School of Psychology

Teaching & Learning Committee

Minutes of the meeting: 30 July 2010

Present
Shayne Loft
Vance Locke
Geoff Hammond (Chair)

Apologies
Hayley Hutchison
Andrea Loftus

1 Chair’s report

There was nothing to report because August meeting of the Faculty T&L Committee had been cancelled.

2 New Courses 2012

The draft responses to the Interim Boards of Studies for retaining the major structure and the current Honours structure were discussed. It was noted that the School would have to restructure its undergraduate course if it could not retain its mixed Level 2/3 units.

3 Scaling scores from multiple-choice exams

The purpose of scaling scores from multiple-choice exams so that they mapped onto the grading scale was discussed, and it was agreed that in units in which a substantial multiple-choice exam was used for assessment the scores should be rescaled to have the same mean and standard deviation as the graded work.

Recommendation to the Head of School: that scores from multiple-choice exams that count for half or more of the assessment in a unit be scaled to have the same mean and standard deviation as the graded work.

4 Mid-year honours entry

The Committee again considered the School’s policy of requiring students entering mid-year to spread their course over three semesters. The Committee did not reach a consensus view on the policy to be adopted.

The points in favour of allowing mid-year students to complete in two semesters are:

- conformity with University policy;
- conformity with the practice in all other Schools in the Faculty;
- an equitable workload distribution for all students (mid-year students currently have three semesters to complete a two-semester load);
- University mid-year enrolments are increasing and it is likely that applications for mid-year entry to Honours will increase;
• CRICOS mandates a two-semester program and the School would have to withdraw its mid-year entry program for international students if it retains a three-semester program.

The points against allowing mid-year students to complete in two semesters are:

• all of the administrative processes (ranking, selection, allocation to supervisors, allocation and checking of proposals and ethics applications, assessing the theses, and a second Honours conference) will be duplicated with mid-year entry;
• mid-year entry might mean that staff will be supervising over the Christmas period;
• completing mid-year entry students can't start an applied postgraduate program mid-year (though they can a PhD, there won't be many Scholarships available);
• the order of units will be different, resulting in fourth-year students with 2 units completed taking units with brand new students, and the second-semester unit cannot assume any prior learning from the first-semester units.

Recommendation to the Head of School: that in the absence of a consensus view a decision be made whether to allow mid-year Honours entry or to maintain the current practice, which would require withdrawal of the mid-year entry for international students.

6 Next meeting

The next meeting will be held at 3 pm on Friday 24 September.

7 Other business

There was no other business.