

College Education Committee Meeting 3-2020
College of Science and Engineering
Minutes

Date: Monday 6 April 2020

Time: 10am – 12pm

Location: via Zoom

1. Acknowledgement of Kurna Land

The Chair acknowledges that the Committee is meeting on the traditional country of the Kurna people of the Adelaide Plains, and that the Committee recognises and respects their cultural heritage, beliefs and relationship with the land and acknowledges that they are of continuing importance to the Kurna people living today.

2. Welcome and Apologies

In attendance: Karen Burke da Silva (chair), Brett Wagner, Carl Mooney, Christopher Biro, Deborah West, Ingo Koeper, Jacqui Troath, Jeanne Young, Jodie Zada, Rachel Gein, Laura Chiappara-Estevez, Masha Smallhorn, Lerryn Pennell.

Apologies: Anna Shillabeer, Cassandra Hood, Jamie Quinton, Kate Stringer, Michelle de Cean, Peter Mason, Pixie Stardust, Stuart Tilley.

Students Committee Representatives have not yet been appointed but they will be finalised and attend the next meeting. We have had a few students nominated but we need to ensure we have them spread across the College.

3. Minutes of Previous Meeting*

The College Education Committee approved the minutes for meeting 2-2020, held on Monday 16 March 2020. Lerryn advised that the February and March meeting minutes had been provided to University Education Committee (Nicole Westrich).

4. Actions from Previous Meetings

Not discussed.

5. Dean's update

DVCS new policy around grades (Committee had not seen this email). May have gone to students only. Main changes:

- Students who fail will have the opportunity for supplementary assessment which could include the option to resubmit an assignment
- At the end of this semester we will look at distribution of student grades and compare it to grades from previous years, last year in particular, and if there is a real difference between the grades this year and last year, we will be scaling or shifting them up and moving them up to match last year's grades.
- If a student receives a grade that they are unhappy with, they can ask for a non-graded pass, but they'll need to fill out a form explaining why; they'll have to think about it and put effort into it.

Action: Karen will follow this up with Antony for the DVCS email to be sent out.

The decision was made after taking into account the range of views from students.

Several students are concerned about their Grade Point Average (GPA), so we are looking at whether we should include all NGPs for this semester.

Some students want a high grade to improve their GPA while others are worried that if they get a low grade due to the online experience it will push their GPA down. This is the reason we've put in place this opportunity for students to say we are not happy with the grade and they'd rather have an NGP.

The scalings will be done at Exam Board. Every topic will receive the distribution of grades (as is usual practice). The Exam Board may be a bit different this semester in that we may invite all the TCs along to look more carefully at the grades.

Jeanne suggested an email be sent to students explaining what it means and providing the form to use. It will help the students understand the process and the background and be good for the topic coordinators when they respond.

It was confirmed that students will be required to submit the work.

Deborah West advised that the Teaching & Learning Committee are in the process of working out how it will work, along with the processes that sit behind it. The Working Group will put together the forms as soon as possible as it will be important for the TCs to have this to discuss with their students.

Karen advised we need to be flexible with deadlines if students don't hand in assignments but push them to submit their assessment piece.

6. Academic Integrity

Karen advised that every Topic Coordinator has been asked to provide a review in terms of online teaching and sessional teaching staff; that spreadsheet is now complete and has gone out to each of the Teaching Program Directors. There will be a meeting to go through each of them.

Most have done a really good job getting all their activities online. That's been a colossal effort, especially around the labs, practicals and field trips – a lot are still being worked out but are starting to go online. The semester break will allow people time to catch up and be ready for second half of the semester.

Assessment is the big issue now – especially the final exam that many academics have in their topics. The best scenario will be to move away from the final exam in as many cases as possible.

However when there is or remains a final assessment we'll need to work with the Topic Coordinators to ensure it's done appropriately and in terms of academic integrity they don't just give the normal exam without invigilation – it won't be a good test of the students' knowledge.

With online exams, if you run through FLO, there are a couple of strategies you can use:

- have a certain number of questions that you know they can do in a certain time and give them a little bit of extra time to think about the question but not enough to hunt the answers down on Google or another browser.
- A large bank of questions, with each student getting a random selection of questions with equal difficulty. The likelihood, even if they are in the same room, of getting the same questions, is slim.

Trent trialled online 10-minute vivas with each student but this takes a lot longer and needs a lot of resources.

In first year Biology, Masha advised there are 4 lecturers each providing a selection of short answer questions – a question bank per lecturer – lecturers will mark that. Short answer questions that cannot be easily Googled; multiple choice questions will be too easy to Google.

FLO quiz is quick to mark short answer questions. Another option is that they write new multiple-choice questions for a big data bank, that will be more work up front but probably the same amount of time overall.

Action: Masha will follow-up with lecturers about this.

For large classes you don't have too many options, unless you get rid of the exam completely and put more weight on the quizzes for example.

Masha advised that the mid-semester exams in Week 7 is an online exam (last year online but invigilated by the demonstrators); it will require a larger pool of questions (25 questions for last year, even if we do 100 this year - it's doable). Exam available from 9am on the Tuesday of Week 7 and closes on the Thursday that week at 5.00 pm.

It will give students, if at home, a bit of flexibility. Exam runs for 45 minutes and is open for 3 full days in place of attending their Collaborate practical. They can take the exam at any time over those 3 days. If any issues we can re-set it easily. It's worth 10%.

Last year's is available as practice – same format but this year there'll be a question bank.

It will be an interesting exercise to see how they go compared to last year and then consider whether we should consider doing the end of year exams. The Committee suggested that doing the final exam as multiple choice will be much easier.

Carl advised that no academic integrity issues have come across his desk.

7. Internal Course Accreditation Reviews – status update

Ingo – need to talk about all the Sciences course recommendations and what we do with those.

8. External Course Accreditation Review

Nothing in this space for this year, except for Computer Science and IT - ACS.

Action: Anna to provide update for the next meeting.

9. Course Quality Advisory Groups

Ingo advised that first meeting was postponed – will take place in a couple of weeks' time.

10. Teaching Program Directors*

. Not discussed.

11. Student Recruitment

- a) Domestic
- b) International

Alistair showed a graph at the Staff Forum last Friday which indicated that student enrolment numbers were up compared to this time last year – we didn't lose a lot of students before the census date which was very pleasing.

Brett spoke of a list of Semester 2 courses that International want to market online - ones

that are easier to be taught online. Master of Science, Masters of Engineering, Masters of IT – the courses we'd normally focus on from an international recruitment point of view and ensuring we have the capacity to teach them all, online, if we need to.

It may be quite a struggle to bring on new students and teach them in an online version. It's a discussion that's happening with the University.

We can see how they perform this semester, seeing they are all doing it online, especially the 1st year cohort and the MIT and then make an assessment based on that observation as to how feasible it might be.

The MIT is using a lot of the online topics anyway so that course has been designed for online learning. None of the other courses have been designed for online learning.

Action: A further discussion to be arranged with Alistair about that.

12. Curriculum Review Update – Curriculum 4.0

Nothing new at present – concentrating on Covid-19 response.

13. Student Retention

Not discussed.

14. Honours Report*

Students may not be able to finish a full honours project – DVCR advises that research can continue if appropriate health parameters are put in place.

Action: Karen to work with Honours Coordinators to look at which projects are halted and sort through the issues to understand why some people have halted their projects.

Ingo in PAMS – academics are unsure of what was happening so some mixed messages went out; some came back after clarification from Alistair.

A lot of unrest amongst academics – VC directive was for everyone to work from home, but DVCR wants lab or field-based work to continue – Ian is clarifying the confusion via the Work from Home forms.

There has been a lot of confusion from PhD students but working with Alistair and Cathy Abbott around this.

Many universities in Melbourne are now closed down. Push research projects as much as we can before anything like that happens.

Deb advised that we remain open until the Government makes a different decision. The hope is that we can remain open for research and critical things.

15. Student Reflection

Not discussed.

16. Course and Topic Approval

Course proposals for 2021 are coming along – there are a lot of them. Rachel is prioritising the UG ones so they can go into the SATAC guide.

Karen to talk to Alistair today about a couple of new degree combinations. 54-unit Master of Science etc. Any changes need to be given approval from Karen and Jeanne before proceeding.

Rachel to focus on Engineering and the MIT.

Deborah advised there's a list from Alistair and a much longer list from all and sundry; it will be an impossible workload for Rachel. Karen confirmed that Alistair's list is the one to concentrate on. Karen/Jeanne's tick of approval required before proceeding.

Brett advised that Alistair is to send an email about the Master of Engineering Management not proceeding.

17. Any Other Business

Laura (Library) – news from the Library. Created a new student topic 'Learning online with FLO'. New services for academics who would like a consultation for online topics. Essential readings and textbooks are available online. Researchers are piloting a 3- tiered service (*refer attachment*).

Student support – central support desk in the HUB - International student, library, SAS and FUSA staff – students are still coming onto campus if no computer/Wi-Fi at home etc. - support and assistance provided. These services will be closed in Colleges, FUSA services desk will be closed as well as Flinders Connect.

Access online is preferable but if they are on campus that's where they can go.

Only other service desk that's open is in Health Services – most consultations are via Telehealth, there's heavy screening for face-to-face consults. Flu vaccines are available.

Clare Pollock – financial support available to students – hardship grants. \$1m grants to make – 80 applications received to date; they expect to be inundated.

Counselling still open – face-to-face and online.

Disability services still open – phone/online, all prayer rooms closed as per government directives.

Student access forms – phone or send an email to disability services@flinders – phone or online assessment – send them out an access plan.

18. Executive Approvals for noting

None for this meeting.

Meeting closed 11.15am.