

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

ACADEMIC BOARD

Minutes of the four hundred and twentieth meeting of the Academic Board held in the Council Chamber, John Scott Meeting House, La Trobe University, Bundoora Campus on Wednesday 14 November 2007 at 9.30am

PRESENT: Professor R W Parish (Chair), Professor C Adams, Dr A Brookes, Professor M Chanock, Dr L Crase, Dr M Davidson, Professor D de Vaus, Professor G Durden, Dr J Fahey, Mr K Farrell, Professor D Finlay, Ms C Freebody, Mr B Goddard, Professor N Gough, Professor E Gow, Mr J Griffiths, Professor R Harbridge, Professor F Hardman, Professor N Hoogenraad, Dr J Jackson, Dr B James, Professor P Johnson (Vice-Chancellor), Professor M Lake, Ms L Lavender, Professor L Ling, Dr J McArdle, Ms V Mansel Lees, Mr A Pagliaro, Professor S Paxton, Professor V Prain, Mr K Reed, Mr P Richardson, Professor M Rimmer, Professor I Robinson, Dr J Russell, Dr M Ryan, Dr K Souter, Professor G Stephenson, Professor H Swerissen, Dr D Tillett, Mr G Villalta, Dr A Vongalis-Macrow, Professor R Walker and Mr Y Yang.

SECRETARIAT: Ms A Cowburn

IN ATTENDANCE: Professor R Adams, Professor A Brennan, Professor L Cahill, Ms L Carey, Professor R Dixon, Professor C Handley, Mr L Lyell (*vice* Mr J Molony), Ms J Martin, Dr E Martens, Mr E Michael (*vice* Professor H Westerbeek), Professor P Murphy, Professor R Nay, Dr P Pigram, Professor M Robertson, Dr M Shortland, Professor J Singh and Dr P Stacey.

PART A: PROCEDURAL MATTERS

(i) Apologies and Attendance

Apologies were received for Dr Roger Croome, Professor Simon Crowe, Dr Jacinta Douglas, Professor Gerald Farrell, Dr L Howie, Ms Lyn Lang, Dr Doug Rogers and Professor Hans Westerbeek.

The Chair congratulated Professor Malcolm Rimmer on his election to Chair of Academic Board for the term February 2008 – February 2010.

(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:

- AB07/161 *Attachment D*, Extension of Appointment: Associate Professor of Physiotherapy
- AB07/161 *Attachment E*, Report of Selection Committee: Professor of Dentistry and Head of Department of Oral Health
- AB07/162 Award of Degrees and Diplomas
- AB07/168 Report of the Standing Committee on Level D Academics
- AB07/169 Report of the Academic Promotions Committee
- AB07/170 Report of the Library Promotions Committee

(iii) Outstanding Matters

The Board received and noted report AB07/160.

(iv) Matters approved on behalf of Academic Board

The Board received report AB07/161 and noted the following matters which had been approved on its behalf since its last meeting:

- (a) Award of degrees and diplomas, as detailed in Attachment A to AB07/161;

- (b) Membership of Committees:
 - (i) *Selection Committee: Associate Professor in International Relations*
Additional member: Professor Joseph Camillieri;
 - (ii) *Standing Committee on Level D Academics*
Professor Peter Dyson vice Professor Erich Weigold;
 - (iii) *Selection Committee: Director of Nursing Research, The Alfred*
Professor Peter Dyson vice Professor Erich Weigold;
 - (iv) *Selection Committee: Professor of Dentistry*
Professor Peter Dyson vice Professor Erich Weigold;
 - (v) *Professional Library Promotion Committee*, as detailed in Attachment B to AB07/161;
- (c) Advertisement of Position:
 - (i) Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, as detailed in Attachment C to AB07/161;
- (d) Extension of Appointment:
 - (i) Associate Professor of Physiotherapy, as detailed in confidential tabled Attachment D to AB07/161; and
- (e) Report of Selection Committee:
 - (i) Professor of Dentistry and Head of Department of Oral Health, as detailed in confidential tabled Attachment E to AB07/161.

(v) Report of the Vice-Chancellor

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

- (a) *2007 Australasian Science Prize*
Professor Paul Fisher, Head of Microbiology, had won the 2007 *Australasian Science Prize* for discoveries which may lead to new drug therapies for mitochondrial diseases.
- (b) *La Trobe at Beechworth*
The hotel at Beechworth had won a prize for the best mid-range accommodation in the state. Congratulations to Brian Millar and the staff at the Beechworth Campus.
- (c) *Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility*
The Federal Government had announced that the Climate Change Adaptation Research Facility had been awarded to Griffith University. La Trobe University had been one of the three short listed contenders.
- (d) *POP Poll Data*
The POP poll data had been updated and there had been no change in the University's position. The University required a more consistent approach to marketing its programs to prospective students. Both content of programs and how they were marketed would be reviewed.
- (e) *Departures*
Professor Earle Gow was retiring after 22 years as University Librarian. His service to the University had been greatly appreciated. Ms Helen King would be Acting University Librarian until an appointment had been made.

Professor Peter Dyson, currently Director of Research and Innovation and a long time professor in Physics, would be retiring in December after 38 years at La Trobe University.

Mr Karl Reed, a long standing member of Academic Board and frequent contributor, was retiring after 19 years.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked Professor Roger Parish for consistently promoting and upholding the interests of the University and the values of academic integrity and excellence in his six years as Chair of Academic Board and providing much support and counsel to him since his commencement.

PART B: MATTERS FOR APPROVAL

420.1 CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 10 October 2007 [AB07/158(M)] were confirmed.

420.2 ITEMS APPROVED WITHOUT DISCUSSION

420.2.1 Award of Degrees and Diplomas

The Board received tabled report AB07/162 and **resolved** to recommend to Council the award of degrees and diplomas as detailed therein.

EO(AB)

420.2.2 Establishment of prizes

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

Fac. Reg.
Ms L Smith
Ms A Forden

- (a) Faculty of Health Sciences: The 'Bernard Rechter' Graduate Research Prize for Honours, as detailed in report AB07/163;
- (b) Faculty of Health Sciences: The 'Hugh Batten' Graduate Research Prize for Masters by Coursework, as detailed in report AB07/164;
- (c) Faculty of Health Sciences: The 'Stephen Duckett' Graduate Research Prize for Higher Degree by Research, as detailed in report AB07/165;
- (d) Faculty of Health Sciences: Dean's Honours List in Faculty of Health Sciences, as detailed in report AB07/166; and
- (e) Faculty of Education: Soroptimist International of Shepparton Inc – Regional Education Scholarship, Shepparton Campus [*amendment*], as detailed in report AB07/167.

420.2.3 Report of the Standing Committee on Level D Academics

The Board received confidential tabled report AB07/168 and **resolved** to endorse that the persons named therein be promoted to Level D, as detailed in the report, with effect from 1 January 2008.

Sec., SCLDA

420.2.4 Report of the Academic Promotions Committee

The Board received confidential tabled report AB07/169 and **resolved** to endorse that the persons named therein be promoted to Level B or C, as detailed in the report, with effect from 1 January 2008.

Sec., APC

420.2.5 Report of the Library Promotions Committee

The Board received confidential tabled report AB07/170 and **resolved** to endorse that the person named therein be promoted from Librarian (Level A) to Librarian (Level B), as detailed in the report, with effect from 1 January 2008.

Sec., LPC

420.2.6 Chair in Chemistry: proposal for the recruitment and appointment of a new Professor in Chemistry

The Board received report AB07/171 and **resolved** to endorse the proposal to advertise for, and appoint, a new Professor in Chemistry.

Dr J Carr

420.3 STANDING COMMITTEES OF ACADEMIC BOARD

420.3.1 Report of Selection and Enrolment Committee: 18 October 2007

The Board received report AB07/172. Dr Peter Stacey, Chair, Selection and Enrolment Committee spoke to the report.

(a) *Schools Access La Trobe Scheme*

The Board noted that, following approval in March 2007, secondary schools had been notified of the new Schools Access La Trobe Scheme; applications had been sought through both VTAC and UAC; and the UAC applications had been received by the University. VTAC has reported that 1749 applications had been received by the University under the corresponding SEAS category. The applications forwarded by UAC indicated some misunderstanding of the scheme criteria and the Selection and Enrolment Working Party would meet to discuss how to address this issue, both for current applicants and for future years.

Information regarding the scheme was detailed in Attachment 1 and Attachment 2 to report AB07/172.

(b) *Annual review of data comparing entry level and category with first semester performance*

The Board received and noted a report on the annual comparison of first semester performance with entry category and ENTER band, as detailed in Attachment 3 to report AB07/172.

420.3.2 Report of Academic Committee: 23 October 2007

The Board received report AB07/173. Professor Chris Handley, Acting Chair, Academic Committee, spoke to the report.

(a) *Policy Proposal: Non-Award Studies Policy*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Academic Services Division to introduce a Non-Award Studies Policy, as detailed in Attachment A to report AB07/173.

Dir. AS

(b) *Proposal to amend the Bachelor of Psychological Science at the Bendigo Campus*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering to amend the Bachelor of Psychological Science at the Bendigo Campus, as detailed in Attachment B to report AB07/173.

Fac. Reg.

(c) *Proposal to amend the Master of Biotechnology and Bioinformatics*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering to amend the Master of Biotechnology and Bioinformatics, as detailed in Attachment C to report AB07/173.

Fac. Reg.

(d) *Proposal to amend the Bachelor of Computer Science in Games Technology*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering to amend the Bachelor of Computer Science in Games Technology, as detailed in Attachment D to report AB07/173.

Fac. Reg.

(e) *Proposal to amend the nomenclature of the Master of Behavioural Science*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering to amend the nomenclature of the Master of Behavioural Science to the Master of Psychological Science (MPsySc).

Fac. Reg.

(f) *Proposal to introduce a Master of Chemical Sciences*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering to introduce a Master of Chemical Sciences (MChemSc), as detailed in Attachment E to report AB07/173.

Fac. Reg.

<p>(g) <i>Proposal to introduce a Master of Education (Applied Learning)</i></p> <p>The Board resolved to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Education to introduce a Master of Education (Applied Learning) (Med(AppL)), as detailed in Attachment F to report AB07/173.</p>	<p>Fac. Reg.</p>
<p>(h) <i>Proposal to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Health Information Management and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Health Information Management (Honours)</i></p> <p>The Board resolved to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Health Information Management (BHlthSc/MHlthInfoMgmt) and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Health Information Management (Honours) (BHlthSc/MHlthInfoMgmt(Hons)), as detailed in Attachment G to report AB07/173.</p>	<p>Fac. Reg.</p>
<p>(i) <i>Proposal to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Orthoptics and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Orthoptics (Honours)</i></p> <p>The Board resolved to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Orthoptics (BHlthSc/MOrth) and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Orthoptics (Honours) (BHlthSc/MOrth(Hons)), as detailed in Attachment H to report AB07/173.</p>	<p>Fac. Reg.</p>
<p>(j) <i>Proposal to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Podiatric Practice and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Podiatric Practice (Honours)</i></p> <p>The Board resolved to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Podiatric Practice (BHlthSc/MPodPrac) and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Podiatric Practice (Honours) (BHlthSc/MPodPrac(Hons)), as detailed in Attachment I to report AB07/173.</p>	<p>Fac. Reg.</p>
<p>(k) <i>Proposal to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Physiotherapy Practice and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Physiotherapy Practice (Honours)</i></p> <p>The Board resolved to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Physiotherapy Practice (BHlthSc/MPhysioPrac) and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Physiotherapy Practice (Honours) (BHlthSc/MPhysioPrac(Hons)), as detailed in Attachment J to report AB07/173.</p>	<p>Fac. Reg.</p>
<p>(l) <i>Proposal to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Clinical Prosthetics and Orthotics and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Clinical Prosthetics and Orthotics (Honours)</i></p> <p>The Board resolved to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Clinical Prosthetics and Orthotics (BHlthSc/MClinP&O) and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Clinical Prosthetics and Orthotics (Honours) (BHlthSc/MClinP&O(Hons)), as detailed in Attachment K to report AB07/173.</p>	<p>Fac. Reg.</p>
<p>(m) <i>Proposal to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Speech Pathology and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Speech Pathology (Honours)</i></p> <p>The Board resolved to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Speech Pathology (BHlthSc/MSpPath) and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Speech Pathology (Honours) (BHlthSc/MSpPath(Hons)), as detailed in Attachment L to report AB07/173.</p>	<p>Fac. Reg.</p>

- (n) *Proposal to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Occupational Therapy Practice and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Occupational Therapy Practice (Honours)*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Health Sciences to introduce a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Occupational Therapy Practice (BHlthSc/MOccTherPrac) and a Bachelor of Health Sciences/Master of Occupational Therapy Practice (Honours) (BHlthSc/MOccTherPrac(Hons)), as detailed in Attachment M to report AB07/173.

Fac. Reg.

- (o) *Proposal to revise the Bachelor of Education*

The Board **resolved** to endorse a proposal from the Faculty of Education to revise the Bachelor of Education, as detailed in Attachment N to report AB07/173.

Fac. Reg.

- (p) *Distributive Leadership in Learning and Teaching: Developing the Faculty Scholars Model*

The Board noted that Dr Geraldine Lefoe, University of Wollongong, had spoken to Academic Committee regarding a Carrick Institute sponsored project titled '*Distributive Leadership in Learning and Teaching: Developing the Faculty Scholars Model*'.

It was also noted that Dr Lefoe had reported that Stage 1 of the project involved the University of Tasmania and the University of Wollongong and that La Trobe University and Flinders University would join the project at Stage 2, commencing in 2008. The Carrick Institute was funding the first two years of the project and the member universities were funding their scholars.

420.4 OTHER MATTERS

420.4.1 Academic Board Working Group: recommendations

The Board received and noted report AB07/174, recommendations from the Academic Board Working Group to improve the functioning of Academic Board.

The Board resolved to endorse the following:

- (i) Representation: the membership should be increased to include all Faculty Associate Deans. The Associate Deans work closely with Deans and Deputy Vice-Chancellors and are in a position to make important contributions to discussion and debate.
- (ii) The Vice-Chancellor's report is a central component of Academic Board meetings, and, when feasible, a brief outline should be distributed to members along with the other papers. A more productive discussion would then result.
- (iii) The reports of Standing Committees should automatically be starred and the Chairs provide a brief verbal report. This report would not only comment on the specifics but also raise general issues/points of discussion the Committees are addressing, particularly in relation to the University's Strategic Plan.
- (iv) The Academic Board should be involved in the initiation and shaping of policy, rather than provide an end-point. The Vice-Chancellor, for example, would signal the major issues and areas of policy that need to be debated and developed, respectively, as has been the case with the Green Paper.

EO(AB)

Professor Dixon suggested that the Directors of the Institute for Advanced Study, Centre for Linguistic Typology and China Centre should be represented on the Board.

The Vice-Chancellor responded by advising that there were many research centres at the University and if all were entitled to have representation on the Board there would be too many members.

420.4.2 Academic Year 2009 and Beyond

The Board received and noted report AB07/175, an issues paper regarding the structure of the Academic Year 2009 and beyond.

Mr Reed suggested that the special examination period that was currently scheduled in January should be moved to the first week in February to allow academic staff to take leave.

Professor Handley suggested that making the special examination period later would affect selection and enrolment and that it would be preferable for it be brought forward to December. The current policy which allowed for 10 working days notice made the timelines too difficult, but it could be done if the academic year was brought forward by a week. It was noted that holding special examinations in January was also difficult for international students.

Professor Robinson advised that Appendix 2 of report AB07/175 offered a solution.

The Board requested that Academic Committee review the issues surrounding the special examination period and the 2009 academic year, including competitor analysis, and provide a report to Academic Board.

Chair, AcC/
Dir. AS

PART C: MATTERS FOR INFORMATION

420.5 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

420.5.1 Minutes of the Faculty Boards

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

(a) Health Sciences: 19 September 2007 FHS/FB0807/8M

PART D: QUESTIONS WITH NOTICE

The Chair advised that Mr Reed had provided two questions with notice.

1. Will the University Code of Conduct for staff be revised to ensure that it supports staff participation in society in a manner befitting in a leading University?

The Vice-Chancellor read out the section of the Code of Conduct pertaining to Mr Reed's question:

Staff are encouraged to exercise their rights to intellectual freedom through contributions to public debate and discussion on matters relevant to their areas of specialist knowledge and expertise. There is an obligation to use this right in a manner which is consistent with an honest and informed search for and dissemination of knowledge and truth. Where informed comments are offered by staff it is expected that commentaries will lie within the areas of expertise of the commentators. The University places no constraint on the right of University staff freely to express opinions in their private capacities as members of society.

In making written or oral comments which purport to represent, or might reasonably be interpreted to represent, the views of the University, staff should ensure that they have proper authority granted by a person holding actual authority on behalf of the University.

Mr Reed suggested that the current wording constrained staff members by only allowing them to provide comments on their areas of expertise.

The Vice-Principal (Resources and Administration) advised that legal advice had been taken when the Code of Conduct was drafted and these parameters had been set. It was a risk management issue.

2. Will the University's Outside Work/Consultancies be revised to allow private consultancies to be conducted in a manner that provides adequate reward for the staff concerned, and permits more reasonable time release without loss of income?

The Vice-Chancellor reported that Section 5.17 of the Human Resources Manual contained the policy that covered University contracts and personal outside work and that it required that staff who wanted to take on "Outside Work" to request the approval of the Vice-Chancellor. Since commencing in April there had been no applications received. The Vice-Chancellor advised that it was important for staff to be encouraged to earn outside income to supplement their academic salaries.

It was noted that the policy was unclear and that more simple and clear processes were required across the University. The Vice-Chancellor reported that this would be addressed in the next year.

It was queried whether there would be wide consultation regarding the draft Strategic Plan. The Vice-Chancellor reported that the draft Strategic Plan had been circulated to Deans and Heads of Divisions and would be discussed at Council that evening. The draft Strategic Plan would be available on the intranet tomorrow for comment in the next 10 days. The Vice-Chancellor encouraged all staff to review the Strategic Plan and provide any comments.

PART E: DISCUSSION

420.6 LA TROBE UNIVERSITY IN FIVE YEARS

Professor Parish thanked all Board members for their assistance and support in the past 6 years as Chair, through times of significant trial and tribulation. The Chair also thanked the Standing Committees of the Board for their hard work and wished Professor Malcolm Rimmer well in the position. He suggested that Academic Board would have a major role in planning at the University.

The Chair introduced the discussion panel:

- Professor Rhonda Nay
- Dr Michael Shortland
- Dr Paul Pigram
- Professor Andrew Brennan

Professor Rhonda Nay

Academic Board IS the leaders of the University and should be a hot bed of excitement, radical ideas and contentious debate. Instead I see a boring rubber stamping of decisions made elsewhere!

What will our university be: insatiably curious about the future and the past! Appetite for change and making a difference. Adaptable, flexible thinkers.

Why: our reason for being; produce leaders of the future – who must be able to change rapidly, anticipate the future and plan for it - not respond chaotically.

How:

- our leaders need to BE leaders – excited, visionary; fun; confident and generous enough to grow the next generation and learn from and share with them and end users – leaders make or break an organization/ team.
- Our staff and students need to feel valued and supported to be risk takers, flexible and rapidly adaptable – love change and lead it but see the value in our history and not make the same mistakes; have critical thinking, creative capacity and the ability to engage constructively in ethical, social debates.
- See research and life long learning as exciting and essential.
- We need to love La Trobe or move on! Misery breeds misery.

So: in 5 years

- Contemporary Leadership development will be mandatory.
- We will be known internationally AND internally for our agreed research strengths that will be seriously supported – not just privilege AFTER teaching done! We will have in place clear processes for identifying research active and those who are not and the union will actually support it Research MUST be central to all we do – or we might as well be a TAFE.

- The value of applied research from diverse funding sources will be realized and valued – NOT just ARC/NHMRC.
- We will be known for our person centered approach to students AND staff.
- We will have in place a serious investment in flexible learning development and delivery led by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) but university wide.
- Career plans will be in place that value all ages and stages provided staff are still curious and excited by research – we will have clear succession planning that brings in and nurtures young blood but also better use those who want to retire - La Trobe will have a Council of Elders: rejuvenated (retired) profs and industry leaders.
- We will no longer have an organization that reflects a Cartesian split between mind and body – the university will not be organized according to current disciplines – students will undertake a basic degree that develops both sides of the brain! No student will graduate without exposure to the great philosophical thinkers, ethicists and scientists; and research will be interdisciplinary.
- Embedded partnerships with end users – expected that academics WILL have professional/international value.

3 things to do NOW?

- Bring in mandatory leadership training and appraisal for heads of divisions/departments.
- Establish regular round tables with our end users Chaired by VC for university and Deans for Faculties – first job to explore how the university and our degrees can be better organized and sold to students and parents to reflect current/anticipated societal change and that will support flexible/both sides of the brain thinkers!
- Establish real flexible delivery unit/processes and student support and benchmark against established Distance Education/online university.

Dr Michael Shortland

A key proposal in the Green Paper is the development of integrated programs of student engagement. Prompted by successes in innovative programs offered through the Division of Residential Services (DRS), Dr Shortland envisioned many aspirational students taking up opportunities for personal and professional growth through leadership, community engagement and outreach programs at La Trobe. Based on evidence from the DRS, student participation in such programs had demonstrable outcomes including improved retention rates and academic performance and the acquisition of key competencies. Access to such programs was highly sought after and had assisted the DRS in remaining competitive.

Three proposals were made in this regard:

1. Integrated Programs:

Several universities have integrated student engagement and enrichment activities through branded leadership programs, whereby participating students acquire 'points' through, for example, volunteer work, attendance at seminars, and global programs. With sufficient points, participants can be awarded a university certificate (and a note on their academic transcript). The model is excellent, but a genuinely path-breaking approach would embed *all* La Trobe student engagement activities in a program of employability skills. Whether participating, for example, in managing clubs and societies, volunteering on Open Day or at Welcome festivals, or joining leadership and outreach programs, La Trobe students would be trained, supervised and assessed in terms of key employability skills (as set out and endorsed by major industry and government bodies), including initiative, communication and team-building. Such programs would have demonstrable learning and development outcomes, satisfy graduate attribute targets, and provide aspirational students with access to attractive and rewarding opportunities only available at La Trobe, hence giving the university competitive edge and a key branding advantage. Dr Shortland referred to a proposal submitted to the VC 'to establish and support integrated programs for student engagement' – the EAGLE Program.

2. Administrative Support:

Dr Shortland envisaged La Trobe in 2012 having a well-resourced and busy Centre for Student Success, designed to match the university's current achievements in providing support services. Our services 'safety net' would be complemented by the provision of many 'high-wire' learning experiences. Such a Centre would provide the organisational framework to develop, deliver, evaluate and quality manage a range of exciting and innovative programs of student engagement and enrichment. Interested staff would be encouraged to become associated with the Centre, which would assist in coordinating existing work across the university (for example, in mentoring, student leadership training, work integrated learning, and volunteering) as well as pioneering new programs.

The university would also benefit from integrating currently dispersed activities relating to student life, so providing an end-to-end experience of, and loyalty to, the institution (from the first welcome to campus through the first year experience, and then to graduation and alumni relationship). Such integration would necessitate new operational and functional arrangements in the university, and Dr Shortland drew attention to the provision in many universities of senior managers tasked to look after student life, the student experience and student success. These are areas currently organised haphazardly across the university, and integration and senior leadership was urgently needed.

3. Student Village:

Dr Shortland pointed out that our campuses were ideally set out to nurture vibrant student and staff learning communities, but better planning and management would be needed to capitalise on our campus assets. Referring to plans submitted some years ago, Dr Shortland sketched out the design of a student village on main campus, with new student accommodation (to meet growth in demand), multi-functional teaching and learning spaces (to facilitate after-hours, weekend and summer programs), recreational and commercial facilities, a Global Lounge (to assist the integration of local and international students), and a staff club. While this represented in some senses a return to the radical founding vision of La Trobe as a staff-student community, such a village would meet the needs of the university as it grows in the future and provide access for neighbouring communities, particularly to the east of the campus, at Springthorpe.

Dr Shortland referred to several documents available on request to members of the Board: *La Trobe Residential Services, Student Leadership Training Handbook* (November 2007) *The LTU Campus Village* (December 2004) *Student Services and Student Success at La Trobe: Developing Learning Communities and Opportunities for Student Enrichment and Engagement* (June 2007) *Response to Green Paper, Proposal 2* (August 2007), with Anne Stansfeld and Ngaere Blair.

Dr Paul Pigram

Dr Pigram explained that he had reflected upon the key tasks and core business of the University.

La Trobe University must be excellent:

- in research
- in learning and teaching
- in fulfilling regulatory compliance.

Every activity in the University should be able to be aligned to the three goals above and the University and staff should be honest about their performance in these areas.

Research

- Staff aren't often honest about their research performance.
- Do we believe what we say about ourselves?
- Use true benchmarks and be honest about where we are going.
- 2008 ARC Discovery Grants – LTU received 15 grants, which was one tenth of the Group of 8 universities grants.
- LTU has only one federation fellow – Professor David Vaux.
- Why aren't we more competitive?
- There needs to be a more simple and practical vision for LTU.

POP Polls

Why are we looking to 2009? There should be a whole of institution response immediately.

Looking forward/opportunities

- Strategic research appointments. Make no compromises, we need the best people coming into the institution.
- Major research projects should be the highest priority in the institution. Other universities are very combative in their approach to major research projects.

Branding

- Join the community – branding.
- Simple message.

- LTU has a wonderful, simple brand – where is it? Why don't we see it?
- Why is there an ad for Springthorpe at the entrance of the University, not one for La Trobe?

Professor Andrew Brennan

I came to La Trobe last year after serving 14 years as professor of philosophy at a Group of 8 University – the University of Western Australia. One of my reasons for moving was the reputation of Humanities here at La Trobe; another was a sense of openness and friendliness which was largely absent at UWA. The open and constructive discussion at today's meeting testifies to the strongly collegial atmosphere here. But I am not here to praise. The philosopher's prerogative is to provoke – at least it has been since Socrates described himself as the gadfly of Athens.

Like most other Australian universities, LTU is moored in the past while trying to sail into the future. However you look at it, this is bound to be a bit of strain. Universities everywhere are changing under the impact of specialisation, globalisation and rapid changes, and yet we also hanker after Cardinal Newman's vision of the university: '...a place which wins the admiration of the young by its celebrity, kindles the affections of the middle-aged by its beauty, and rivets the fidelity of the old by its associations. It is a seat of wisdom, a light of the world, a minister of the faith, an Alma Mater of the rising generation' (*The Idea of a University, 1852*).

If we are to release our moorings, but not get lost at sea, we need to consider how – inspired by the VC's Green Paper – we can best bring our founding principles to bear on defining our vision and mission in our new and ever-changing circumstances. How can we contribute to the community by exposing our students to everything that is best in the world of knowledge, develop them as citizens of the future and cultivate habits of critical thinking and integrity through our own example as teachers and researchers? How can our research challenge and be critical of the enthusiasms and limitations of the current age and contribute to improving the quality of life in our society?

What stops us doing this now, and what must be overcome as soon as possible is the crisis of values and identity now gripping the university. This crisis relates not to the distinction between academic disciplines and approaches, nor to other questions surrounding our teaching and research. Instead it surrounds a very simple division – the one between the academic and the non-academic. Since coming here I have heard endless complaints about our support structures and administrative units – the very units whose efficient functioning can make our work fulfilling, and whose foul-ups can undermine our best efforts as teachers and researchers. Creative whingeing like this is good for a group – but only when it leads to action, change and reform. At first I thought that the inaction over problems in support was a result of the collegiality I mentioned already. Maybe the academic staff here are kind to a fault, unwilling to be critical except for private complaints, personal grouses and so on. But then I realised that this was not a sufficient explanation. As I encountered more and more failures in our support structures, I realised that the University lacked effective procedures for letting the various administrative functional units of the university know how they were performing and how they were seen to be performing. There is no systematic structure for users to report failures and bad practice, no system of user groups, no real accountability of administrative functions to those who are most in need of them. The answer to this problem would be simple, and would hardly take five years. A system of user groups, a clear set of targets for each administrative unit, a determined attempt to measure performance against user demands and expectations – these could all be implemented quite easily.

But then I realised that there was a still deeper problem beneath all this. A problem of values, identity, mission. The university, obviously, is a business and has business functions and financial targets. But the university is more than a business. It is a place where students are nurtured, grow and develop into people with lives to lead. What they experience at university can, and should, make a difference to the kind of people our graduates become, the lives they lead and the contribution they make to society. None of that translates well into business-talk. We have the same problems with our business and doctors, lawyers and other professionals have. A medical practice needs to make money to stay in business, but the professional standards of doctors extend far beyond their business skills. They have to care about what is in their patients' best interests, not just what their patients want. We too care for our students, and for our disciplines. We care about education, not only about turning a profit. We have failed in our vocation if our students' lives are not changed by what they experience under our care. If the business values, and the discourse on money dominate the thinking of the institution, and if the values of care, development, integrity, the development of leadership – if these and other values are squeezed out of sight, then the whole place can easily lose its way.

Part of the problem we face today is exactly that we too often ask the wrong questions and use the wrong discourse. The language of money, bureaucracy and management too often dominates the discussion of policy, strategy and purpose. We wonder how to make money out of overseas students, how to fill our quotas for home students; instead we should be asking what kind of development and care we can give our students, how the La Trobe experience is going to change them for the better, what kinds of inspirations and care we can offer them that other universities do not.

It is not easy to nurture the discourse of learning, education, professional development, the building of character and integrity. These sound vague, quaint, out of touch with the harsh realities of the market and the financial bottom line. Yet I am convinced that already many students come to La Trobe in search of just such values and of the development that our style of education can offer. If we take these values seriously, then we can ask questions about whether our course structures are rich enough to nurture the qualities we want our graduates to carry with them for the rest of their lives. Should humanities students be required to take some units in the sciences and vice versa? Should there be common first-year units? Can we find answers to these questions that are in the best interests of our students? Are there current problems on which our applied researchers should be focusing? These are questions about values, academic priorities – questions on which we need to focus if we are to retain credibility as an institution of the higher learning, and if we academics are going to induct our students into forms of life and ways of thinking and acting that are good in themselves, and which encourage not just creativity and cleverness, but also honesty and integrity. Let's set a goal that in five years' time, our students will look to us as role models, for examples of how to live, for an understanding of what matters and what is valuable. And let's get there by shaping our academic course and trying to find a set of shared values that rise above the demands of the market and an obsession with balance sheets.

If I had to identify three messages, they were:

- (1) too much focus on finance and profitability encourages the wrong kind of competition among departments, schools and faculties, and loses sight of the values which universities embody (see quote from Cardinal Newman);
- (2) administrative support operates in the wrong direction – academic staff spend too much time supporting administrative demands and are not getting the support they need to perform well in teaching and research; there should at least be user groups to which various support functions are accountable; and
- (3) we have lost our way in that we have lost our sense of shared values and identity as an institution.

While (1) and (2) are issues that can be dealt with within 5 years, (3) poses a larger problem that we need to focus on and continue working on.

The Chair thanked the Panel.

Discussion:

Professor Dixon suggested that the way to develop the University's research profile would be to promote that the University was excellent in a small number of disciplines, rather than the 14 areas of research strength which appeared to have been chosen on political grounds. The Vice-Chancellor and senior management should identify 3 to 5 areas which were truly the University's strengths.

The Vice-Chancellor suggested that academic strengths should be identified by academic units not senior management.

Professor Murphy thanked the speakers for their provocative discussion and encouraged members to take the thoughts and ideas of the speakers into account when reading the draft Strategic Plan. Professor Murphy suggested that the University should concentrate on areas of differentiation, consider leadership and creating an exciting environment in the future.

Professor Lake stated that there had been much discussion about aspirations and desires in the last couple of years, but there had been little analysis of the two major issues, namely the decline in first preferences and research at the University. Why, if we are so good at research, do we only have one Federation Fellow?

Professor Hoogenraad advised that he had been inspired by the discussion and suggested that the University needed hard workers who were judged by their actions and work rate.

Dr Tillett suggested that there were no consequences of action or inaction at La Trobe.

Mr Reed queried how the University could come reduce administrative loads for academics and suggested that 30-40% of direct administrative support should be diverted to support academics.

The Vice-Chancellor thanked the discussion panel and all the contributors to the discussion. Factors and issues that required attention had been identified. The Vice-Chancellor suggested that there were areas of administrative overlap and the University could run more efficiently. All staff needed to address what they did and how they did it and a coherent University wide approach was required to make changes at La Trobe.

The meeting closed at 11.20am.

NEXT MEETING: **9.30am**
 Wednesday 13 February 2008
 Council Chamber
 John Scott Meeting House
 Bundoora Campus

CONFIRMED BY CHAIR _____

DATE _____