

## ACADEMIC COUNCIL

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### MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, 9 FEBRUARY 2000  
AT 2:00 PM IN AG 01

#### PRESENT:

A Pratt (Chairperson)  
M Brady  
P Burke  
E Cassidy  
E Cunningham  
J Doyle  
AN Glynn  
P James  
B Leavy  
L MacMathuna  
D Madden  
A Morrissey  
C Nic Phaidin  
C O'Malley  
H Ruskin  
P Sheehan  
B Trench  
AD Wood

J Carroll (Deputy Chairman)  
T Brady  
R Byrne  
M Clynes  
S Derby  
M Egan  
M Henry  
B Kehoe  
C Long  
B McMullin  
M Molony  
A Mulligan  
C O Coigligh  
M O'Sullivan  
R Saunders  
A Smeaton  
W Tuke

A Brady  
A Burke  
M Canning  
F Corcoran  
K Devenney  
M Gannon  
J Hurley  
P Kinsella  
L Looney  
B McNamara  
R Morgan  
S Ni Mhaolrunaigh  
R O'Kennedy  
P Preston  
M Scott  
M Townson  
D Walls

#### APOLOGIES:

D Bancroft  
D Diamond  
J Kerrane  
K Monks  
J Murray  
A Sinnott

M Byrne  
B Flood  
S McGovern  
T Moynihan  
C O hOgartaigh

L Davis  
K Junker  
K MacKeogh  
G Murphy  
J Ryan

### 1. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

The agenda was adopted subject to the inclusion of a number of matters under 'any other business'. Two documents were tabled at the start of the meeting namely (a) the revised 'Framework of Good Practice in Teaching & Learning' to be considered under 3.9 of the agenda and (b) the recommendations from the Accreditation Board for the BNS in Nephrology Nursing to be considered under 6.3.1. of the agenda.

## 2. MINUTES OF THE 8 DECEMBER 1999 MEETING OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL

The minutes of the meeting of 8 December 1999 were approved and signed by the Chairman, subject to the removal of the word 'only' in the fourth line under the tabular data for item 15 on page 11.

## 3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL

### 3.1. Accreditation of research degrees: All Hallows College

In the context of the accreditation arrangements with All Hallows College, as described in the Memorandum of Understanding approved by Academic Council on 9 June 1999, a proposal was approved by Academic Council for the award by Dublin City University of research degrees to those students of All Hallows who successfully complete research programmes of study which are conducted and examined in accordance with the University's regulations, as provided in the publication "Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research & Thesis".

### 3.2. Timing of Summer and Autumn examination meetings

- For the Summer diet of examinations, the Programme Board Examination review Committee meetings should be held 2 weeks after the 2-week examination period; the order of the Progression and Award Board meetings should correspond to that for the Programme Board Examination Review Committee meetings and be held exactly one week later; and the examination results should be issued in the post exactly one week after the final Progression and Award Board meeting and on the web as soon as it is practicable to do so.
- The Autumn diet of examinations should be scheduled during the last 2 weeks of August; there will be a single Autumn examination board meeting for each programme (merging the Programme Board Examination Review Committee and Progression and Award Board meetings) and this should be held 1 week after the 2-week examination period; these examination board meetings will be scheduled during a period of 3 to 4 days as appropriate; and the examination results should be issued in the post and on the web as soon as it is practicable to do so during the following (first-year registration) week.
- The Chairman agreed to consider the timing of Autumn examination boards for taught Master's programmes as a separate matter. *Note: It was agreed at the 9 February 2000 meeting that, pending the development of a proposal for change from the School of Communications, the schedule for postgraduate programmes would be the same as that approved for undergraduate programmes.*

### 3.3. Role of External Examiners

Academic Council agreed the proposal that, in future, External Examiners must be involved with the final (i.e. award) years of programmes and, at the discretion of individual Programme Boards, may be involved with other (i.e. non-award) years of programmes.

### **3.4. 1999/2002 Register of External Examiners**

Academic Council noted nominations for the appointment of module external examiners and external examiners for the University's taught programmes across six Faculties for the three-year period 1999/2002. It was noted that the Faculty of Distance Education will be making a separate submission to the 9 February 2000 meeting of Academic Council, following the conclusion of the 1999 diet of examinations.

### **3.5. Academic Calendar 2000/01**

Academic Council deferred approval of the proposed Academic Calendar for 2000/01 pending its amendment as a result of decisions reached during consideration of the previous agenda item on the timing of Progression & Award Boards. In response to a query from a member regarding the necessity of commencing Semester 1 on the final Monday of September, the Chairman requested the Registrar to present a 3-year window of Semester 1 dates to the 9 February 2000 meeting of Academic Council.

### **3.6. Freedom of Information Act**

In the context of a query from a member of Academic Council relating to the provision of sufficiently detailed documentation for appeals, the Chairman agreed to return to the 9 February 2000 meeting of Academic Council with some indication of the likely implementation date for the provisions of the Freedom of Information Act 1997 whose scope was recently extended (July 1999) to include universities. *Note: The Chairman advised the 9 February 2000 meeting that a date for implementation of the Act in the university sector had not yet been decided. The Secretary had attended a briefing on the Act by the Department of Finance and would be reporting briefly to the next day's meeting of the Heads & Professors Group. The Director of Finance is a member of the CHIU Group which would be meeting with the HEA on the following day and, once agreement on implementation of the Act to the university sector is agreed, a full briefing for all university personnel will be organised.*

### **3.7. Research Committee: Annual Report**

In presenting the 1998/99 annual report from the Research Committee to Academic Council, Dr Conor Long, Dean of Research, requested that Academic Council should record his appreciation of the valuable role and contribution of the School of Research Convenors whose 3-year period of office was now coming to an end. *Note: The Chairman has since written to the School Research Convenors in question to thank them on behalf of Academic Council.*

### **3.8. Proposal to establish a Research Ethics Committee**

Academic Council approved in principle a proposal from the Dean of Research to establish a Research Ethics Committee to deal with ethical issues arising from research conducted within the University and research undertaken by individuals or groups associated with the University.

### **3.9. Student Union's proposed Framework of Good Practice**

It was agreed at the 13 October 1999 meeting that, with the support and assistance of the Dean of Teaching and Learning, through the Teaching and Learning Committee, the proposal could be further enhanced and made more complete through the inclusion of details relating to the responsibilities and obligations of individual students. *Note: a revised report was adopted at the 9 February 2000 meeting of Academic Council and*

*welcomed in the context that the framework should be interpreted flexibly and adapted to suit local requirements such as, for example, the distinctive needs of part-time and distance education programmes.*

**3.10. DCU and Lifelong Learning: Outline strategy paper**

Mr Mike Egan, Student Representative for the Joint Faculty of Education, advised the meeting that a strategy paper was being prepared by the Strategic Planning Executive, Mr Chris O'Malley, and other staff including Mr Egan, which would be presented to the 9 February 2000 meeting of Academic Council.

**4. REPORT FROM STANDING COMMITTEE OF ACADEMIC COUNCIL**

Noted.

**4.1. Minutes of the 2 December 1999 meeting**

Noted.

**5. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF STANDING COMMITTEE**

Members of Academic Council are reminded that the endorsement of Academic Council is required in respect of recommendations and decisions made by Standing Committee. While this is normally achieved by adoption of the relevant minutes, it is important for Academic Council to note items of special significance contained within these minutes.

**5.1. Faculty/Committee/Programme Board Minutes**

The Chairpersons of the relevant Programme Boards have been advised of the decisions of Standing Committee of Academic Council in respect of the specific issues raised in the minutes for consideration.

**5.2. Appointment of External Examiners**

The Registrar reported that invitations had been issued to the various External Examiners recommended for appointment for Research Degrees and for Taught Programmes.

**5.3. Appointment of Internal & External Examiners**

- Members of Standing Committee were requested to submit their views to the Registrar on his draft guidelines relating to internal examiners, the independent Chairperson and potential conflicts of interest in the appointment of External Examiners.
- With the assistance and cooperation of the Registrar and other members, Professor Brain MacCraith will introduce proposals for the establishment of a Graduate Studies Office for the University.
- The views of the members of Standing Committee were requested in bringing forward proposal for more realistic fee remuneration levels for the various categories of external examiners.

#### **5.4. MSc in the Management & Applications of It in Accounting**

Standing Committee has requested the assistance of the Course Team in formulating a proposal which would address the issues of eligibility for the exit awards of Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma and the recognition, in terms of credit transfer, to be provided for students wishing to return to the programme having earlier received one or both of these awards.

#### **5.5. Entry requirements for the BEng MEBS Programme**

Standing Committee recommended that the proposal be considered, in the first instance, by the Programme Board and, in recognition of the significant changes being proposed at the start of the first year of implementation, not least the new entry requirements in mathematics, the new award title, and an amended set of core and option modules in all four years of the programme, that the issue of programme re-accreditation be given serious consideration. *Note: Standing Committee noted a revised proposal from the programme Board which was tabled at the 2 December 1999 meeting and, in view of both the timing and the significance of the proposed amendments to the programme, it recommended that the proposal be placed on the agenda of the next meeting of Standing Committee for detailed consideration.*

### **6. REPORTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FROM ACCREDITATION BOARDS**

Academic Council approved reports from its Accreditation Boards in respect of the under-listed programme proposals from All Hallows College, Mater Dei Institute of Education and the School of Nursing. The Registrar paid tribute to the Deans of Faculty who assisted in the process by chairing the various meetings, the external members of the Accreditation Boards who provided the necessary and expert peer review, and the proposers who were widely complimented during the reviews for the excellence of preparation and quality of documentation.

#### **6.1. All Hallows College**

- 6.1.1 BA in Theology & Philosophy
- 6.1.2 BA in Humanities: Pastoral Theology
- 6.1.3 Graduate Diploma in Humanities: Holistic Development
- 6.1.14 MA in Pastoral Leadership

#### **6.2. Mater Dei Institute of Education**

- 6.2.1 Bachelor of Religious Education
- 6.2.2 Graduate Diploma in Theological Studies
- 6.2.3 Graduate Diploma in School Chaplaincy & Pastoral Care
- 6.2.4 Graduate Diploma in Healthcare Chaplaincy
- 6.2.5 MA in Religion & Culture and MA in Religion & Education

#### **6.3. School of Nursing**

- 6.3.1 BNS in Nephrology Nursing

**7. ACADEMIC CALENDAR 2000/01**

Academic Council approved the proposed Academic calendar for 2000/01 following its amendment as a result of decisions reached at the 8 December 1999 meeting on the timing of Progression & Award Boards and subject to the inclusion of the dates for the publication of the examination timetables for Semesters 1 and 2 and the autumn diet of examinations. In response to a query from a member regarding the necessity of commencing Semester 1 dates to the meeting with starting dates of the last Monday in September (as currently) and the first Monday of October. Following a discussion, it was agreed that, in future years, Semester 1 should start “on the Monday nearest to October 1”.

**8. 1999/2002 REGISTER OF EXTERNAL EXAMINERS: NDEC PROGRAMMES**

Academic Council noted nominations for the appointment of external examiners for the Faculty of Distance Education’s taught programmes for the three-year period 1999/2000 to 2001/2002.

**9. PROPOSAL TO ESTABLISH A UNIVERSITY RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

The Dean of Research presented a proposal to the meeting for the establishment of a University-wide Research Ethics committee which provided details on the responsibilities of both the University-wide Committee and Schools and described procedures for University units in dealing with ethical issues arising from research. Additionally, five appendices were included which provided guidance for Schools under the following headings:

- Guidance for School Procedures for the Consideration of issues with Ethical Implications
- Guidance for the Establishment and Operation of School Ethics Committee
- University Ethics Committee: Referrals by Schools
- Annual Report by School to the University Ethics Committee
- Documentation for School Review

Academic Council approved a proposal from the Research Committee for the establishment of a Research Ethics Committee in the University (to be titled the University Research Ethics Committee) which will be responsible for creating a University-wide awareness of ethical issues arising from research and from other experiments, projects, demonstrations, surveys and scholarly work. It was agreed the document should be amended to include a statement on academic freedom in the context of the universities Act 1997, some cross-referencing to existing policies and procedures relating to the conduct of contract research, and clarification on the advisory/decision-making role of the University-wide Committee. It was acknowledged that the scope of the proposal would have to be extended to include Research Centres but that such a development should await the outcome of the current University-wide review of research management structures.

## 10. DCU & LIFELONG LEARNING: STRATEGY PAPER

The Strategic Planning Officer, Mr Chris O'Malley, who was in attendance at the meeting to introduce this agenda item, presented a paper which set out the major forces influencing the move towards a coherent strategy for lifelong learning and the issues which Dublin City University need to address in its response. Such forces at work included the recent shift from growth to decline in the school-leaver population and the need to redress the accumulated relatively low level of educational attainment amongst large parts of the Irish adult population, and the social divisions which result. There was broad welcome for the paper and discussions centred on key issues which the University needed to address in order to provide a coherent strategic response:

- Clarification on the portfolio of activities which the University intends to offer to provide lifelong learning.
- Identification of the likely sources of funding to make these activities possible and sustainable.
- Prioritisation of the external relationships to be developed to facilitate funding and/or channels to the appropriate target students.
- Ensuring that admissions policies are adequate to facilitate entry through non-CAO channels while maintaining standards.
- Ensuring that the delivery of programmes is flexible enough to meet the needs of those who cannot commit 20 hours or more per week to attending programmes.
- Ensuring that the pedagogic style is appropriate to adult learners and that content can be kept relevant.
- Ensuring that appropriate incentives for staff and Schools are in place to encourage initiatives in this area to be taken and followed through.
- Ensuring that student support services appropriate to the needs of non-traditional students are put in place (*it was acknowledged during the meeting that the extent of support could be highly significant and that the nature of such support differed according to the different constituencies involved*).

The Strategic Planning Officer advised the meeting of his plans to organise a workshop involving the members of staff who contributed to the writing of the strategy paper and other staff across the University who might be interested in making a commitment to addressing these issues. In the meantime and in the context of the need to put structures in place in order to be able to respond to the provisions of the national development Plan, the Chairman requested members who see potential for specific initiatives in their respective academic areas to submit proposals or expressions of interest for his consideration and support as a matter of priority.

## 11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

### 11.1 Registration Council recognition of Science Education Degree

The Registrar advised the meeting of correspondence received from the Department of Education & Science which confirmed that the Registration Council will recognise the University's qualification of BSc in Science Education for the purpose of teaching Chemistry and Physics from the approved subject areas set out in the Rules and Programme for Secondary Schools. He offered his congratulations to Professor Martin Henry, Dr Gerry McNamara and other colleagues who were instrumental in

the development and delivery of this excellent and now properly recognised new programme of studies.

**11.2 The Learning Festival**

Mr Mike Egan advised the meeting that 'The Learning Festival' would be held at the University during 13-18 February 2000. The overall objectives of the Learning Festival are to raise awareness across the broad community of North Dublin of the ever-increasing importance of lifelong learning and to broaden the accessibility and appeal of learning in its different forms.

**11.3 End of Registrar's Term of Office**

In noting that this was Professor Carroll's last meeting of Academic Council as Registrar, nearing the March 31 completion date of his second and final three-year term of office, the Chairman expressed his thanks to the Registrar and paid tribute to his achievements, commitment and work-rate over the past six years during a time of major change and huge expansion in both student numbers and academic programmes. In response, Professor Carroll thanked the Chairman for his kind words and expressed special thanks to all the current and former members of Academic Council for their great support and understanding during his period as Registrar.

Date of next meeting:

Wednesday, 12 April 2000 2:00 pm in AG01
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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chairman

Date: \_\_\_\_\_