

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY

COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM 5.1

MEETING 07/5

VICE-CHANCELLOR

24 OCTOBER 2007

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

Purpose

To report to Council on key developments and events that have occurred since Council's last meeting.

Recommendation

That the Vice-Chancellor's Report as detailed in Document 5.1 and attachments be received and noted.

1. EXTERNAL MATTERS

➤ Commonwealth Grants

Teaching and Learning Performance Fund 2008

As I advised you recently via email, we have been allocated \$8.4 million in the Teaching and Learning Performance Fund (TLPF) 2008. On the basis of seven criteria, each University was ranked into one of four bands (A1, A2, B, C) in four different disciplinary clusters (science, computing, engineering, architecture and agriculture; business, law and economics; humanities, arts and education; and health). UTS was one of only two Universities to be ranked in the top A1 band in all four disciplinary groups.

Analysis by *The Australian* shows that UTS has ranked equal first with the University of Wollongong out of 38 Universities. Other University rankings in the Sydney metropolitan area were: University of New South Wales (3); University of Sydney (8), University of Western Sydney (equal 24) and Macquarie (37). A full list of the rankings is attached to this report.

This outstanding result is the culmination of many years of work focused on a strategy for improving the student experience of University. That strategy included projects designed to improve the quality of teaching, the quality of the curriculum, enhancement of the support services available to students, and innovations in the total student experience of university. The Australian Higher Education Supplement published my comments about the Fund on 10 October 2007.

Workplace Productivity Programme

Minister Bishop has informed me that the Government is providing funding of \$1,428,324 for the Performance Management Framework project, under the Workplace Productivity Programme (WPP). The WPP assists Australian Universities to progress workplace reform, and our project aims to better track our KPIs to inform effective management decision making.

The Australian Technology Network of Universities (ATN), of which UTS is a member, received funding under the WPP for \$1.5 million, to develop an alternative pay and career structure for academic and professional staff which will encourage improved individual performance outcomes. The project aims to produce a flexible model that can be adapted by Universities to enable and support their attraction, retention, reward and engagement strategies.

Collaboration and Structural Reform (CASR) Fund

Having received \$900,000 under the Capital Development Pool to fund construction of the Anatomy Laboratory, I have been advised that we have been granted a further \$400,000 through the CASR fund to equip the lab.

Indigenous Access Scholarships

On 4 October the Minister advised me that UTS will receive 17 Indigenous Access Scholarships, as part of a base national allocation of 400. A further 600 will be allocated through a competitive bidding process in the near future. Indigenous Access Scholarships provide payment to indigenous higher education students, particularly those from rural or remote areas of Australia who need to relocate to take up an undergraduate course or an approved enabling course. Our allocation is derived using 2005-6 enrolment data for the University's percentage of Indigenous commencing fulltime undergraduate students in Commonwealth supported places.

➤ Higher Education Endowment Fund Advisory Board

On 3 October Minister Bishop announced the appointment of the advisory board for the \$6 billion Higher Education Endowment Fund:

- Mr Philip Clark AM, Chair - former Managing Partner and Chief Executive Officer of Minter Ellison, and current member of the Research Quality Framework Reference Committee
- Dr Peter Farrell AM - Founder, Chair and CEO of ResMed Inc and currently serving on the Board of Trustees at the University of California – San Diego
- Dr Cherrell Hirst AO – former Chancellor of the Queensland University of Technology and current Chair of Peplin Limited
- Mr John Poynton AM – Co-founder and Executive Chair of Azure Capital and member of the Business School Board at the University of Western Australia
- Dr Michael Vertigan AC – Former Chancellor of the University of Tasmania and current Chairman of AGEST Superannuation Fund and Tasmanian Perpetual Trustees Ltd
- Dr Jim Peacock AC – Chief Scientist of Australia (ex-officio)
- Ms Lisa Paul PSM – Secretary of the Department of Education, Science and Training (ex-officio).

The advisory board will consult stakeholders, develop programme guidelines, make recommendations in relation to grants for capital expenditure and research facilities, and advise on philanthropic donations.

➤ Nursing Education

Recently the Federal Government announced it would fund \$170 million over five years for the establishment of 25 Hospital based Nursing Schools to deliver Enrolled Nurse training. The Nursing profession has not been consulted and considers it an ill-advised retrograde proposal, expressing concern for risk to public safety with the introduction of school leaver on-the-job training for patients who require complex care and are acutely unwell. The Faculty of Nursing Midwifery and Health and the University have responded to a range of interested media, indicating the proposal would further decrease access to hospital placements for registered nursing students.

➤ **Teacher Education**

During the last Federal Budget, the Government announced funding for a program called "Improving the Practical Component of Teacher Education". An extra \$77 million is available to Australian Universities over four years equating to an additional \$450 per teacher education student per year.

However to receive these funds, Universities have to greatly increase the level of in-school professional experience for teacher education courses by up to 50%. NSW Universities are already finding it extremely difficult to meet current requirements which are not sustainable. The addition of up to 50% in professional experience days can not be met.

NSW Universities, through the NSW Teacher Education Council, has sent a detailed assessment of the matter to the Minister; the matter has received good press coverage; and the NSW Vice-Chancellor's Committee has taken up the issue with the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). DEST officials requested meetings during September with representatives from NSW Universities in attempt to resolve the issue.

➤ **Allocation of New Places Commencing in 2008**

On 10 September I was advised by Minister Bishop that the Federal Government was allocating 30 new Commonwealth supported places to UTS to commence in 2008, rising to a pipeline of 82 places. These places are for Bachelor of Science and other Science undergraduate courses.

➤ **More Financial Support for Students**

The Senate recently passed the Social Security Legislation Amendment (2007 Budget Measures for Students) Bill 2007, which importantly extends Austudy to eligible Masters (or equivalent) students, and expands eligibility to rent assistance for Austudy students. This legislation implements a number of the recommendations that Universities Australia has been lobbying for since release of its Australian University Student Finances Report 2006 early this year.

I still do not believe that this support, or investment in education, is sufficient, which was a theme of my opinion piece in The Sydney Morning Herald on 8 October 2007.

➤ **OECD *Education at a Glance* Report**

On 18 September the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) *Education at a Glance* report was released. The report found Australia trailed behind only the US and Korea in private spending on education, and that the federal government was spending 4.3 per cent of gross domestic product on public education compared with an average among 30 developed nations of 5.0 per cent. This puts Australia behind Mexico, Iceland, France, Finland, Belgium, Austria, Denmark, New Zealand, Norway, Britain and the US in public funding.

A copy of the report is available at www.oecd.org/edu/eag2007.

➤ **Universities Australia (UA)**

On 8 October Dr Glenn Withers AO commenced as the inaugural Chief Executive Officer of Universities Australia. Dr Withers will oversee UA as it builds its policy and advocacy profile for the University sector.

Dr Withers has a Masters and PhD in Economics from Harvard University. His experience in working with government, industry, and the university sector is extensive. Government positions included Deputy Secretary in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, and First Assistant Secretary, Commonwealth Department of Employment and Industrial Relations. For the last ten years, Dr Withers has been the Professor of Public Policy at the Australian National University and is a Professor at the Australian and New Zealand School of Government.

➤ **National Union of Students (NUS) Ranking**

UTS performed well in recently released NUS rankings of Universities in terms of their support for student representation and advocacy in the post-VSU environment. The rankings were based on five key indicators:

- Independent advocacy services and support
- Recognition of student representative function of student organisations
- Student driven campus culture
- Student control over governance and expenditure
- Consultation, discussions and negotiations with student organisations regarding financial support.

2. INTERNAL MATTERS

➤ **Kuring-gai Update**

The NSW Department of Planning is continuing to progress our application for the rezoning of our Kuring-gai campus. At this stage, we are running some three weeks behind the original project plan of June 2007. The delays to date have been a result of the need to ensure the consistency of the consultants' reports. As such, it is expected that the public exhibition of the plan will be delayed until the week of 22 October. It is also expected that the second of three community reference group meetings will take place in early November with a third in December. At this stage, we expect Ministerial feedback early in the New Year. This timeline should enable evaluation of the Kuring-gai campus use to take place with a final recommendation to Council in April of 2008.

➤ **Environmental Sustainability Initiative (ESI)**

For several years now, UTS has been undertaking a number of projects that could be broadly classed as supporting environmental sustainability. We have not, however, formally coordinated these projects or communicated the results. With the formation of the ESI, UTS is adopting a formal and focused approach to the topical issue of environmental sustainability.

Under the guidance of a steering committee, including leading experts in this field, six working groups have been set up to direct our efforts in:

- Recycling and Waste Management
- Transport
- Energy
- Water
- Procurement
- Building and Construction.

These working groups will undertake and report on various projects that combine the efforts of staff, students, UTS researchers, UTS institutes, and industry and government partners. Ultimately it is expected that we will measure our current emissions, our past investments and their impact on emissions, and leverage off our research and partnerships to become leaders in environmental sustainability in a CBD or City University.

➤ **UTS Health Service Receives Top Accreditation Honour**

The UTS Health Service recently received the award of accreditation from Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited (AGPAL), demonstrating the quality and safety of our Medical Practice. The AGPAL accreditation program was developed jointly by AGPAL and various doctors organisations including the AMA, and aims to provide a range of guarantees to patients by accrediting the practice environment. Accreditation will help us attract and retain skilled doctors, and enable us to attract practice grants from the Health Insurance Commission (Medicare).

➤ **Commonwealth Learning Scholarships**

On 27 July, UTS received approval from Minister Bishop to convert unspent Commonwealth Accommodation Scholarship (CAS) funds to Commonwealth Education Costs Scholarships (CECS). UTS's accumulated unspent CAS funds were estimated to rise to \$1.27million by December 2007. The unspent funds accumulated because scholarship guidelines stipulate that CAS must be distributed only to students who meet strict criteria in relation to financial hardship and regional home address. The Equity & Diversity Unit has identified approximately 250 students from the main and mid-year rounds of Equity Scholarship applications, and is currently checking enrolment and Centrelink status before making CECS offers using the converted CAS funds.

➤ **Research Update**

Thomson Scientific Citation

As reported in Campus Review on 4 September, Thomson Scientific has rated UTS third in Australia in Economics and Business, 2002-6 (ranked by average citations per paper). This continues the accolades which our Faculty of Business is receiving.

Research Quality Framework (RQF)

On 18 September, the RQF Panel Membership and Specifications were released by Minister Bishop. I am very pleased to advise that Professors Hung Nguyen and Mary Chiarella were appointed to the Engineering and Technology Panel and the Public Health and Health Services Panel respectively. The DVC (Research), Professor Sue Rowley, chairs the panel for Creative Arts, Design and Built Environment; and Professor Ian Palmer, Associate Dean (Research and Development), Faculty of Business, chairs the Economics, Commerce and Management panel.

This is an excellent outcome and I know how pleased the UTS research community will be to see our outstanding colleagues recognised through RQF panel membership. The Minister's press release and a full list with biographies of all members can now be accessed on the RQF website: <http://www.dest.gov.au/research/rqf>.

UTS has been allocated funds from the Australian Scheme for Higher Education Repositories (ASHER) and Implementation Assistance Programme (IAP), to support the implementation of the RQF, as follows:

FUND	IAP	ASHER	TOTAL
2007	\$62,625	\$120,758	\$183,383
2008	\$127,748	\$224,660	\$352,408

ASHER funding will assist in establishing the digital data storage systems ('repositories'), and IAP assists in meeting costs of data gathering.

Grant Successes

- **National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) Project Grants** – two grants awarded from 12 applications, totaling \$952,000. A sector wide comparison is not relevant for UTS, as Universities with Medical Faculties are the significant beneficiaries of NHMRC funding. This is a good result for UTS, as we have a limited number of researchers active in fields funded by the NHMRC
- **Australian Research Council (ARC) Linkage Projects** (2008 Round 1 only) – seven grants awarded from 16 applications, totaling \$2.2 million. This is a very good result continuing the trend of the last few years
- **ARC Linkage International** – one grant was awarded from four applications, totaling \$28,584. These are small grants that fund travel for international researcher exchanges
- **ARC Discovery Projects** - 12 grants were awarded from 90 applications, totaling \$3.77 million. Overall this was a disappointing result; our success rate has fallen from 20% (18 of 90) in the 2007 round while the sector success rate actually rose 1% in 2008. Funds allocated in 2008 have declined by \$1million from 2007. More detailed analysis is underway to identify the reasons for decline. A notable achievement was the award of a prestigious QEII Fellowship to Dr Jonathan Marshall of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences.

➤ External Engagement and Alumni Update

Global Panel Student Forum at UTS

The DVC (External Relations), Dr Rosalind Dubs, organized the Global Panel Student Forum on Saturday 15 September. Our co-host was Global Panel, a group of eminent international figures which is seeking to establish a 500million Euro investment fund for the Korean Peninsula. The event was held in conjunction with the Prague Society for International Cooperation.

The topic was economic engagement with North Korea, and around 45 students participated. The session was moderated by former NSW Premier, Hon Bob Carr, with Attorney-General Phillip Ruddock, Global Panel Foundation Chair Professor Marc Ellenbogen actively participating. A senior executive from Qantas, a spokesperson for the Danish Foreign Affairs committee, and the Counsellor for Political and Economic Affairs from the Russian Embassy also enlivened the debate.

Bob Carr, Minister Ruddock and other members of the visiting delegation all praised the quality of the UTS students the University had brought together for the Forum and it was clear that UTS was viewed in a most favourable light by our visitors.

Alumni News

- The Alumni Networks mini conference was held in August, and UTS now has 15 active alumni networks locally and overseas
- UTS:Alumni web site now has the capacity to accept donations on-line
- The recent appeal for Library books was a success, resulting in over 100 books valued at \$100 each being donated
- A donation of \$10,000 for bursaries for indigenous students was received from the George Alexander Foundation. Submissions to charitable trusts and foundations continue

Successful Alumni

- IT graduate Richard White, CEO of Cargo Wise, has won the Inspiration Award for best innovative practice in information and communication technology
- Engineering graduate Chris Wilson, of Winten Constructions, was awarded the Master Builders Association of NSW Graduate of the Year award
- Law graduate Phin Hartson has gained prominence for his pro-bono work with Islander youth in Sydney
- Sean Hobbs, HSS graduate, has been appointed Official War Artist (photography) by the Australian War Memorial and is working in Iraq and Afghanistan
- Former UTS Faculty of Information Technology PhD student Carolyn McGregor has been awarded one of only two prestigious Canada Research Chairs in Health Informatics at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT)

➤ **UTS Debating**

The Debating Society recently competed in the Australasian Intersvarsity Debating Championships (“Austral’s”) in Malaysia, and the UTS 2 team of Isabelle Paton, Jane Macnamara and Esther Qweit finished ninth overall in the competition. Isabelle Paton claimed fourth best speaker in the tournament and was the highest ranked speaker from New South Wales in the competition. Overall, the result was the best for the Debating Society at the Austral’s in the last decade.

➤ **British Council “Realise Your Dream” Grant**

Katrina Schwarz, who is in the final stages of her Master of Arts (Journalism) degree at UTS, is one of six winners in the British Council's Realise Your Dream program. The program provides talented young people in the creative industries an opportunity to spend time with industry leaders in the United Kingdom. As well as being editor of *Art & Australia* magazine, Katrina has written for UTS's *Festival News*, *Yen* and *Monument* magazines and launched her co-creation *The Salon Anthology* at Sydney Writers' Festival earlier this year. She will do work experience with an art publication or art project while in London. A second of the winners, Jess Scully, withdrew from UTS before finishing her Journalism/Law degree, but we hope she will return in the near future to complete her Bachelor of Arts.

➤ **Successful Engineering Initiative**

The University recently received a letter of thanks from Burwood Girls High School for our Faculty of Engineering’s “Hands On” program. I congratulate Ms Bronwyn Holland, Director of the Women in Engineering Program and her team, who are working with female high school students – many from non-English speaking backgrounds – to encourage them to take up Engineering studies.

Burwood Girls High reports that Bronwyn’s team is breaking down cultural barriers to females choosing an Engineering career, and that their students are consequently studying mathematics at a higher level. It is encouraging to receive such positive feedback, and tangible results from our outreach programs.

➤ **Sporting News**

I am pleased to inform you of some Sports highlights since my last report:

- **UTS Balmain Cricket Club** has approved the proposed merger with the Sydney Cricket Ground Trust to form the Sydney Cricket Club
- **Our UTS Rowers** achieved outstanding results at the recent World Championships in Germany. Katelyn Gray, UTS Union High Performance Sports Scholar, and Vicky Roberts, from UTS Rowing Club, were in the Australian Women’s Four that won a bronze medal. UTS Coach Ellen Randell-Griffith coached Miranda Bennett, lightweight 4’s, to a gold victory
- The **UTS Jets Rugby League team** has won the Premiership in the University League competition for the second consecutive year

- **Hockey** – five teams made it through to the grand finals on 15 and 16 September, but were unfortunately beaten despite putting on a great show. Sacha Overhoff has won the Kevin Flack Medal for Best and Fairest Player in the Sydney Hockey Association men’s 2nd grade competition; and Rita Holmes was named the Inaugural Best and Fairest player in the Sydney Women’s Premier League Indoor Hockey competition
- **Racewalking** - Fiona Alldis (UTS High Performance Sports Scholar, Racewalking) recently won the U20 Australian 10km Roadwalk Championship in Perth, and the Silver Medal as the second woman to cross the line in the Open Women’s Championship
- **Snow Sports** – the UTS team recently competed in the AUS Snow Sports Championships at Perisher, placing third overall, with our Men’s taking out first place. UTS also won the Spirit of the Mountain Award, given to the team who competes in the true spirit and energy of Australian University Sport event
- **2007 UTS Australian University Games** – congratulations to our athletes, whose combined results placed us in the Top 10 in this year’s games: silver medal to the Women’s Waterpolo Team; bronze medals to the Women’s Tennis Team, Women’s Hockey Team, and the Mixed Netball Team. Individual Athletics results – gold to Geoff Davis and Michael Barber, silver to Fiona Alldis, and bronze to Michael Trealar and Jacob Holt.

3. EVENTS

➤ Faculty of Law – 30th Anniversary

On 13 September, I attended the 30th anniversary celebration of the Faculty of Law, at which the Hon Justice WMC Gummow AC delivered the keynote address. The Faculty was established in February 1975 as part of the then NSW Institute of Technology, and lectures began in February 1977 in a part-time LLB program innovative in its mix of core and skills subjects. Thirty years on, with more than 4,000 graduates and a growing research presence, the Faculty continues to deliver a wide variety of courses to meet the future needs of students and the community.

➤ UTS Union Dinner

The annual UTS Union Dinner was held at the Gallery Function Centre on 14 September. Almost 200 people attended, including hard-working Union staff and representatives of many of the clubs and societies which fall under the auspices of the Union. On behalf of Professor Vicki Sara, I presented the Chancellor’s Volunteer of the Year award to Engineering student Brett Granger, who has demonstrated a wide range of volunteer contributions across the UTS community.

➤ **News Limited Forum**

On 26 September I welcomed a large audience to the annual News Limited Forum, which was chaired by Professor Shirley Alexander. The Forum is presented by UTS and Daily Telegraph Education, and keynote speakers were Federal Minister Julie Bishop, and Shadow Minister Stephen Smith, who discussed school and higher education. This forum is always successful, and is important in raising the profile of the University.

➤ **Human Rights Awards**

I was pleased to host the annual Human Rights Awards on 18 October in the Chancellery, at which Justice Michael Kirby delivered the guest speech. Around 150 people attended to see 11 award recipients across six categories, and comments from the panel included some outstanding work being done by staff and particularly, students. It is heartening that students are finding time for human rights work when they have to combine paid work with their studies.

4. AROUND CAMPUS

➤ **Environment Health & Safety Consultation Survey 2007**

The Environmental Health and Safety Branch has commissioned an independent review assessment to determine whether the University is meeting its statutory obligations to consult staff on occupational health and safety at UTS. This exercise was last carried out in 2005. Surveys are currently being conducted across five faculties and three units, amongst approximately 80 staff members.

The review will assess staff awareness of health and safety issues, processes in place for reporting and managing problems, and identify opportunities for improvement and/or concerns that need addressing.

➤ **Auslan and Deaf Culture Awareness**

The UTS Equity & Diversity Unit is currently holding An Introduction to Auslan and Deaf Culture for staff and students. This series of fun, informal classes introduces Auslan, the language of the Deaf community of Australia.

Attendees are learning practical Auslan skills, the fingerspelling alphabet and appreciate the role of visual communication in Auslan. The programme runs until 6 November, and further information is available from Joanna Leonard on 9514 1274.

➤ **UTSpeaks**

Members of Council will have received invitations to UTSpeaks on Wednesday 31 October, and I encourage you to attend. Dr Paul Woolley will lead a discussion on *Financial Sector Dysfunctionality - Is society well served by its financial institutions?* 5.30pm drinks for 6.15pm start, at University Hall, UTS Science Building; 45 Harris Street, Ultimo (diagonally opposite ABC headquarters). Free parking is available in the basement of the Peter Johnson Building. RSVP by Tuesday 30 October 2007 to Terry Clinton, 9514 1623

5. APPOINTMENTS AND DEPARTURES

Dr Alex Byrne, University Librarian, has just completed his two year term as President of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), the peak international body for the industry. It has been a tremendous honour for UTS to have Alex in this position, and he has expressed to me his appreciation for the support he has received from UTS which has also been noted by others. He has prepared a final report on the broader outcomes of his presidency, especially those in regard to the World Summit on the Information Society, intellectual property regulation, safeguarding of heritage and promotion of intellectual freedom. Alex believes that all of this has helped raise the profile of UTS among intergovernmental agencies and a number of international and national professional organisations.

As advised in my recent email to Council Members, **Professor Desley Luscombe** has been reappointed as Dean of the Faculty of Design, Architecture and Building for a further four-year term. The further embedding of the current strategic direction and a focus on strengthening external engagement will be two priorities for the next stage of the Faculty's development.

The Board of Insearch has appointed **Alex Murphy** as the new Managing Director, following the retirement of Murray Laurence. Alex's appointment took effect on 3 September, and I have welcomed him to this role on behalf of the University.

6. CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to the following:

- **Professor David Goodman**, DVC (International), who has been re-appointed as an AUQA Auditor for 2007-2009
- **Dr Jonathan Marshall** of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, who has been awarded a prestigious QEII Fellowship (mentioned previously in this report).
- **Dawson Ko**, a first year local student in the Bachelor of Business who on 10 October was awarded one of ten national Pride of Australia medals. News Limited sponsors the awards, which recognise outstanding contributions by ordinary Australians. Dawson lost his sight in 2003 aged 20. He became the first Australian blind person to be awarded a black belt in karate. Dawson also established an online support group and a fashion website for young people who are visually impaired.

7. IN MEMORIAM

The University was shocked by the sudden death in August of **Nicola Bruti Liberati**, staff member and PhD student in the Faculty of Business. Nicola was a young man on the verge of an outstanding career, and had already had nine publications and a number of papers presented at international conferences. His thesis on Quantitative Finance, *Numerical Solution of Stochastic Differential Equations with Jumps in Finance*, was submitted in April this year and was regarded as outstanding by all of his examiners. Nicola's colleagues and friends honoured him at a memorial service on 4 September, and his PhD was awarded posthumously at the graduation ceremony on Wednesday 26 September at 10.30am. I have sent condolences to Nicola's family and partner on behalf of the University.

SUPPLEMENTARY TABLED PAPER 5.1

UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY, SYDNEY

COUNCIL

AGENDA ITEM 5.1

MEETING 07/5

VICE-CHANCELLOR

24 OCTOBER 2007

VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

Purpose

To report to Council on additional key developments and events that have occurred since the dispatch of the last Vice-Chancellor's Report to Council.

Recommendation

That the Vice-Chancellor's Report, as detailed in Document 5.1 and the Supplementary Tabled Paper 5.1, be received and noted.

1. EXTERNAL MATTERS

➤ National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education

I am pleased to report UTS's involvement in a new National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education, which has recently been announced by the Minister for Education, Science and Training, the Hon Julie Bishop. The Centre will be established at the University of South Australia next year, and is a collaboration between the University of South Australia, UTS and the Queensland University of Technology.

The Australian Government will provide \$630,000 in establishment costs and \$590,000 annually towards the operational costs of the Centre. The Centre will develop best practice for attracting and retaining students from disadvantaged backgrounds and will provide outreach programs to universities, schools and the broader community. It will work to promote and facilitate greater access to education for students from poorer backgrounds and particularly those from rural and regional areas.

➤ NSW Governor Professor Marie Bashir

On 15 October the Premier announced that the term of Her Excellency Professor Marie Bashir AC CVO AO as Governor of NSW has been extended until 2012. Professor Bashir is a frequent visitor to our University, having officiated at such events as the installation of the Chancellor, Professor Vicki Sara; the opening of the Nobel Exhibition, Beautiful Minds; and the opening of Building 10. I have written to Her Excellency on behalf of the University, congratulating her on the extension of her appointment.

➤ Trade Delegation to India

Professor Archie Johnston, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering, was recently in India, and had a number of very productive meetings in Delhi and Mumbai, including with the All India Association of Industries (AIAI). They subsequently issued a very positive press release, pointing towards future joint ventures/collaborations between industry, academia and the government. It is my intention to meet with the President of AIAI, Vajay Kalantri, when I visit India with the Premier of NSW in November. We will also be signing a Memorandum of Understanding with AIAI in the near future.

2. INTERNAL MATTERS

➤ Academic Board Elections

The results of recent elections for the positions of Deputy Chairs of Academic Board, for the period 1 November 2007 to 31 October 2009, are:

- Deputy Chair (and Chair, Academic Administration Committee) - Associate Professor Geoffrey Riordan
- Deputy Chair (and Chair, Courses Accreditation Committee) - Associate Professor David Wilson

- Deputy Chair (and Chair, Coursework Students' Appeals Committee) - Associate Professor Geoff Monahan
- Deputy Chair (and Chair, Teaching and Learning Committee) - Professor Diana Slade

A ballot for the position of Chair of Academic Board is currently being conducted, and results will be finalised by 5pm on 24 October.

Emma Lancaster, currently Education Vice President, has been elected President of the Students Association, and as such is ex-officio member of Academic Board. Emma's term will begin on 1 December 2008.

The meeting of Academic Board on 3 October was the last meeting of the current Board, and all members were thanked for their contribution to the work of Academic Board. Members retiring from the Board at this meeting were wished well for their post-Board future.

➤ **Risk and Assurance Unit**

Following consultation with the Senior Executive and the Audit and Review Committee, I have approved the changing of the name of the Internal Audit Unit to the Risk and Assurance Unit, effective 15 October 2007. The change of name reflects the unit's shift towards involvement in the risk management framework of the University, which is increasingly common among audit units.

➤ **Peer Assisted Learning and Support (PALS) / UTS Peer Assisted Student Success (U:PASS)**

Peer Assisted Learning and Support is one of the projects funded through the Learning & Teaching Performance Fund 2007. It aims to support faculties in establishing and running Peer Assisted Learning Schemes in subjects with traditionally high failure rates. On 19 October I attended a function to present training completion certificates to thirteen U:PASS Peer Leaders from Faculties of Science, Engineering and Business. It was great to witness the skills and enthusiasm of student Peer Leaders, who are heart of the program.

Prior to becoming learning facilitators in U:PASS sessions, students are trained in the peer assisted learning model and group facilitation strategies.

➤ **Congratulations**

- **Professor Stephanie Donald**, Director, Institute for International Studies, has been appointed Chair of the Humanities and Creative Arts Panel of the Australian Research Council (ARC). This is a great honour for Stephanie, and I have wished her every success in this prestigious role.

- **Professor Heather Goodall**, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, has been elected a Fellow of the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia. Fellows are elected by their peers on the basis of having made a distinguished contribution to one more of the Social Sciences, and this considerable honour is recognised internationally.