requirements of Degrees Awarded by Griffith University, Bachelors Degree Policy, Honours Programs – Requirements and Administration, and the Policy for the Award of Masters Degrees other than the Master of Philosophy plus other related policies.
• Discussion paper with supporting arguments for change within each of the policies, and a
• List of non-policy issues that require further consideration and action.

5.3 At its 2/2005 meeting, the Working Party considered the four policies and recommended changes. The policy now deals only with end-on Honours programs and includes the provisions relating to embedded Honours, reflecting that the Bachelors degree is awarded with Honours to students who meet specific requirements or conditions of achievement.

5.4 A summary of the changes is included in the document Discussion Paper on Reviewing the Structure of the Honours Degree and its Relationship with the Bachelors and Masters Degree (2005/0035305), which was circulated via Quickplace prior to the meeting. The Learning and Teaching Committee was asked to consider the discussion paper, summary of changes and the policies.

5.5 Dr Lyn Holman attended the meeting to speak to the attached policies:
• Bachelors Honours Degree Policy (2005/0035308)
• Structure and Requirements of Degrees awarded by Griffith University (2005/0035309)
• Bachelors Degree Policy (2005/0035307)
• Policy for the Award of Masters Degrees other than the Master of Philosophy (2005/0035306)
• Role of the Honours Convenor (2005/0025031)

5.6 Dr Holman noted that the revised policies are major structural program documents with significant changes that make them more usable and up to date, and which are both linked to and reflective of changes in the Academic Plan. Very broadly, changes include:
• Provision of larger generic programs with individual testamurs.
• Failure in a course or courses implying failure in the Honours program overall
• Changes in the Bachelors program to reflect requirements of the Academic Plan for stronger degree programs
• Masters programs to include nested awards such as credit, Honours and Masters with Distinction

5.7 The Chair requested that the nomenclature be amended from 1st class, 2nd class, and 3rd class Honours degrees to - Honours 1, Honours 1A or 1B, and Honours 111.

Recommendation

5.8 The Committee recommended that the revised policies be forwarded to Faculty Boards for consideration. The five policies and the discussion paper detailed in items 5.5 and 5.6 above have been forwarded to Faculty Boards with the request to provide feedback for presentation to the April meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

SECTION D: MATTERS NOTED, CONSIDERED OR REMAINING UNDER DISCUSSION

6.0 CARRICK LEADERSHIP GRANTS

6.1 The Carrick Institute has released guidelines for a Leadership Capacity Building Program as the first round of grants offered in its comprehensive Grants Scheme. The guidelines outlined in the document, Leadership for Excellence in Learning and
Teaching Program (2005/ 0035293) emphasise that grants are designed to build leadership capacity in ways that promote and advance learning and teaching in Australian higher education. In the first round of funding, expressions of interest or full submissions are due by March 17, 2006 and a final round for full submissions closes on May 31, 2006.

6.2 The Chair suggested that a small group be convened to identify existing and potential centres of leadership and to target these groups or individuals as potential applicants.

6.3 A member noted in the context of leadership at Griffith that the role of the course convenor should be a focus for attention.

Recommendation

6.4 The Committee resolved to recommend that the Chair convene a small group to identify groups and individuals who might be targeted to apply for Leadership grants.

7.0 REPORT FROM THE FIRST MEETING OF THE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

7.1 Chair of the newly established Learning Environment Committee, Professor Paul Turnbull, presented a brief report following the first meeting of the Committee, at which the following background reports were considered:

- Report on Print Production, Digitisation and Distribution (2005/0025022)
- Report on Print and Digital Library Collections (2005/0025023)
- PEW/Internet, Teens and Technology(http://www.pewinternet.org/)

7.2 The Learning Environment Committee noted that various initiatives employing digital technologies to enhance teaching and learning are underway or scheduled for development. In some areas, such as participation in the Australian Digital Theses Initiative, Griffith is well advanced. One of the challenges ahead of the committee is to consider how these initiatives might be further developed to enhance Griffith’s capacity to develop and deliver quality online teaching and learning.

7.3 The committee noted that not all staff were aware of digital initiatives at Griffith and discussed ways in which staff could be made more aware of, and participant in, these initiatives.

7.4 The Committee also considered the findings of the progress report on the review of flexible learning at Griffith available at:


The review concluded that the University’s strategy and investment in flexible learning has resulted in achievements that potentially position the University well in delivering student centred education. The key achievements are identified as a substantial skill base in flexible learning across the University, a significant number of learning objects and resources, a standard interface Learning@Griffith, and the provision of 12 Learning Centres across the campuses.
7.5 However, the perception of students is that, rather than flexible learning enabling them to take greater responsibility for their learning, the University has delivered in the main, educator-led instruction accompanied by on-line materials. The review identifies the challenges at this stage of the University’s development of flexible learning as including:

- matching the use of different types of resources to the student cohort and the stage at which they are at within their education (e.g. first year students, postgraduate students);
- encouraging the sharing and reuse of the many learning objects that have been developed;
- encouraging our teaching staff to use Learning@Griffith to facilitate consistent access and communication with students;
- using the standard interface Learning@Griffith as a base that can be extended through links to other materials;
- clarifying the roles of various University agencies that support teaching and learning to encourage greater collaboration; and
- developing clear curriculum standards to ensure the quality of teaching and learning at Griffith;

and recommends that in the next phase of flexible learning the emphasis should be on:

1. student centred learning driving the dimensions of flexibility;
2. program-wide focus;
3. enhanced collaboration;
4. maximising outcomes;
5. development of clear policy frameworks and quality assurance processes.

7.6 In relation to Learning@Griffith, Professor Turnbull noted that a priority for 2006 will be responding to the findings of the PEW/Internet research on Teens and Technology, e-teaching and e-learning, which indicate that students increasingly want cyber service and show zero tolerance for institutional failure in this respect. Students expect interactive and experiential learning modalities. The Committee agreed to sponsor a series of informal seminars to demonstrate and explore innovative practice in flexible learning. It was agreed that the seminars would have a problem-based focus.

7.7 Professor Turnbull noted that the structure of the Learning Environment Committee was good because it was comprised of staff from FLAS and IT and academic staff, and expressed the hope that members of the committee would interact informally and that ideally their conversations would be available to the Griffith community via a blog (Web log: a shared on-line journal where people can post diary entries).

7.8 The Chair thanked Professor Turnbull for the summary report and noted that the Learning and Teaching Committee looks forward to the implementation of recommendations coming from the Learning Environment Committee.

For noting

8.0 CAAUT AWARDS SEMINAR

8.1 The Carrick Institute offered a national seminar in Adelaide on the 10 November to provide background and advice for eligible institutions on its enhanced award scheme, the Carrick Australian Awards for University Teaching, which commences in 2006.

8.2 The introduction of a Citations Scheme in addition to teaching and program awards is of particular interest since it is a new process and will involve the identification of
nominees from a broader range of University staff. Nomination for citations is open to academic staff, general staff, sessional staff and institutional associates in eligible institutions. All nominations must relate to contributions to student learning in higher education. Each eligible institution may nominate up to ten individuals or teams for Citations for Outstanding Contributions to Student Learning each year.

8.3 The Head of the Secretariat, Karen van Haeringen, attended the seminar and provided a brief summary of the key issues for consideration in preparation of University applications for the 2006 Carrick awards.

For noting

9.0 REPORT FROM COURSE MANAGEMENT CHANGE MANAGEMENT GROUP

9.1 The Academic Committee adopted a new Course Outline process in November 2004 for implementation with trial Schools/Departments in Semester 2, 2005. The Course Outline Requirements policy directs Course Convenors to prepare Course Outlines for semester 1, 2006 using the Course Outline template, for publication on the Course Outlines website by the first week in February 2006.

9.2 The Course Outline Project communication plan details the range of planned communication activities to ensure staff readiness for the new course outline process. Academic staff have the opportunity to attend repeat seminar sessions focussed on the Course Outline template and system in December and January.

9.3 An implementation progress report (2005/0035289), was circulated for the information of the Learning and Teaching Committee, summarising all communications and events set out in the communication plan, plus communications and events added following endorsement of the plan. Progress on an item has been indicated in the document.

For noting

10.0 COMMUNITIES OF PRACTICE

10.1 Academic Plan 2, in describing strategies for bringing focus to the signature experience of Engaging Disciplines, outlines the establishment of Communities of Practice as a strategy for fostering interdisciplinary approaches to curriculum design as well as a mechanism for problem based professional development in and across disciplines.

10.2 The Learning and Teaching Committee has sponsored the development of various Communities of Practice as a strategy for promoting best practice in learning and teaching in and across disciplines. The Committee was advised that Communities of Practice have been established in the following areas:

- Cultural Diversity
- Mentoring
- Student Learning Portfolios
- Human Service and Health Practice with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples

10.3 Communities of Practice differ from networks in that they are intentional, problem based, and focus on the development of tools and resources to improve practice. The document, Learning and Teaching at Griffith:Communities of Practice (2005/0035288) has been used as a guide to establish the above-mentioned and any new groups.

For Noting
11.0 GRIFFITH GRANTS FOR LEARNING AND TEACHING – WORKSHOP

11.1 Griffith University has established and supports a number of award and grant initiatives to encourage, recognise and reward those who demonstrate excellence and innovation in their teaching and supervision. The Learning and Teaching Committee was asked to establish a 2006 Grants scheme. A “Griffith Grants for Learning and Teaching” scheme for 2006 was designed, primarily to support innovative approaches to learning and teaching consistent with the Griffith Academic Plan 2 and also to identify candidates for the Carrick Institute’s proposed Grants scheme.

11.2 At the 2/2005 meeting, a draft scheme, Griffith Grants for Learning and Teaching (2005/0035269), was presented for discussion. Following recommendations from the Committee a revised scheme, Griffith Grants for Learning and Teaching (2005/0035274), was recommended to the Academic Committee for approval at its November meeting. The scheme has three foci as follows:

- Institutional Grants – Strategic School/Program Grants (Four grants at $100,000 each)
- Interdisciplinary/Disciplinary Grants – Signature Grants (Four grants up to $50,000 each)
- Individual Grants – Innovation Grants (Eight grants at $10,000 each)

11.3 Applications for 2006 Griffith Learning and Teaching Grants are due on February 24, 2006. Griffith Institute for Higher Education will run a workshop on 1 February 2006 designed to provide hands on practical advice and support to individuals or teams applying for a Griffith University Learning and Teaching Grant. The format of the workshop requires that applicants bring a draft of their application so that it can be discussed.

For noting

12.0 CARRICK SUMMARY OF AUQA REPORTS

12.1 The Carrick Institute released a summary of the AUQA reports entitled Summary of Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education - Promoting and Advancing Learning and Teaching in Higher Education: The Messages from the AUQA Reports by - Dr Kay Stevens, October 2005, in late November. It is a sizeable document. The Head of the Secretariat, Karen van Haeringen, produced a ‘summary of the summary (2005/0035302)’ which was provided to members for their information.

13.0 SUB-COMMITTEES OF LEARNING AND TEACHING COMMITTEE

13.1 EDUCATIONAL EXCELLENCE COMMITTEE

13.1.1 An action Sheet from the second meeting of the Educational Excellence Committee was circulated (2005/0035304).

13.2 LEARNING ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

13.2.1 An Action Sheet from the inaugural meeting of the Learning Environment Committee was circulated (2205/0035290).

13.2.2 A Report on Teaching Fellowships 2005 by Dr Dianne Watters (2005/0035303) outlining the use of personal response systems (Keepads) in teaching large classes was circulated.
14.0 CHAIR'S REPORT

14.1 AUSTRALIAN AWARDS FOR UNIVERSITY TEACHING

14.1.1 The Secretariat received advice from the Carrick Institute on October 11 that all four nominees from Griffith University had been selected as finalists for the 2005 Australian Awards for University Teaching.

14.1.2 Griffith’s nominees for the 2005 AAUT were as follows:
- Professor Michelle Barker – Teaching Award: Law Economics, Business and related studies
- Sam di Mauro - Teaching Award: Humanities and the Arts
- U3A: Three Eras of Cooperation - Institutional Award: Provision of educational services to the community
- Group Assessment in the Arts and Education Group - Institutional Award: Approaches to improving/enhancing assessment

14.1.3 Professor Michelle Barker was announced as winner of the National Teaching Award in the category of Law Economics, Business and related studies at the award ceremony in Canberra on the evening of November 29. The Vice Chancellor congratulated Professor Barker and the three finalists in an all staff email on November 30.

14.1.4 The Chair, on behalf of the Learning and Teaching committee congratulated Professor Michelle Barker on receiving the national award.

14.2 FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE COORDINATOR

14.2.1 The Deputy Vice Chancellor circulated a notice (2005/0035286) advising that The University wishes to appoint a senior member of academic staff to coordinate the Griffith First Year Experience for the academic years 2006 - 2007. Expressions of interest have been invited from Senior Lecturers and above for a 50% appointment to the position of First Year Experience Coordinator in the Deputy Vice Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)'s Office commencing in January 2006.

14.2.2 The role is responsible for overseeing the first year experience for Griffith’s commencing students, in particular the development of effective approaches and innovative programs that target commencing students, resulting in improved retention, improved completion rates and successful graduate outcomes. The Coordinator is expected to work closely with students, academics and support service staff, and will be an ex officio member of the Orientation and Engagement Committee and the Learning and Teaching Committee.

14.2.3 The Chair noted that expressions of interest had been received and that an appointment would be made soon. The Chair will report on the appointment at the first meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee in 2006.

14.3 LEARNING AND TEACHING PERFORMANCE FUND

14.3.1 The Chair noted that Griffith did not receive funds in the November 2005 round and that it was clear that the committee responsible for allocating funds had taken no account of the contextual statements provided. The Chair noted that
there are indications that the Minister may revisit the process of allocating funds.

14.3.2 Griffith has invited Mr Ken Lowe from ACER to visit in 2006 to examine processes for collating DEST data at the University.

14.4 COURSE OUTLINE PROGRESS

14.4.1 The Academic Committee adopted a new Course Outline process in November 2004 for implementation with trial Schools/Departments in Semester 2, 2005. The Course Outline Requirements policy directed Course Convenors to prepare Course Outlines for semester 1, 2006 using the Course Outline template, for publication on the Course Outlines website by the first week in February 2006.

14.4.2 An audit carried out on Thursday 15 December indicated that 8.6% of courses had been submitted and 1.1% published using the new course outline template and process.

14.4.3 Professor Neil Dempster, Chair of the Course Management Change Management Group, noted that this can be considered a good result and that a good final result could be expected since the policy itself was strong, staff had been given notice of the policy and requirements well in advance, the course catalogue is linked to the course outline template, and improvements had been made following a review by the Learning and Teaching Committee in semester 2.

14.4.4 The Chair thanked Professor Neil Dempster for overseeing the project.

14.5 NEW GROUP STRUCTURES

14.5.1 The Chair advised that the University had recently commissioned the consultants Phillips KPA to review the Research Centres policy with a view to improving and streamlining its operation; and in particular to clarify the roles of Centre Directors and their relationships with other managers in the University. The University will be responding to the recommendations of the final report from Phillips KPA report in two ways:

(a) Changes to the Research Centre policy -

(b) Clarification of Group management structures –

14.5.2 With regard to point (b) above, the Phillips KPA Report identified serious problems flowing from the current variability in the University’s structural arrangements and senior management roles in Groups. In a broadcast email to staff (0035285), the Vice Chancellor, Professor Ian O’Connor, indicated that the University, in response, will implement the following structural changes as a matter of urgency.

14.5.3 Groups will be required to conform to one of two standard structural templates - a single faculty Group template, and a multi-faculty Group template. Within each template, roles and accountabilities of senior managers will be clarified. The detailed arrangements entailed in each template are outlined in the document Group structures and accountabilities of senior academic managers.
at Griffith University: A proposal (2005/0035291), which was provided to members.

14.5.4 These changes are a tidying up of current structural arrangements, which will address some long standing problems and will lead to clearer lines of responsibilities and accountability. These changes were tabled at the December meeting of Council for approval, and Pro Vice Chancellors will soon begin the process of taking them forward in their Groups.

14.5.5 The Chair noted that there is a strong learning and teaching theme in the discussion about structures with a view to identifying who is responsible for learning and teaching.

14.5.6 The Chair noted that consequential changes to positions were being managed by HR and that Dr Lyn Holman, with staff in Academic Administration, was working through broader consequences.

15.0 NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Learning and Teaching Committee will be held on Monday 6 February at 10.00am in Room N16_1.22, Nathan Campus

Confirmed: ............................................

(Chair)

Date: ......................................................