

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the four hundred and fourteenth meeting of the Academic Board held in the Council Chamber, John Scott Meeting House, La Trobe University, Bundoora Campus on Wednesday 21 March 2007 at 9.30am

PRESENT: Professor C Handley (Acting Chair), Professor C Adams, Mr T Bajaj, Professor M Chanock, Dr L Crase, Professor D de Vaus, Professor K Dodd, Dr J Douglas, Ms M Federico, Ms C Freebody, Mr B Goddard, Professor N Gough, Professor E Gow, Mr J Griffiths, Ms J Gwynn, Dr K Holmes (*vice* Professor T Murray), Professor N Hoogenraad, Dr L Howie, Dr J Jackson, Dr D Kirkby, Professor D Kirkpatrick, Professor M Lake, Ms L Lavender, Professor G Leder, Professor L Ling, Dr J McArdle, Ms V Mansel Lees, Dr G Mayer, Professor R W Parish (Acting Vice-Chancellor), Professor S Paxton, Mr A Plaisted, Professor M Rimmer, Dr M Sandeman, Dr K Souter, Dr D Tillett, Ms G Verrinder, Mr G Villalta, Dr A Vongalis-Macrow, Professor R Walker, Professor H Westerbeek and Mr Y Yang.

SECRETARIAT: Ms A Cowburn

IN ATTENDANCE: Professor R Adams, Professor R Brownlee, Mr B Carboon, Dr K Ferguson, Professor R La Polla, Dr E Martens, Professor P Murphy and Professor A Perry.

PART A: PROCEDURAL MATTERS

(i) Apologies and Attendance

Apologies were received for Dr Roger Croome, Professor Simon Crowe, Professor Frank Hardman, Dr Trevor Hogan, Ms Lyn Lang, Professor Vaughan Prain, Mr Paul Richardson, Professor Ian Robinson, Professor George Stephenson and Professor Erich Weigold.

(ii) Approval of Agenda and ordering of Agenda Items

The Board resolved to approve the Agenda, as circulated.

The Board received the following tabled papers:

- AB07/29 *Attachment H*, Report of the Selection Committee: Associate Dean, Allied Health
- AB07/29 *Attachment I*, Report of the Selection Committee: Chair in Tourism Management
- AB07/29 *Attachment J*, Report of the Selection Committee: Research Professor of Philosophy (*establishment of position and appointment by invitation*)
- AB07/29 *Attachment K*, Report of Committee for Emeritus Professors and Scholars meeting held on 19 February 2007
- AB07/30 Award of Degrees and Diplomas

(iii) Outstanding Matters

The Board received and noted report AB07/28.

(iv) Matters approved on behalf of Academic Board

The Board received report AB07/29 and noted the following matters which had been approved on its behalf since its last meeting:

(a) Membership of Committees:

- (i) *Selection Committee: Professor/Associate Professor of Allied Health (Northern Health)*, as detailed in Attachment A to report AB07/29;
- (ii) *Selection Committee: Professor/Associate Professor of Macroeconomics*, as detailed in Attachment B to report AB07/29;

- (iii) *Selection Committee: Chair in Finance and Associate Professor of Finance*, as detailed in Attachment C to report AB07/29;
- (iv) *Selection Committee: Professor/Associate Professor of Management*, as detailed in Attachment D to report AB07/29;
- (v) *Selection Committee: Chair in Tourism Management*, Dr K Ferguson *vice* Professor Parish;
- (b) Establishment/re-establishment of positions:
 - (i) a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to establish a joint position of Professor or Associate Professor of Allied Health as a collaborative partnership between Northern Health and the Division of Allied Health, La Trobe University, as detailed in Attachment E to report AB07/29;
 - (ii) a proposal from the Faculty of Law and Management to establish/re-establish the following positions, as detailed in Attachment F to report AB07/29:
 - Chair/Associate Professor in Macroeconomics;
 - Chair in Finance;
 - Associate Professor in Finance; and
 - Professor/Associate Professor in Management;
 - (iii) a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to establish and advertise a position of Professor/Associate Professor of Public Health and Head of School, as detailed in Attachment G to report AB07/29;
- (c) Report of Selection Committees:
 - (i) *Associate Dean, Allied Health*, as detailed in confidential tabled Attachment H to AB07/29;
 - (ii) *Chair in Tourism Management*, as detailed in confidential tabled Attachment I to AB07/29;
 - (iii) *Research Professor of Philosophy [establishment of position and appointment by invitation]*, as detailed in confidential tabled Attachment J to AB07/29;
- (d) Report of Committee for Emeritus Professor and Scholars, as detailed in confidential tabled Attachment K to report AB07/29; and
- (e) Award of degrees and diplomas, as detailed in Attachment L to AB07/29.

(v) Report of the Acting Vice-Chancellor

The Acting Vice-Chancellor reported on a number of matters of current interest.

(a) Learning and Teaching

- The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Student Services) would report on the findings from the national survey of students in Australia's 37 public universities conducted in 2006 by the AVCC [*see item 6*].
- Enrolments were currently at 105.4%

| | |
|--|--------|
| Faculty of Education | 102.9% |
| Faculty of Health Sciences | 107.9% |
| Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences | 103.2% |
| Faculty of Law and Management | 109.4% |
| Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering | 102.2% |
| Albury-Wodonga | 98.1% |
| Bendigo | 104.8% |
| Mildura | 100.8% |
| Shepparton | 106.3% |
- *Murray-Darling Basin Civil Engineering Cadetship Programmes*: whilst in Canberra on 1 March 2007, a meeting was held between Ms Wendy Craik, Executive Director of the Murray-Darling Basin Commission; Professor Joe Petrolito, Civil Engineering; Mr David Ensor, Director of Industry and Community Engagement; and the Acting Vice-Chancellor. The programme is to sponsor 60 x 4-year civil engineering scholarships in conjunction with industry partners over six years at the Bendigo Campus.
- Mr John Molony, Executive Director (International), commenced on Monday 19 March 2007.
- The external review of the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering took place 7-9 March 2007. The final report will be available at the end of April.

- The Acting Vice-Chancellor met in Sydney with Professor Deryck Schreuder, to discuss the Review of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences which Professor Schreuder will Chair.
- (b) *Research*
- The official opening of the Knowledge Transfer Division by the Chancellor took place yesterday.
 - The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) will report on the University's research agenda, including the RQF framework, at the next Academic Board meeting.
 - A team has been established to oversee the preparation of the University's RQF submission. Emeritus Professor Robert Leckey had been appointed as co-ordinator.
 - *National Biosecurity Centre*: the Acting Vice-Chancellor and Vice-Principal (Resources and Administration) met with the State Minister for Agriculture, the Hon. Joe Helper to discuss the project. It is expected to be discussed by the Expenditure Review Committee of Cabinet in the near future.
- (c) *Infrastructure and Facilities*
- *VSU*: the University is providing \$3m for support of student services. \$110,000 in fees had been collected from students voluntarily joining the Student Guild. A shortfall of \$500,000-\$600,000 in addition to the \$3m will be covered by the University.
 - The Argus Project Steering Committee chaired by the Vice-Chancellor has been established and has met twice.
 - The Acting Vice-Chancellor; Director, Industry and Community Engagement; and Mr Trevor Greene, Director, Melbourne Symphony Orchestra, met in Canberra with the Federal Minister for Arts and Sport, Senator George Brandis, to outline plans for the Beechworth Centre for the Arts and to seek Federal support.
 - Student One: Melbourne University is also implementing Student One and collaboration between the Melbourne University and La Trobe University is being established. The Acting Vice-Chancellor is receiving weekly progress reports on implementation.
- (d) *External Issues*
- The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Strategic Development) is organising a campaign, with other regional universities, to lobby the government to increase the funding for the regional campuses. A meeting of representatives of universities with regional campuses to plan the campaign will be held on April 12 at La Trobe.
 - The Victorian Vice-Chancellors met with the Hon Jacinta Allen, Minister for Skills, Education Services and Employment. Issues discussed were the decreasing Federal funding for the sector, the extra costs of regional campuses and the possible future roles of State and Federal Governments in higher education.
 - The AVCC will in future be called Universities Australia. The new Board will have nine members, including a Chairman and a Chief Executive. Chancellors will not be members. Joint meetings between the University Chancellors' Council and Universities Australia will take place twice yearly. The Universities Australia Constitution will need to be endorsed by University Councils.
 - The Acting Vice-Chancellor and Deans are developing criteria for annual performance reviews of Faculties. It is envisaged a team chaired by the Vice-Chancellor will meet with a Faculty Team chaired by the relevant Dean to review past and future performance and plans.
 - 40th Anniversary Celebrations: Professor Altman has suggested that La Trobe University inaugurate an annual "Festival of Ideas". Further events are planned throughout the year.
- (e) *Governance*
- The Senior Management Group is now functioning as a policy committee.
 - The Acting Vice-Chancellor is meeting with the Deans on a monthly basis to discuss Faculty issues. The Vice-Chancellor elect will continue these meetings.

PVC(R)/
EO(AB)

PART B: MATTERS FOR APPROVAL

414.1 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 February 2007 [AB07/26(M)] were confirmed, with the following amendment:

- Page 11 – delete *Ms Hughes* and replace with *Ms Gwynn*.

414.2 ITEMS APPROVED WITHOUT DISCUSSION

414.2.1 Award of Degrees and Diplomas

The Board received tabled report AB07/30 and **resolved** to recommend to Council the award of degrees and diplomas as detailed therein.

EO(AB)

414.2.2 Establishment of prizes

The Board **resolved** to establish formally the following Prizes:

- (a) Humanities and Social Science: La Trobe University Bendigo/Theosophical Society Perennial Philosophy Undergraduate Prize, as detailed in report AB07/31;
- (b) Humanities and Social Science: La Trobe University Bendigo/Theosophical Society Perennial Philosophy Postgraduate Prize, as detailed in report AB07/32;
- (c) Humanities and Social Science: Parsons Brinckerhoff Prize, as detailed in report AB07/33;
- (d) Health Sciences: Elsevier Gerontic Nursing Clinical Practice Prize, as detailed in report AB07/34;
- (e) Health Sciences: Elsevier Excellence in the Care of Older People Prize, as detailed in report AB07/35;
- (f) Health Sciences: The Orthoptic Association of Australia Inc. Prize for Second Year Orthoptics, as detailed in report AB07/36;
- (g) Health Sciences: The Orthoptic Association of Australia Inc. Prize for Third Year Orthoptics, as detailed in report AB07/37;
- (h) Health Sciences: Elsevier Undergraduate Academic Achievement Award, as detailed in report AB07/38;
- (i) Health Sciences: Rochester and Elmore District Health Service Prize, as detailed in report AB07/39;
- (j) Health Sciences: Gerontology Special Group Prize *[amendment]*, as detailed in report AB07/40;
- (k) Health Sciences: Cardiothoracic Special Group Prize *[amend name to Cardiorespiratory Physiotherapy Australia (Victorian Branch) Prize]*, as detailed in report AB07/41;
- (l) Health Sciences: Podiatrist Registration Board of Victoria Prize and the John Diggle Award *[amend name to Podiatrists Registration Board Award]*, as detailed in report AB07/42;
- (m) Health Sciences: APA Victorian Branch Honours Research Prize *[deletion of prize]*, as detailed in report AB07/43;
- (n) Health Sciences: Australian School of Therapeutic Massage Award *[deletion of prize]*, as detailed in report AB07/44; and
- (o) Health Sciences: The AMA Bendigo and District Subdivision Prize *[deletion of prize]*, as detailed in report AB07/45.

Fac. Reg.
Ms L Smith
Ms A Forden

414.2.3 Membership of Committees

(a) Library Committee

The Board **resolved** to appoint Dr Diane Kirby (*vice* Dr L Thwaites) to the Library Committee, under category C – one member of the Academic Board as nominated by the Academic Board, as detailed in report AB07/46.

Sec. LC

414.2.4 Award of 2006 DM Myers Medals

The Board received report AB07/47 and **resolved** to award 2006 D M Myers Medals to:

- (a) Education Lois Vear
- (b) Health Sciences Ms Chelsey Lee Nash
- (c) Humanities and Social Sciences Ms Alison Horsbury & Mr Edwin Wise
- (d) Law and Management David Padovani
- (e) Science, Technology and Engineering Sarah Johansen & Rohan Claffey

Fac. Reg./
AEGTO

414.3 STANDING COMMITTEES OF ACADEMIC BOARD

414.3.1 Report of Academic Committee: 13 February 2007

The Board received report AB07/48.

- (a) *Proposal to offer the Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Commerce double degree at Bendigo campus*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering to offer the Bachelor of Science/Bachelor of Commerce double degree at the Bendigo campus, as detailed in Attachment A to report AB07/48.

Fac. Reg.

- (b) *Proposal to introduce the Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Information Technology*

The Board **resolved** to endorse, for referral to Council, a proposal from the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering to introduce the Bachelor of Commerce/Bachelor of Information Technology (LBCBIT), as detailed in Attachment B to report AB07/48.

EO(AB)

- (c) *Withdrawal of 120 credit point Master of Teaching*

The Board noted that Academic Committee had received and noted advice from the Faculty of Education regarding the withdrawal of the 120 credit point Master of Teaching coursework program. Academic Committee had previously approved a proposal from the Faculty of Education to introduce a two year full time Master of Teaching course to replace the existing one year full time Master of Teaching course, subject to correspondence citing the deletion of the existing one year full time Master of Teaching course.

- (d) *University Assessment Policy Working Party*

The Board noted that the first meeting of the University Assessment Policy Working Party had been held on 2 February 2007 and issues were emerging quickly. It was also noted that the following preliminary set of principles would be incorporated into the University Assessment Policy and had been discussed by the Working Party:

- Assessment should be criterion referenced.
- Assessment practices should be equitable.
- There should be a variety of assessment tasks.
- There should be more than a single piece of assessment for any one unit.
- The link between assessment and learning needs to be clearly stated.
- Assessment feedback should be timely and two way.
- The timing of assessment should be appropriate.
- Assessment should be both formative and summative.
- Assessment policy and practice should be regularly reviewed.
- Academic standards should be maintained or improved.

414.3.2 Report of Research and Graduate Studies Committee: 16 February 2007

The Board received report AB07/49.

- (a) *Bureau of Animal Welfare Unit*

The Board noted that the Chair of the Research and Graduate Studies Committee had reported on the outcomes of the audit conducted by the Bureau of Animal Welfare on the care and use of animals for scientific purposes at the University and among their recommendations was the appointment of an Animal Welfare Officer.

(b) *Research Quality Framework*

The Board noted DEST had clarified the census date for the RQF exercise (31 March 2007) and the application of a three month prior service period. Further clarification was still required with respect to impact and the inclusion of adjuncts. It was noted that DEST had organised a number of workshops in Canberra, to be held in the week of 19 February 2007, which may provide the opportunity to further clarify these and other issues. The workshops were aimed at developing panel specific guidelines. It was also expected that the Minister would announce RQF panel chairs in the near future, as well as membership of the RQF Reference Committee.

The Board also noted that an RQF Taskforce had been formed, coordinated by Professor R Leckey, who along with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research), would meet with Faculty Boards in March to discuss further RQF developments.

(c) *Genetic Manipulation Supervisory Committee Terms of Reference*

The Board noted that the Office of Gene Technology Regulator had issued revised guidelines for the Accreditation of Organisations in July 2005, which required terms of reference of institution review boards to contain information on complaint mechanisms and procedures for suspension or discontinuation of research. In order to fulfil these requirements, the Research and Graduate Studies Committee had approved a revised terms of reference, as detailed in Attachment A to report AB07/49, noting in particular point 17 – *The Committee will investigate all complaints about research projects which are lodged with the Committee. Such complaints can be made in person.* - which meets OGTR guidelines.

(d) *Membership*

Animal Ethics Committee

The Board noted that the Committee had approved membership of the Animal Ethics Committee as listed below, for the period 1 January 2007 to 31 December 2007:

| | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Category A | Dr J Sullivan, external |
| Category A | Dr D Hoffman, external |
| Category B | Dr M Foley, Biochemistry |
| Category B (shared) | Dr M Clarke, Zoology |
| Category B (shared) | Dr C Meathrel, DEME |
| Category B | Dr J Schuijers, Human Biosciences |
| Category B (alternate) | Dr M Sandeman, Agriculture |
| Category C | Ms R van de Vusse, external |
| Category C (alternate) | Dr B Wellington, external |
| Category D | Mr D Munro, external |
| Category D (alternate) | Ms D Fulloon, external |
| Category Carer (shared) | Ms E Suric, Zoology |
| Category Carer (shared) | Mr R Evans, Agriculture |

414.3.3 Report of Committee for External Programs: 21 February 2007

The Board received report AB07/50.

(a) *Semester One Enrolments Update*

The Board noted that University enrolments had increased by approximately 8% for commencing students compared to the same date in 2006. Growth was heavily concentrated in the Faculty of Law and Management. Current indications were that the system-wide growth in Australia was running at approximately 4% increase in commencements, with La Trobe once again out-performing the industry.

The Board also noted that the Language Centre enrolments were flourishing on the back of the increase in University commencements and there had been good growth in short course enrolments. Foundation Studies and Diploma enrolments were running approximately to budget which was based on a 10% increase in enrolments over 2006.

It was reported that there had been an increase in commencing research students. In 2006, there had been 92 applications and, in 2007, there had been 189 applications. It was noted that a great deal of effort had been put in to attract international postgraduate research students by:

- changing processes;
- providing a new research brochure;
- an additional casual staff member had been allocated to IPO; and
- the website had become more user friendly.

The Board noted that the Semester Abroad program commencements were the same as last year and a balance was being achieved with regard to incoming and outgoing exchanges.

(b) *La Trobe International*

The Board noted that, from 1 January 2007, La Trobe International had been merged with the Language Centre to form the La Trobe University International College. The merged entity would teach Foundation Studies and Diploma programs at Bundoora and also deliver its programs at various locations interstate and offshore. The objective of LTI (now LTUIC) was to prepare students for undergraduate study at the University.

The Board also noted that approximately one third of the students that enrol in these offshore pathways programs at overseas partners enrol at La Trobe University for further study and that the courses aimed to be self contained profit making programs even without students continuing onto the University.

It was noted that the Committee had agreed that the profile of the University was raised and it was beneficial when academics who were overseas for other reasons visited these programs and spoke to the students and staff.

(c) *Agreements of Exchange and Co-operation*

The Board noted that Agreements of Exchange and Cooperation had recently been established formally with the following institutions:

- The University of East Anglia, UK: agreement for academic exchange and co-operation;
- National Hung Hsing University, Taichung, Taiwan: international cooperative agreement;
- Third Military Medical University, China: memorandum of understanding;
- Third Military Medical University, China: cotutelle double badged PhD agreement;
- Lancaster University, United Kingdom: agreement for academic exchange and co-operation;
- Tilburg University, The Netherlands: agreement for academic exchange and co-operation;
- Utrecht University, The Netherlands: agreement for academic exchange and co-operation;
- Universidad Torcuato Di Tella, Argentina: agreement for academic exchange and co-operation;
- Universitat De Barcelona, Spain: agreement for academic exchange and co-operation
- Stockholm University, Sweden: agreement for academic exchange and co-operation;
- The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Haker, China: memorandum of understanding for academic exchange and co-operation;
- The University of Aarhus, Denmark: agreement for academic exchange and co-operation;
- Ho Chi Minh City University of Technology, Vietnam: twinning agreement;
- Universita Carlo Cattaneo - Liuc, Italy: agreement for academic exchange and co-operation; and
- Aalborg University, Denmark: agreement for academic exchange and co-operation.

(d) *Argus Building Update*

The Board noted that progress reports had been received from the builder, architect and La Trobe University Project manager at the end of January. The building works were expected to be completed in late 2008, with most academic programs commencing in 2009.

(e) *Bendigo Language Centre*

The Board noted that the Bendigo Language Centre had closed and all English language programs would be run through Bundoora Language Centre.

414.3.4 Report of Selection and Enrolment Committee: 22 February 2007

The Board received report AB07/51.

(a) *Schools Access La Trobe Scheme*

The Board **resolved** to approve the establishment of a new access scheme for students from selected schools, as detailed in Attachment 1 to report AB07/51.

Sec. SEC

The Board noted that if the scheme was approved:

- a Working Group from within the Selection and Enrolment Committee would be established to go through the operational issues;
- applications made under the scheme would be received in a central location and then dispatched to Faculties once courses applied for/preferences were known;
- the scheme would initially only apply to selected courses, to be determined by Faculties over the next four to six weeks in consultation with the Manager, AEGTO; and
- the scheme would be piloted over the next two years, with an operational review to be conducted after one year, and a full review after two years.

(b) *Guaranteed Entry Scheme*

The Board noted that the Selection and Enrolment Committee had received a proposal for a guaranteed entry scheme, as detailed in Attachment 2 to report AB07/51. It was noted that there could be substantial benefits from such an approach, but that detailed entry levels were a matter for Faculties to determine, taking load management into account. The Committee had requested that Faculties consider implementing the scheme when preparing 2008 VTAC Guide entries.

414.4 OTHER MATTERS

414.4.1 Report of Selection Committee: Associate Dean, Research, and Professor of Health Sciences

The Board received and noted report AB07/52 and noted that the position of Associate Dean, Research, and Professor of Health Sciences had resolved not to recommend an appointment to the position of Associate Dean, Research, and Professor of Health Sciences, at this time. It was noted that the position would be readvertised in conjunction with an executive search process to identify suitable candidates.

Dr J Carr

414.4.2 Professorial Reports

(a) *Professor Rhonda Nay (Gerontic Nursing)*

The Board received and noted, for referral to Council, a professorial report submitted by Professor Rhonda Nay (Gerontic Nursing), as detailed in report AB07/53.

EO(Sec)

414.4.3 Learning Technologies Policies and Governance Committee: Statement on the Use of Technologies to Support Teaching and Learning at La Trobe University

The Board noted that the Learning Technologies Policies and Governance Committee had developed a statement on the use of technologies to support Learning and Teaching at La Trobe, as detailed in report AB07/54. The statement would inform policies, guidelines and procedures for the use of a range of current and future technologies.

The Board also noted that a taskforce had been established to develop policies and protocols for the use of the University's Learning Management System (WebCT).

414.4.4 External Review of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences: Draft Terms of Reference

The Board received report AB07/55 and noted the draft terms of reference for the external review of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

PART C: MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

414.5 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

414.5.1 Minutes of the Faculty Boards

The Board received and noted the following minutes of the Faculty Boards:

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| (a) Health Sciences: 15 November 2006 | FHS/FB1006/1M |
| (b) Humanities and Social Sciences: 6 December 2006 | LHUSS/FB2006/150M |
| (c) Humanities and Social Sciences: 7 February 2007 | LHUSS/FB2007/22M |

PART D: QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

There were no "Questions with Notice" provided.

PART E: DISCUSSION

414.6 AVCC AUSTRALIAN UNIVERSITY STUDENT FINANCES 2006

The Board received and noted report AB07/56, which included the following documentation:

- AVCC Media Release, dated Thursday 8 March, 2007: Students Under Financial Stress;
- AVCC Fact Sheet: Undergraduate student finances in 2006;
- AVCC Fact Sheet: Postgraduate student finances in 2006;
- AVCC Fact Sheet: Indigenous student finances and welfare in 2006; and
- AVCC Fact Sheet: Comparisons with key indicators from the 2000 *Paying their Way* study.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Student Services), who was a member of the AVCC steering group, advised that the report Australian University Student Finances 2006, a summary of findings from the national survey of students in Australia's 37 public universities conducted in 2006, had recently been released. Staff who wished to view the report could find it at the following website:

www.avcc.edu.au/studentfinances

A later media release, dated 15 March 2007, had since been released, which the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Student Services) advised would be circulated to Board members.

PVC(E&SS)/
EO(AB)

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Student Services) reported that this was the latest in a series dating back to the 1970s. Until the mid 80s the survey was conducted by the Commonwealth Department of Education. The AVCC undertook the 2000 *Paying Their Way* survey independent of the government and have fully funded the 2006 survey. Over 97,000 students were sent the questionnaire and there had been a 19.3% response rate. The full census of Indigenous students had been surveyed, with a 16.5% response rate. A large proportion of students reported they lacked adequate financial support, with work having an adverse affect on their studies and limiting their opportunities to benefit from the full university experience. 70.6% of full-time undergraduate students reported working during semester, on average these students were working 14.8 hours per week. 22.4% of full-time students and 33% of part-time students reported regularly missing classes. The survey findings also reinforced the need for universities to continue to support student services post-VSU.

For large numbers of students, their financial circumstances had directly affected their choice of mode of study, choice of university or choice of course. There had been a large rise in the proportion of students taking out loans (from 10% in 2000 to 24% in 2006) to support their studies. It was noted that students often did not see the worth in applying for Institutional scholarships, deemed as taxable income, if they compromised their commonwealth support.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Student Services) advised that the report had been released a fortnight ago and that the University had provided copies of the report to student groups. Students were advised a meeting will be held to discuss implications for La Trobe University.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) reported that the University had requested to be provided with the La Trobe University respondent data and had been advised that the response rate had been high enough for this to be meaningful.

The Dean, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences suggested that it was likely that the University's capacity to deal with student poverty would be limited and that the University should ensure that mechanisms were provided for flexible learning, so that students missing classes due to work commitments could access what they had missed.

The Acting Chair agreed and suggested that timetabling should also be reviewed in light of the survey findings.

It was queried if the ATO would review the issue of tax free scholarships. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Student Services) advised that the AVCC had indicated it was a finding they would be pursuing with the government.

Ms Freebody advised that graduate coursework was an area of concern for students. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Student Services) advised that full-time postgraduate coursework students had been identified as one of the student groups in the most difficult financial position. It was also discussed that the University should review its strategies to assist students who face loss of employment during placements and field work.

Professor Lake noted that the report had found full-time undergraduate female students were more disadvantaged than full-time undergraduate male students and asked why, whilst noting that the majority of La Trobe University students were women. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Student Services) indicated that female students were more likely to use support services and to understand the impact of finances on their study.

Mr Bajaj queried if international students had been surveyed. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Student Services) advised that only domestic students were surveyed. It was noted that the International Programs Office were currently reviewing the types of assistance that could be provided to international students.

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Shepparton) noted that the University had conducted its own research into student poverty in 1999 and advised that some great ideas had been discussed at the time, but there had been a lack of a continued integrated University-wide approach. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Student Services) agreed that it would be timely to review the types of assistance that students wanted.

Ms Mansel Lees advised that the incoming *Welfare to Work* changes would impact on students receiving a parenting payment. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Equity and Student Services) reported the survey found there was also a decline in the proportion of full-time undergraduate students receiving Youth Allowance or Austudy and a rise in the number of students whose application for income support was rejected.

The Acting Vice-Chancellor reported that the Minister was concerned that only one in five students responded to the survey. He also advised that any amendments regarding taxation would require legislative amendment.

Ms Gwynn queried whether the University would be utilising the upcoming election to put pressure on the government to increase payments to students. It was noted that the AVCC would be using the survey to address a number of issues with the government in 2007.

The meeting closed at 10.40am.

NEXT MEETING: 9.30am
Wednesday 9 May 2007
Council Chamber
John Scott Meeting House
Bundoora Campus

CONFIRMED BY CHAIR _____ **DATE** _____