The following matters, which may be of interest to the staff and students of the University, were considered by the University Council at its meeting of 24 November 2006.

It was the last Council meeting for academic staff member, Professor Julie Steele. Council thanked Julie for her significant contribution to Council over the last three years and wished her well in the future.

Professor Tony Hulbert will commence as one of the two academic staff members of Council on 1 January 2007.

Council noted the recent death of Professor Howard Worner, UOW Honorary and one of Australia's most eminent metallurgists and scientists, and passed a resolution of condolence.

Vice-Chancellor’s Report

UOW named Commonwealth University of the Year: The University has won the Times Higher Education Supplement’s inaugural award of "Commonwealth University of the Year". The announcement was made at an awards ceremony held in London last week. UOW's Manager of Community and Partnerships, Ms Monique Harper-Richardson, was in London representing the University at the awards ceremony.

The "Commonwealth University of Year" award 2006 was being run for the first time in liaison with the Association of Commonwealth Universities. The award, open to all higher education institutions in the Commonwealth excluding those from the UK, was focused on how universities achieve community engagement. The prestigious National University of Singapore was runner-up.


Innovation Campus: The University has signed the contract for the construction of the Innovation Campus' Central Facilities Building. An inspection of the site took place on 24 November 2006.


Medical School: The Australian Medical Council is preparing its final report on the UOW Medical School. The indications are very positive with the University looking set to receive accreditation.

VSU Funding: Due to the financial consequences of the Voluntary Student Unionism legislation (VSU), the University had previously put on hold its proposed extension to the URAC facilities. The University is now making a funding bid to the Federal Government to recommence this project.

Research

- The Federal Government has decided to push ahead with the Research Quality Framework which is based on the UK model and will present significant changes to the research funding process. The administrative costs of preparing for the RQF will be significant for universities and UOW has begun its preparations for this exercise.

- The National Health and Medical Research Council funding grants have been announced. UOW secured two grants worth a total of $1.1 million (Prof Mark Walker and his team from Biology and Dr Nadia Solowij and her team in Psychology).

- The University’s designated research strengths have been increased from 12 to 15.

Teaching and Learning

- In 2006, UOW was equal top nationally (with UQ) in winning grants from the Carrick Institute for teaching and learning.

- A former UOW honours graduate and University Medal winner, Jane Olsen, was recently awarded the prestigious Undergraduate Thesis Award at the 2006 Australia and New Zealand Regional Science Association Inc (ANZRSAI) conference for her Bachelor of Commerce (Honours) thesis.

Water Savings Awards: The University of Wollongong and the University's Maintenance and Energy Manager, Mr Chris Hewitt, have been acknowledged by the State Government for helping to achieve significant water savings at the annual Every Drop Counts Business Program Awards ceremony held in Sydney on 15 November.

Mr Hewitt won an individual award for significant achievements in water conservation. He has introduced a number of water-saving initiatives on campus, including plans to harvest rainwater from roofs to irrigate sports fields and using vacuum systems in laboratories that do not use water.

Sport: The University has won its first rugby premiership in the first grade competition.

Chair of Academic Senate’s Report to Council 2006
Council received the Chair of Senate’s Annual Report to Council. The report is available on the Senate web pages at: [http://www.uow.edu.au/content/groups/public/@web/@gov/documents/doc/uow002221.pdf](http://www.uow.edu.au/content/groups/public/@web/@gov/documents/doc/uow002221.pdf)

Business from the Administrative Committee
Council received the minutes of the 31 October 2006 Administrative Committee Meeting. For further information about the Administrative Committee: [http://www.uow.edu.au/governance/admin.html](http://www.uow.edu.au/governance/admin.html)

Occupational Health & Safety
The October Occupational Health and Safety Report was noted by Council. For further information on OH&S: [http://staff.uow.edu.au/ohs/](http://staff.uow.edu.au/ohs/)

Policy Approval
General Course Rules and Examination Rules

Research Amendments to the Rules for Student Conduct and Discipline
Amendments to the misconduct processes involving higher degree research students were approved by Council. The amended Rules can be accessed online at: [http://www.uow.edu.au/handbook/generalrules/student_discipline_rules.html](http://www.uow.edu.au/handbook/generalrules/student_discipline_rules.html)

Review of Information Systems and Information Technology disciplines
Council received the report of the recent review of Information Systems and Information Technology in the University. The review covered subjects and courses, administrative and academic structures as well as research and staffing issues. Council noted the review recommendations.

Planning and Development Appointments
Mr John Steinke and Mr Rod Oxley were reappointed as community members of the Planning and Development Committee, each for a two year term.

Amended WUSA Constitution
Amendments to the WUSA constitution were supported by undergraduate students through an online referendum in October. The amendments were forwarded to Council for approval and all were passed, except for one provision that sought to reduce the majority needed to remove a representative from a two thirds to a simple majority. The amended constitution will be available on the WUSA web pages.

Innovation Campus Progress Report
A progress report was received on the Innovation Campus. For more information about developments at the campus: [http://www.innovationcampus.com.au/](http://www.innovationcampus.com.au/)

Reports from Controlled Entities
A third quarter progress report was received from the ITC Ltd. Further information on the ITC: [http://www.itc.com.au/](http://www.itc.com.au/)

End of year reports were received from the UniCentre and URAC. Further information about the UniCentre: [http://unicentre.uow.edu.au/](http://unicentre.uow.edu.au/)

The next University Council meeting is scheduled to be held on Friday, 9 February 2007.