School of Social Sciences  
School Executive Committee Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, 30th April 2014 at 2:00pm  
Seminar Room G.25

Present:
Professor Alistair Paterson, Head of School (Chair)  
Mr Tim Stewart, Manager  
Professor Loretta Baldassar  
Professor Marie-Eve Ritz  
Professor Jeannette Taylor  
Professor Samina Yasmeen  
Professor Helene Jaccomard (Associate Dean Education) for Item 1  
Ms Jill Woodman (Secretary)

Apologies:  
Associate Professor Stephen Dobbs, Associate Professor Martin Porr, Professor Ian Saunders

Welcome  
The Chair welcomed Professor Helene Jaccomard (Associate Dean Education) to the meeting.

Minutes of Previous Meeting  
The minutes of the 27th November 2013 meeting were passed without amendment.

Part A: Items for Communication

PDA (PDR/PAR)  
As from late May staff will no longer be required to do a PDR and a PAR but a PDA (Professional Development Appraisal) only. The PDA is an combination of the PDR and PAR.

Office of Operational Excellent - Functional Review  
Ernst and Young are working with UWA on the Functional Review. Input from staff is essential and if you have suggestions or comments they can be sent through to the Head of School and/or submitted through the OOE website:  

Part B: Items for Discussion

1. Teaching Matters  
Professor Jaccomard explained that one of the areas she will be focussing on as Associate Dean (Education) is increasing the number of students who complete a BA. The number of students enrolling in the Faculty has increased because of the broadening units, but the number of students completing a BA is falling. There is a need to make sure the Faculty does not become a service faculty.

Teaching awards and prizes are other areas being looked at as we have to make sure that they reward excellence and also make units more attractive. The better promotion of prizes may add extra appeal to units which have prizes attached to them.
One of the items to already come out of the Functional Review is the number of IT systems in the University that do not connect with each other. UIMS and LMS is a good example. Professor Jaccomard explained the difference between UIMS and LMS is that everyone can look at UIMS, it is a marketing function to invite students to do the unit, but LMS is only accessible once the student has enrolled in the unit. There may be information that you would only want on LMS. Work is being carried out on UIMS to make it a little more user friendly.

LMS: David Glance, Director Innovation in the Faculty, has been testing LMS, an important part of the Faculty’s online process. Shannon Johnston in CATL is a very good contact for help.

Misconduct: If you consider you have a case of misconduct the procedure is to gather as much supporting material as possible, complete the relevant form and send the form and supporting documents to the Associate Dean (Education). The Associate Dean and lecturer will have a meeting and then the Associate Dean will then meet with the student.

It is not up to the academic to make the decision about the level of misconduct and the penalty. This is so good relationships with the student can be maintained, which is important if they are still attending classes.

Assignments: On-line submission is being encouraged and LMS is a reasonably good system for uploading assessments. Turnitin has just been incorporated into LMS and there is a small pilot scheme running to test how well it works.

Peer assessment: Peer assessment exercises are reasonably easy to set up but can be time consuming to mark. However, there are proven results for this sort of student engagement and is another form of assessment which can be used.

SURF: SURF scores are becoming disproportionally important at this University and will now be made available to students. It is important to make sure scores are reliable which means increasing the response rates. It was suggested that lecturers talk about the SURF questions to students and use the LMS forum function to ask similar questions. Students do not always understand what is meant by a question and what we are trying to find out. This should raise their awareness of the process so that, hopefully, more will complete the survey.

2. Staffing
Moilet Mtandwa has commenced as the School’s Accounts Officer. Staff should contact Moilet for all accounts and budget matters.

Emma Piggott is looking after the Off-Shore Programs until the 19th May when Linda Cresswell will be returning from her long service leave. From the 19th, Emma will be the support officer for the Masters Programs and also the assisting with postgraduate matters.

Aoife Fennessy will commence as an Administrative Assistant in the School on 19th May and will be looking after Anthropology and Political Science.

Faculty: Gillian Trahorsch has taken a secondment to Medicine and Dentistry. Richard Mather, Faculty Accountant, is moving to the Vice-Chancellery and the Faculty will be getting a team of three people to look after finances. The team will be shared with the School of Indigenous Studies, Law and the Business School.

3. Other Business
Building Works- Noise Issues
Tim Stewart has the site supervisor’s mobile number so can contact him direct if building noise is interfering with teaching and research. If noise is impacting on your work contact Tim.
Condition of Social Sciences Building
The poor condition of the Social Sciences building was discussed. The Head of School and Manager will do an inspection of the building and take their recommendations and concerns to Facilities Management.

4. Next Meeting
The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, 28th May 2014.

Meeting closed at 3.00 pm