UNIVERSITY INTERNATIONALISATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of the (1/2006) meeting of the University Internationalisation Committee held at 9.30am on Thursday 30 March 2006 in the Belmore Room.

Present:  
Mr J Langridge (Chair)  
Prof R Whelan  
Prof J Morrison  
A/Prof G Williams  
Prof J Bern  
A/Prof S Tanner  
A/Prof G Hampton  
Prof J Bremner  
Mr P O’Halloran  
Mr P Day  
Ms R Buckham  
Ms M Bell  
Dr D Christie  
Mr M Ngui  
Mr D MacKinnon  
A/Prof S Dolnicar  
Mr M Rowney

In Attendance:  
Ms C Taylor, Ms T Hoynes (Policy and Governance Unit), Prof L Astheimer (PVC Research), Ms H Sainsbury (Strategic Planning Unit) Mr C Littler (Library), Ms S Watson (Policy and Governance Unit), Ms L Armour (CEDIR)

Unable to attend:  
Prof M Sheil, Prof R Castle, Prof D Griffiths, A/Prof J Curtis, Prof J Glynn, Ms F McGregor, Prof P Kitley, Ms S Hughes, A/Prof B Derewianka, A/Prof T Chandra, Ms E Ens

PART A - PRELIMINARY BUSINESS

A1 Apologies and Welcome

Apologies were received from Prof Rob Castle, Prof D Griffiths, Prof P Kitley, A/Prof J Curtis, A/Prof B Derewianka, Ms F McGregor and Ms S Hughes.

The Chair welcomed Mr Martin Rowney, a new student representative on UIC elected by and from Academic Senate.
A2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved 01/06

That, subject to minor amendments, the minutes of the UIC meeting on 23 November 2005 are confirmed as a true record of the proceedings of that meeting.

Resolved 02/06

That Prof J Morrison and A/Prof G Williams are recorded as attending the meeting.

PART B - BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

The Chair reported on the following matters arising from the minutes of the meeting of 23 November 2005:

Transnational Education

Formal discussions with the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) on transnational education are yet to take place, pending an indication from the Vice-Chancellor on the direction UOW will take on this matter.

2005 UIC Self-evaluation

There was a poor response rate to the 2005 UIC self-evaluation questionnaire. Nevertheless, some of those who responded raised a number of pertinent issues, including a lack of clarity in and understanding of the terms of reference for UIC and its subcommittees. Given that URC has recently reviewed its structure and terms of reference, and that UEC is currently undergoing such a review, it seems both timely and appropriate to review UIC and its subcommittees. A review committee will be convened to conduct the review. Membership of the review committee will include:

- Jim Langridge as Chair
- Chairs (or nominees) of the subcommittees
- Theresa Hoynes, Senior Manager Policy and Governance
- Other co-opted members, as determined by the review committee.

Prof Rob Whelan, Chair of ISAAC raised a further item of business arising from the previous meeting. The terms of reference for ISAAC were to be amended to correct several errors. A revised version of these terms of reference was tabled for the Committee’s consideration, and it was agreed that several amendments be made.
Resolved 03/06:

That the ISAAC terms of reference are amended, as follows:

In the section beginning “[I]nternational agreements and alliances…”,

1. That point (d) should be revised to read “providing input into policy on offshore agreements and student exchanges”;
2. That point (e) should be deleted and referred to LISSC; and
3. That point (f) should remain until it is dealt with in the forthcoming full review of UIC terms of reference.

PART C – GENERAL BUSINESS

C1 Chair’s Report

The Chair reported that he had recently attended meetings of DVCs/PVCs International and the IDP Board which had raised several critical issues that the higher education sector will need to deal with. He will also be attending the forthcoming AEI (international division of DEST) conference and hopes for clarification there on a number of important matters.

The Chair also outlined the 2006 UIC strategic priorities, namely:

• Further developing the Targeted International Links Grants scheme
• Greater uptake by students of international study opportunities
• Maximising the benefits of the scholarships program
• Improving the International Studies Minor program.

In response to questions, the Committee was advised that:

• Information on the exchange program, including scholarships and destinations, is available on the University website (http://www.uow.edu.au/student/exchange/)
• A survey of students conducted approximately two years ago indicated that students were reluctant to go on exchange for a variety of reasons, including interruption to part-time work, loss of income and costs involved. A further barrier may be that 40% of the undergraduate population of UOW is mature age (21+), which can mean family responsibilities prevent them from long stints overseas.
• Scholarships of up to $5,000 are available to students who go on exchange; students without a scholarship receive a travel grant of $1,000. There is also funding of $500 available from the Vice-Principal (International) to any student who goes overseas for a short period, as long as the overseas study is for credit.

The Committee agreed that faculties need to identify a person to ‘champion’ the international exchange program, much as Henri Jeanjean in the Faculty of Arts very successfully champions his student exchange program to Pau University in France.
C2  **Government Policy and Issues Impacting on International Education**

In addition to the information in his written report, Mr Paul O'Halloran advised the Committee that recent changes at the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs (DIMA) had been positive.

The review of the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) Act is continuing, with the focus now on the National Code of Practice for Registration Authorities and Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students. Substantial changes to the National Code are expected, and a draft will shortly be released for public comment.

DIMA is being lobbied by peak bodies to lower the English language visa requirements for entry to pre-tertiary ELICOS courses. DIMA has noted concerns at the poor performance of some graduates when they take IELTS near the end of their course to apply for skilled migration. After the current review, DIMA is likely to require a higher IELTS for skilled migration (possibly 6.0), and award extra migration points for higher scores (up to IELTS 7.0).

Mr O'Halloran encouraged the Committee to pass on feedback or suggestions on any issue raised in his reports.

C3  **Report from UniAdvice**

Mr Peter Day, Manager International Student Recruitment, reported that there has been a slowdown Australia-wide in the recruitment of onshore international students. Higher education statistics for the full year show declines in numbers of commencing students from eight of the top ten source countries. The decline in commencing students at UOW was, in part, attributable to a rise in the English language entry requirements at the Sydney Business School and a delay in responding to market demand for new or revised courses, particularly in computer networking.

Mr Day stressed the need for senior UOW academics and officers to raise the profile of the University by attending international conferences and promotional events.

In response to questions, Mr Day advised the Committee that the Research Office has been involved in the development of the 2006 research prospectus. The new prospectus will cover all areas of research at UOW, rather than concentrating on areas of research strength. It was suggested that the prospectus could also be useful vehicle for highlighting UOW’s international links.

A/Prof Graham Williams from the Faculty of Informatics informed the Committee that there had been a national downturn of about 30% in domestic students enrolling in informatics courses, following a downturn worldwide. However, the Faculty has detected an increase in student numbers since it addressed its course issues. A/Prof Williams also told the Committee that the Faculty’s offshore
offerings were going extremely well, with around 200 students enrolled through the Singapore Institute of Management, which has recently become Singapore’s fourth university. A further 40 to 50 enrolments are expected in new courses in multimedia design and games design offered at the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology.

C4 Reports from Senior Executive members

On behalf of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research), the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research), Prof Lee Astheimer, reported that the Research Student Office is currently reviewing the information on its web pages. Prof Astheimer will take up the matter of promoting UOW’s international links with the RSO.

C5 Report from UOW Dubai

The Chair advised the Committee that UOW Dubai is already outgrowing its teaching space just two years after the most recent capital works. Six courses are currently being scrutinised by the UAE Commission of Academic Accreditation. Possible new courses for Dubai in engineering, arts and health are being considered, and the Chair suggested that anyone interested in proposing new courses can contact Prof van der Walt. The Chair also reported that the first cohort of Indian students had now enrolled. India has now taken over from Iran as the largest source of non Emirati-based students.

C6 International Studies and Alliances Subcommittee Report

Prof Rob Whelan, Chair of ISAAC, spoke to the tabled report, in particular highlighting the recent approval by Academic Senate of the introduction of the Cotutelle scheme. The scheme allows UOW to enter into arrangements with French partner universities for students to complete a doctorate that will result in degrees being awarded by both institutions. The scheme is supported by EU funding. Prof Whelan suggested that similar arrangements with other international partner universities with which UOW conducts collaborative research could be investigated.

Prof Whelan also explained to the Committee the mapping exercise done by ISAAC on UOW’s international links and university rankings. The tabled spreadsheet includes the Shanghai Jiao Tong University top 500 rankings, alongside the UK Times top 200, the US News and World Report top US universities, CHE list of German research universities and AsiaWeek’s best Asian universities. Next to these, ISAAC had mapped information from the faculties, past Targeted International Links Grants and UniAdvice on UOW’s existing or proposed international links. The mapping exercise is part of the process to produce the next Targeted International Links list of 30 or so institutions. It was suggested that further rankings could be mapped, such as the Financial Times and Pennsylvania State University lists of top business schools. Prof Whelan asked Committee members to let him know of any other useful ranking or league tables that could be included. There may also be omissions in the lists of UOW’s linkages, as not all faculties had responded to ISAAC’s requests for information.
C7 Language and International Student Support Sub-Committee Report

A/Prof Greg Hampton, Chair of LISSC, reported that the 2005 survey of international students had raised some serious issues, including the subsistence-level finances of some students and instances of harassment and abuse in the local community. While prospective students are advised of the cost of living in Wollongong, it might be time to revitalise the Job Shop to help international students look for part-time work. A/Prof Hampton also suggested that a public relations campaign is required to communicate to the wider community how the presence of international students benefits the region, and a community engagement grant will be sought to do this. The Chair offered the Committee’s support for the grant application, and said other resources might be found to assist these proposals. It is important that international students realise the University takes these issues seriously.

C10 Internationalisation Strategic Plan Review and Planning Report 2005

The Chair asked the Committee to send any comments on the draft Strategic Plan Review and Planning Report to Catriona Taylor (taylor@uow.edu.au).

C11 AUQA Report of UOW Quality Audit

Ms Heather Sainsbury from the Strategic Planning Unit (SPU) advised the Committee that AUQA’s report on UOW had been released on 15 March and is available in full from the AUQA website at www.auqa.edu.au. While AUQA made various favourable comments about UOW’s internationalisation activities, it also noted that there were several areas needing improvement. These included marketing strategies, the failure rate of full fee-paying students, a framework for managing offshore partnerships, and the uptake of study abroad opportunities. SPU will prepare a Quality Improvement Plan in response to the report which will draw as far as possible on processes already in place. The University will need to post a report on its website in 18 months’ time that sets out the progress made towards addressing the issues in the audit report.

The Chair suggested that individual views on the report should be sent direct to Heather Sainsbury, and invited Ms Sainsbury to brief the Committee on the Quality Improvement Plan at its June meeting.

C13 Work Plans

In regard to the LISSC work plan, A/Prof Greg Hampton advised the Committee that LISSC planned to steer the Illawarra Committee for International Students towards community engagement issues. LISSC will also look at UOW policies that might specify English language requirements and at the possibility of including overseas internships into the culturally-inclusive curriculum options.
PART D – OTHER BUSINESS FOR NOTING

D1 Other Business

The following items of other business were raised:

- Having separated from the Faculty of Commerce, the Graduate School of Business will need a representative on UIC. The Chair will follow this matter up.
- The Faculty of Law will be delivering a Masters course in Prosecutions to staff of the Malaysian Attorney-General’s Department. Courses in Transnational Crime Prevention will also be offered through Tsinghua University in China.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 11.10am.

Catriona Taylor
Executive Officer
University Internationalisation Committee