

## Committee of Convocation

### Minutes of Meeting

held on Wednesday, 18 February 2015, in the Jim Potter Conference Room,  
Old Physics, University of Melbourne, commencing at 5.30 p.m.

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#### 1. Welcome

The President, Ros McMillan, took the chair and opened the meeting, welcoming the guest speaker.

#### 2. Guest speaker - Associate Professor Louisa Remedios, Director of Teaching and Learning at the School of Physiotherapy

Associate Professor Remedios gave a very interesting talk about the events which led to the establishment of the Physiotherapy course at the University when most of the staff at the former Lincoln Institute had moved to LaTrobe. She also dealt with more recent changes in the course that have been made to accommodate the "Melbourne Model".

The present course takes three years after a first bachelor-level degree, and has to accommodate entrants with a wide range of first degrees, while allowing students to specialise in particular areas of practice. Students graduate with a Doctor of Physiotherapy, which is described as a "graduate masters-level program": the professional body does not permit these graduates to use the title "doctor".

There has been a very high demand for places, and the first two graduating cohorts have been well accepted by the profession. When considering admissions, the school uses the "multi-mini-interview" procedure, whereby each applicant has eight five-minute interviews, each with a single interviewer (which is less intimidating than a panel of interviewers). This is believed to be an effective and fair approach.

Associate Professor Remedios took questions from members, after which the President warmly thanked her for her presentation. This was endorsed by the members by acclamation.

#### 3. Attendance

##### Members Present:

Ros McMillan (President), John Scott (Secretary), David Bellair (Minute-taker), Leslie Boston, David Ford, John Harcourt, Gary Israel, Irene Jablonka, John Nelson, Barbara Perry, Ian Rechtman, Beverley-Anne Rodan, Laurence Simpson.

##### Apologies Received:

Anne Ada, Cecily Close, Peter Ross (leave of absence), Jenny Stillman (leave of absence), Noel Whiting.

#### 4. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 19 November 2014, were confirmed with an amendment at item 6 (a), and those minutes have been separately re-issued as Revision 1.

## **5. Membership**

No change.

Leave of Absence is granted to members Peter Ross and Jenny Stillman, according to their respective needs.

## **6. Report of the President**

The President advised as follows.

- a) That she had noticed a request by the University Alumni Office for alumni to act as hosts and mentors for "access" students in various categories, to introduce them to Melbourne and to help them get settled. She had contacted the responsible staff member who was very willing to accept applications from Committee members in the next few days, even though the closing date had passed already.
- b) That she had visited Gizmag (see [www.gizmag.com](http://www.gizmag.com)) in Cardigan Street, Carlton, as mentioned by our November speaker, Associate Professor Margaret Simons.
- c) That she had prepared a minute-taker roster for the rest of the 2015 meetings, and will circulate it.
- d) She mentioned a paper, discussing the Business Improvement Plan (BIP) experience, that had been circulated to University staff by the Senior Vice-Principal, Ian Marshman. A committee member commented that one result of the BIP seems to have been that research areas will still have administrative staff to do things, but that teaching staff may need to do more administrative work themselves.
- e) She reported that she had contacted the President of the Alumni Council, David Laidlaw, and that he was very happy to attend the Committee meeting to be held on 15 April 2015, to speak. Committee members welcomed this and were in agreement that the discussions with David Laidlaw be the only agenda item for that meeting and that he should be invited to dinner, afterwards.

## **7. Alumni Council Activities**

No report was available.

## **8. Financial Report**

The Treasurer reported a bank balance of \$260.90. He advised that having Committee members pay for the end-of-year dinner by direct credit to the bank account had worked well and was a much simpler process for him to manage.

## **9. Faculties and School Reports**

- a) Beverly-Anne Rodan mentioned the new Master of Entrepreneurship course taught by the Wade Institute based at Ormond College (see <http://www.ormond.unimelb.edu.au/wade-institute-for-entrepreneurship>) and noted that the degree is awarded by the University of Melbourne.

## **10. Key Matters for Consideration**

### **a) Actions Update**

David Bellair reported that he had come to the conclusion that his investigation into the use of Social Media, by the Committee, had been a solution in search of a problem. He felt that it would be better first to list the aims and objectives of the Committee and then to see how various social media could support them. He agreed to circulate a paper, within the coming two weeks, for consideration at a forthcoming meeting.

### **b) University Funding**

There was a discussion of current government policies in respect of tertiary education, and John Scott undertook to prepare a short discussion paper for the Committee to assist the possible development of a Committee policy position.

## **11. Other Business**

### **a) Social Media Project**

See item 10 (a), above.

### **b) Website**

John Harcourt advised that he was continuing to update the website with our current events.

### **c) Pre-meeting Tours and Speakers**

Laurie Simpson advised that he had booked a visit to the Anatomy Museum for Committee members on 20 May 2015.

### **d) Meeting Room**

Irene Jablonka advised that meeting room bookings, in respect of meetings to be held during the remaining part of 2015, had been acknowledged by the relevant administrative area, but not yet confirmed. University staff members involved in this work were extremely busy and had been recently subject to both relocation of their work area and to the recent BIP restructure.

## **12. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 18 March 2015, at 5.30pm.

## **13. Close**

The meeting closed at 7.20 pm.

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### **Attachments:**

Updated Actions listing.

### **Papers Circulated:**

Separately, an article from the Australian Financial Review, dated 16 February 2015, written by Vicki Thomson and dealing with university funding.

**Future Speakers:**

To be advised.

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## COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION - ACTIONS

| Ref. No. | Date       | Description   | Responsibility | Status      | Ref. No. |
|----------|------------|---|----------------|-------------|----------|
| 61       | 2013-08-21 | Progress the investigation of the use of Social Media | Executive      | Ongoing     | 61       |
| 73       | 2015-02-18 | Prepare brief discussion paper on university funding  | John Scott     | In progress | 73       |
| 74       | 2015-02-18 | Circulate roster of Minute-takers                     | President      | In progress | 74       |

## Committee of Convocation

### Minutes of Meeting

held on Wednesday, 18 March 2015, in the Jim Potter Conference Room,  
Old Physics, University of Melbourne, commencing at 5.30 p.m.

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#### 1. Welcome

The President, Ros McMillan, took the chair and opened the meeting. She then welcomed the guest speaker.

#### 2. Guest speaker - Dr Vincent Alessi, Curatorial Manager at the Potter Museum of Art, University of Melbourne, Parkville campus.

Dr Alessi began by outlining his career as a curator and an art historian. For 9 years he was the Director of the La Trobe University Art Museum, and for the past 12 months he has been the Curatorial Manager at the Potter Museum.

The thesis for his PhD in Art History was based on letters and a collection of prints by Vincent Van Gogh, an artist who had always fascinated him. This involved studying links between Van Gogh and Charles Dickens, especially their interest in Victorian social issues.

He then described his plans for the exhibition program at the Potter, including his ambition to bring in an audience over summer (usually a period of low attendance). His strategies have already proved successful this year. He spoke of his plans to experiment with ways of using the various floors of the building; to present thematic exhibitions; to create exhibitions around single objects; to encourage people to engage with works in different ways by providing minimum text to accompany objects, and to display art in public places.

Questions by members of the Committee to Dr Alessi following his talk, included matters as diverse as the use of 3D printers and other new forms of technology, graffiti, and the collection of ceramics and glassware bequeathed to the Potter Museum by the anaesthetist Dr Geoffrey Kaye.

The President thanked Dr Alessi for his most interesting and stimulating talk.

#### 3. Attendance

##### Members Present:

Ros McMillan (President), John Scott (Secretary), Cecily Close, David Ford, John Harcourt, Irene Jablonka, John Nelson, Barbara Perry (Minute-taker), Ian Rechtman, Beverley-Anne Rodan, Laurence Simpson, Noel Whiting.

##### Apologies Received:

Anne Ada, David Bellair, Leslie Boston, Gary Israel, Peter Ross (leave of absence), Jenny Stillman (leave of absence).

#### 4. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 18 February 2015, were confirmed without amendment. Moved: John Nelson. Seconded: Barbara Perry. All in favour.

## **5. Membership**

No change.

## **6. Report of the President**

The President brought to the attention of the Committee the fact that the book by Juliet Flesch “40 Years, 40 Women” was to be launched on Monday 30 March at 5.30 pm, in the Leigh Scott Room of the Baillieu Library. All those Committee members who wish to attend were invited and could accept the invitation online.

As foreshadowed in an earlier message from the President, a discussion was then held on the subject of University Deregulation as a subset of current consideration by the Committee of University Funding.

Several members of the Committee expressed views on these controversial and topical matters.

Laurence Simpson summarized the discussion, and his report will be circulated as a separate document.

## **7. Alumni Council Activities**

No report was available, however the President of the Alumni Council will be the speaker at the next meeting of the Committee of Convocation.

## **8. Financial Report**

The Treasurer reported a bank balance of \$244.90.

## **9. Faculties and School Reports**

- a) Irene Jablonka reported on a lecture that she attended at the Physics School, given by professor David Jamieson, that included an explanation of the importance of blue LED light for energy efficiency.
- b) Both Irene Jablonka and Beverley Ann Roden attended a presentation at the Potter Museum at which 5 post-graduate students from different faculties described ways in which they had used material from the Potter Museum in their research. Particular mention was made of the Grimwade gift to the Museum and of the benefit that it has afforded.

## **10. Key Matters for Consideration**

### **a) Actions Update**

Item 61 - Progress the investigation of the use of Social Media – On-going.

Item 73 - Prepare brief discussion paper on University funding – Completed.

Item 74 - Circulate roster of Minute-takers – Done.

### **b) University Funding**

See Report of the President at item 6, above.

## **11. Other Business**

### **a) Social Media Project**

Nothing to report.

**b) Website**

Nothing to report.

**c) Pre-meeting Tours and Speakers**

In process.

**d) Planning for meeting of 15 April 2015**

David Laidlaw, the President of the Alumni Council, will be the guest speaker. Members of the Committee suggested a range of questions to be put to him at the meeting and these were noted by the President. Mr Laidlaw will be invited to join the Committee for dinner after the meeting.

**12. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 15 April 2015, at 5.30pm.

**13. Close**

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm.

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**Attachments:**

Updated Actions listing.

**Papers Circulated:**

Nil.

**Future Speakers:**

To be advised.

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## COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION - ACTIONS

| Ref. No. | Date       | Description   | Responsibility | Status  | Ref. No. |
|----------|------------|---|----------------|---------|----------|
| 61       | 2013-08-21 | Progress the investigation of the use of Social Media | Executive      | Ongoing | 61       |

## Committee of Convocation

### Minutes of Meeting

held on Wednesday, 15 April 2015, in the Jim Potter Conference Room,  
Old Physics, University of Melbourne, commencing at 5.30 p.m.

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#### 1. Welcome

The President, Ros McMillan, took the chair and opened the meeting. She then welcomed the guest speaker.

#### 2. Guest speaker - Mr David Laidlaw (LLB 1975), President of the Alumni Council of the University of Melbourne

Mr Laidlaw introduced his presentation by recounting that the Alumni Council had been in existence for three years and that it consists of six elected members, six appointed members and two non-voting members who represent the Advancement Office of the University.

Mr. Laidlaw then explained the goals of the Alumni Council:

- To develop greater communication between the University and the alumni;
- To work with Advancement to encourage a culture of giving to the University;
- To provide support to the faculties in relating to students and early graduates.

In its pursuit of these goals, the Alumni Council does not try to be involved in all activities within these three areas, but concentrates on special areas where it is felt that significant expertise could be applied.

The main association of the Alumni Council is with the Advancement Office. As President of the Alumni Council, Mr Laidlaw regularly confers with the Advancement Office. There has been emphasis on reaching graduates in connection with the recent appeal. The Alumni Council submits a report of its activities to the University Council at the end of each year.

There is a guest speaker, usually from one of the faculties, at each of the bimonthly meetings of the Alumni Council.

On 14 February 2015, the Alumni Council held a 'Planning Day'. The agenda included special consideration of opportunities for mentoring, concerns in relation to governance and liaison with the faculties and with Alumni living overseas.

There has been a decision to focus the activities of the Alumni Council, rather than to spread too broadly, and to this end there has been the establishment of six working parties, as detailed below.

##### a) Alumni Giving

This group has been working with other groups within the University, including the Advancement Office, in support of the recent appeal (which has now reached some \$400m). The appeal has been far more ambitious than any previously attempted by the University and it has been highly successful.

There have been several lessons:

- Most donations were from major donors from big business, many being designated for new areas of teaching;
- Only 2% of graduates contributed to the appeal, in contrast with 15% to 20% in the United States and 10% in Britain (in Princeton, for example, there is a special effort made to encourage the graduating classes and the recent graduates in relation to their ongoing support for the university);
- People tend to become engaged by giving and some institutions do better, e.g. the Peter McCallum Hospital.

#### **b) Mentoring**

There has been a deliberate effort to have graduates meet with students and recent graduates to discuss professional life after graduation and career opportunities, in general, and this has been greatly appreciated by the students, graduates and mentors, alike.

#### **c) Liaison**

This group concentrates on the enhancement of relationships between alumni associations, including overseas associations, and faculties for mutual support. Faculty Boards were also mentioned. These initiatives have had the support of the University Council.

#### **d) Communications**

This working group has been considering how to develop relations with other alumni groups within the university and to develop an "Alumni Voice".

#### **e) Data and Research**

Headed by Dr David Hill, this group looks at the methodology of surveys and the utilisation of statistics. There has been consideration of longitudinal surveys. (Note: A longitudinal survey involves repeated observations of the same variables over long periods of time, perhaps decades. In a longitudinal cohort study, the same individuals are observed over the study period.)

It is also considered that some of the surveys needed to go much deeper for a better understanding, thus to provide better data.

#### **f) Governance**

This group is coordinated by Dr Ros Otzen and it is keeping track of aspects of the various alumni bodies to ensure that they are able to work within their specific charters.

It was pointed out that the alumnus definition applies to any-one who has spent one year at the University, so a student representative would be appropriate as a member of the Alumni Council and this is being explored. It is sought to cover the range of categories of alumni, including those of age, faculty, gender, etc.

Mr Laidlaw made the point that the Alumni Council related to the University Council, but on a limited basis. The main relationship is with the Advancement Office. Mr Laidlaw mentioned that he had yet to attend a meeting of the University Council.

The President then invited questions from members of the Committee. Points that arose were as follows.

- Communications with faculties are in regard to governance, not courses. There is no involvement with curricular matters.
- Strategic advice on alumni matters can be offered to the University, although the spread of faculty representation amongst the membership of the Alumni Council is not comprehensive.
- It can be a challenge to set up mentoring for heterogeneous groups, such as from Science or Arts, whereas it can be easier to have a lawyer mentor a lawyer, for example.
- The speakers at meetings are mainly from faculties but they are usually those involved in governance and finance.
- Although a report is presented to the University Council at the end of each year, the Alumni Council reports to the Advancement Committee much more often.
- Feedback takes the form of occasional comment.
- The Advancement Office provides administrative support for minutes, etc.
- There is to be a new Director of Advancement in May.
- It is often difficult to encompass all that is going on within the field of interest, particularly as lines of communication are generally being reformed subsequent to the recent implementation of the Business Improvement Plan.
- Clear opportunities for general communication and cooperation between the Committee of Convocation and the Alumni Council have yet to emerge, but direct communication between the presidents would always be welcomed.

The President thanked Mr Laidlaw for his most informative presentation.

### **3. Attendance**

#### **Members Present:**

Ros McMillan (President), John Scott (Secretary), Lesley Boston, Cecily Close, John Harcourt, Gary Israel, Irene Jablonka, John Nelson, Barbara Perry, Laurence Simpson (Minute-taker), Noel Whiting.

#### **Apologies Received:**

Anne Ada, David Bellair, David Ford, Ian Rechtman, Beverley-Anne Rodan, Peter Ross (leave of absence), Jenny Stillman (leave of absence).

### **4. Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 18 March 2015, were confirmed without amendment. Moved: Cecily Close. Seconded: John Harcourt. All in favour.

**5. Membership**

No change.

**6. Report of the President**

No report.

**7. Alumni Council Activities**

As presented by the Guest Speaker (refer to item 2, above).

**8. Financial Report**

The Treasurer reported a bank balance of \$155.20.

Website expenses accounting for a reduction, since the last report. It was considered that there should be an approach to the University Advancement Office for funding. Ros McMillan and John Harcourt offered to progress this matter on behalf of the Committee.

**9. Faculties and School Reports**

**a) Barbara Perry reported on three meetings attended (with Cecily Close):**

The launches of two books written by Juliet Flesch:

- Forty Years / Forty Women (also attended by Ros McMillan);
- Transforming Biology – A history of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology.

**b) Baillieu Library Saturday Seminar, with presentations by Professors Kerry Murphy and Peter McPhee.**

**c) Ros McMillan reported on the most successful launch of the Brian Brown Recording Studio at VCA.**

**10. Key Matters for Consideration**

**a) Actions Update**

Item 61 - Progress the investigation of the use of Social Media – On-going.

**b) University Funding**

A paper that has been prepared by Laurie Simpson will be distributed with the minutes of this meeting.

**11. Other Business**

**a) Social Media Project**

Nothing to report.

**b) Website**

Nothing to report.

c) Pre-meeting Tours and Speakers

There will be a pre-meeting visit to the Anatomy Museum of the Medical School on Wednesday 20 May 2015. Further details are to be provided in due course.

**12. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 20 May 2015, at 5.30pm.

**13. Close**

The meeting closed at 7.15 pm.

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**Attachments:**

Updated Actions listing;

Paper relevant to University Funding prepared by Laurie Simpson.

**Papers Circulated:**

Nil.

**Future Speakers and Tours:**

The speaker for the May meeting is Professor Roger Cousens of the Melbourne School of Land and Environment.

His special interests include:

- Application of ecology to management decisions;
- Historic botanic gardens of Victoria;
- Invasions and biosecurity (coastal weeds, alpine weeds).

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A tour of the Burnley campus of the University of Melbourne is to take place on Tuesday, May 12, 2015 commencing at 10.30 am.

Meet at reception in the main building. Mr John Rayner will welcome us. He will provide a brief overview of the work at Burnley campus. Mr Andrew Smith will then host the rest of the tour.

The address is 500 Yarra Boulevard, Burnley. Guests are welcome.

Those driving, please turn into the drive that leads into the campus and leave the car, for short time, just outside the main building. Go to reception, on the ground floor, introduce yourself and pick up a visitors' pass to put in your car. There is an arrangement with reception about this. Drive out and find a parking spot in Yarra Boulevard, or nearby. The pass will prevent you from being booked. Reception will explain more fully, on the day.

Or take the number 70 tram along Swan St to stop 18.

Or take train to Burnley Station, then 70 tram to stop 18 along Swan St.

## COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION - ACTIONS

| Ref. No. | Date       | Description   | Responsibility | Status      | Ref. No. |
|----------|------------|---|----------------|-------------|----------|
| 61       | 2013-08-21 | Progress the investigation of the use of Social Media | Executive      | Ongoing     | 61       |
| 75       | 2015-04-15 | Apply to Advancement Office for funding               | President      | In progress | 75       |

# University De-regulation

## A paper for consideration at the Committee of Convocation at Melbourne University

It is apparent that this whole concept of de-regulation of the universities is not merely a matter of the control of aspects of the governance of the universities, but has many hidden agendas, and I share with many of my colleagues the difficulty in understanding all the factors involved in the positions of both the government and the position of the universities generally, and of the University of Melbourne in particular.

## The Government

What is the government seeking with this legislation? The Coalition has a complex problem with the support of the tertiary institutions. In the past, the contribution of governments to the funding of the universities was almost 50 % but successive governments have reduced this contribution so that the practical result is that the percentage is now less than 25% and in many cases below 20%. The actual amounts have increased but with the continuing cost of providing tertiary education, the percentage has been substantially reduced. Yet it must be conceded that the HECS support of the students has contributed significant amounts toward university funding.

The above applies essentially to the teaching and learning component of student education, but the rising cost of research is also a consideration as part of this legislation. While initially research funding was conceived to be included in the Medicare fee discussions, this has been dropped with the withdrawal of the surcharge concept. However there is also the concern with the continuing cost of research programs within the universities.

The present government is also concerned with the budget deficit at the present time, and the future demands on the economy with the ageing population and the growing unemployment demands, and the failure of the mining sector and other manufacturing centres to maintain the government's fiscal needs to meet these foreseeable demands.

And even in considering these opposing entities, there are many other aspects in any government considerations of tertiary education, that have an influence on the relationship between the universities and the government. Much of this detail has not been made available, but is significant in consideration of a final review.

The minister, the Honourable Christopher Pyne stated this week that 40 of the 41 vice chancellors favoured de-regulation. But is it as simple as that?

One would like to know the context in which this possibility was presented to the vice chancellors. Was it presented without any of the strings that have been attached to the proposed legislation? In such a case all would have agreed to the proposition. However, it is the other associated addenda that are the concerns of the opposition, the vice chancellors and the universities.

What other factors are operative in the proposed legislation?

- What continuing control of the universities will there be?
- How will research funding be maintained?
- Is it to support the teaching & learning component of each university, or into the general funds?
- The continuation and the nature of the continuing HECS support of student fees, and the fact that much of the loan is never repaid, and hence is a drain on the public purse.
- One must also be aware of the Minister of Education. Christopher Pyne graduated from the University of South Australia, and almost immediately entered upon a political career, without significant experience in what some would call 'the real world'. He is thus limited, and in this his first major portfolio, is most anxious to make a success of his position and this legislation. His own

personality is also limited in seeing other points of view, and making major compromises to a particular point of view.

One can also be sure that the government would have a concern in the governance of the universities, and unlikely to be willing to invest largely into the universities without a continuing interest and some concern as to how that money is spent. The side issues involved have not been released.

## The University Position

What changes will be made within the universities?

- There must be competition between the universities for student enrolment as this is their major source of income even with the government support
- Will the present funding of the universities be compromised if they win the right to self-regulation?
- At present the universities are anxious to enrol as many students as possible for financial reasons.
- There would then be an even greater inequality, less social equity than exists at the present time in the universities.

Melbourne University, seen as the leading university in Australia, will continue to attract the top students even if they raise their fees. The lesser ranked universities will not be able to charge comparable fees. If they wish to attract students then they will either lower their fees, or develop other ways to attract students.

And yet here there is a further problem. Melbourne University is ranked internationally for its research performance, but students do not go to the university for research but for teaching and learning. In the development of their *raison d'être*, the major emphasis of each university will become more apparent, research, pedagogy, or preparation for a trade as in the previous TAFE institutions.

But –

- i. In the recent article by Gary Newman, Melbourne is ranked in the lowest group of universities in pedagogy.
- ii. Melbourne University readily acknowledges that research is its major emphasis.
- iii. Much of the teaching of students, certainly in MDHS is done by research staff, and experience has shown that this is not excellent.
- iv. Much of the finance collected as student fees is actually spent in funding research at Melbourne University, research for which it ranks highly, but is there probity in all their arguments with the government?
- v. Are the universities meeting the goals for which the students attend the university initially?

Under such a system, what will there be in the way of regulation of each of the universities? It is apparent in the experience of almost all disciplines that self-regulation does not work as a regulatory mechanism. The more powerful universities will override others in attaining the goals that they set themselves, while the lesser universities will have little opportunity to attain significance with their ideas and ideals.

If the government grants the universities the opportunity for self-regulation, it would be essential that there be significant accountability to the community, whose support for the universities in philanthropy, financial contribution and recognition of past achievements has been the foundation on which the universities have been established. One could consider that in the recent discussions with the government much of this has been forgotten.

## The Student

These are the forgotten players in this whole discussion, and in many ways, should be the main consideration in the long term effects of the legislation. Governance in all aspects is important, but the

product focus in this situation is on the student and the requirement that this education provides the graduate with the best preparation for life and work in the community. There are many aspects to such an education, and the universities vary greatly in their ability and indeed their desire to provide such.

Different universities have different priorities in vision, allocation of resources, and meeting the goals and needs of students and the hopes of the community. These priorities are not always apparent and the student is often guided by reputation, and even hearsay in making their choice.

There are many questions. In addition to all the aspects of campus life,

- Which university should I attend?
- How do I know what is the main emphasis of each university, and how will this affect me?
- What is their record of teaching?
- Are the teachers committed to their teaching as this is hallmark of a good teacher?
- How well equipped will I be for graduate life in my particular area?

And even more dependent on this whole deregulation debate,

- How much will it cost?
- How can I pay for it? Now? Later?

At the present time there are a large number of students who drop out during their first year at the university, and this applies in most universities. Is this a factor that should be considered in the formal masterminding of student life, or is the university governance concerned more with the status of the university in the world rankings, or their survival in an intensive economic world than meeting the needs of those whom it is their responsibility to serve, rather than to govern?

In this whole situation of university regulation and governance there are many questions that might be asked.

- Is control a significant factor?
- Is this question of solving the economic equation of both the government and the university finances the major concern?
- Is it a ploy by the government to appease a troublesome, intelligent section in the community as is seen in the totalitarian administration communities around the world? One may think so?

If the government grants the universities, the opportunity for self-regulation, it would be essential that there be significant accountability to the community, who have such a significant dependence on the university for the quality of the training of students in preparation for their performance as graduates in a professional capacity in the world community. This quality has been lost at the present time.

Or in reality, is the answer that we would really like to hear, that all are seeking to provide the best form of education, backed by well performed research, for our young people, equipping them as well as we can for full employment in this "Lucky Country"?

## Appendix

# The hunt for Australia's best teaching uni

Date March 9, 2015

**Gary Newman**

*Gary Newman has studied at Deakin and RMIT universities and tutored at the University of Melbourne.*

World university rankings show where the most prolific researchers are located but students' experience is more influenced by teacher quality. Measured world rankings are used by universities to promote themselves but they say little about teaching and the experience of students.

It's a simple question that deserves a simple answer: what's the best teaching university in Australia?

The world university rankings suggest it's the University of Melbourne, but such rankings are predominantly driven by research output, not teaching quality. A recent study found research-intensive universities are generally worse at teaching, a finding supported by well-established trends in student feedback. In other words, the status of our universities is almost completely unrelated to their ability to educate students.

This is why I've made it my mission to find higher education's holy grail – the number one teaching university in the land.

"I think you'll find that pretty tricky," says Dr Emmaline Bexley, a higher education researcher from the University of Melbourne. Yet she's sympathetic to my cause. "It shouldn't be a hard question. It should be a really easy question to answer but no one has figured out how to do it."

Well I guess I'll just have to be the first.

My search for data on teaching quality brings me to a little-known federal government department called the Office for Learning and Teaching which doles out accolades for teaching excellence. The office was established in late 2011, with \$57.1 million in funding over four years for the Promotion of Excellence in Learning and Teaching in Higher Education program. I collate their published data and rank universities based on the number of awards and citations they've received in the past three years.

Voila! Australia's first teaching-based university ranking (probably).

Griffith University in Queensland places first with five awards and 19 citations, including best teacher for 2014. The best Victorian university is Deakin (ranked 14th) with heavyweights Melbourne and Monash coming in at a lowly 25th and 17th respectively.

When the size of the university is factored in, the unfashionable Central Queensland University places first, with the unprestigious Federation University (formerly Ballarat) the best in Victoria (third 3rd overall) with Melbourne and Monash a bottom-dwelling 39th and 35th respectively.

I'm feeling quite chuffed about my new ranking system ... until I speak to Andrew Norton, higher education program director at the Grattan Institute. "If the data is out there, there will be a newspaper that compiles a ranking – that's the way the world works. But whether it will be hugely useful, I'm not sure." "[Rankings] create a lot of status-seeking behaviours among the universities which I think is not particularly productive. Universities try to game particular indicators that do well in the rankings, rather than doing what they think is actually right for their particular student cohort."

Existing research-based rankings discourage universities from focusing on teaching, says Daniel Edwards, principal research fellow at the Australian Council for Education Research (ACER). "Every government I've ever heard of wants most of their universities to be in the top 100 of the Shanghai Jiao Tong ranking. If universities are driven in that way they're funnelled into research-centric metrics and therefore a research-centric workforce."

Few would argue a focus on research is a bad thing of itself, although it appears some universities are churning out research papers at the expense of teaching excellence. Surely an additional ranking system based teaching quality would only help matters? "It could be useful as a counterbalance to the research rankings," acknowledges Mr Norton, before adding that such a ranking would need to be more complex than simply tallying teaching awards per university.

"[The awards] probably reward the people who are going to be star teachers under any system." He says the standard of a university's worst teachers makes the biggest difference to overall teaching quality.

Back to the drawing board.

Another option could be to rank universities based on staff to student ratios and staff seniority, the logic being that universities with the smallest classes and the most qualified staff should be the best at teaching. Not so, says Ross White from the Good Universities Guide, which gives universities a star rating across a range of categories based on student surveys and government data.

"The correlation between teaching resources ... and teaching quality doesn't seem to hold up," says Mr White. "Edith Cowan University got one star for staff student ratio and only two stars for staff qualifications, and yet still achieves five stars for teaching quality." Mr Andrew Norton agrees, adding that staff student ratios are an imprecise measure because they don't measure actual class size. "We've also got this paradox that we need to explain which is that student/staff ratios have been getting worse over time yet student satisfaction is going up."

How about student surveys?

"If you're going to do it in a sophisticated way you would adjust for disciplinary difference. Courses like I.T. always get relatively poor [student feedback] so a uni that is heavy on I.T. will probably appear worse than it really is."

The Good Universities Guide bases its five-star teaching quality rating on the Australian Graduate Survey. Mr Norton says the guide's ratings could overstate the difference between universities because they are a relative measure; that is, a one or two-star university could have only marginally lower standards than a five-star uni.

Mr White disagrees, defending the ratings as a consumer-friendly way of comparing universities. He also declines to name Australia's best teaching university, arguing instead that students should look at a range of information to find the university that's right for them, rather than relying on a crude ranking.

But that's all too sensible for my liking. Why can't someone just tell me which university is top of the pops?

"I would say there's no objective way of knowing that at the moment," says Dr Edwards. But when I ask for the answer he would provide under duress from a loaded firearm, he points me in the direction of a 2013 research paper jointly authored by ACER and the LH Martin Institute, a body "set up to provide the tertiary education sector with career and capability development". The paper contains comprehensive profiles of universities, based on datasets relating to research, regional engagement, student body and teaching. Teaching performance is profiled based on subject diversity, teaching accolades, casualization of staff, staff/student ratio and retention rates.

Dr Edwards cautions that the profiles are crude and were never intended as a means of ranking universities, but I rank them anyway because that's the kind of thing newspapers do. The results? In equal first position are the University of Tasmania, Edith Cowan, the University of Canberra and Federation University.

All of this leads me to conclude that the number one teaching university in Australia could be Griffith or Federation, but is almost definitely not Melbourne. It could also be Edith Cowan, or possibly Canberra.....

# The best teaching universities in Australia

## Australia

### Teaching accolades (total)

Griffith

Deakin

### Teaching accolades (per capita teaching staff)

Central Queensland University

Federation

### University Profiles *(LH Martin Institute / ACER)*

Tasmania, Edith Cowan, Canberra, Federation University

Federation

### Five star teaching universities *(Good Universities Guide)*

Bond, Edith Cowan, Federation University, Notre Dame University, Sunshine Coast, University of New England, University of Western Sydney

## Committee of Convocation

### Minutes of Meeting

held on Wednesday, 20 May 2015, in the Jim Potter Conference Room,  
Old Physics, University of Melbourne, commencing at 5.30 p.m.

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#### 1. Welcome

The President, Ros McMillan, took the chair and opened the meeting. She then welcomed the guest speaker.

#### 2. Guest Speaker - Professor Roger Cousens of the School of BioSciences in the Science Faculty of the University of Melbourne

Professor Cousens, of Land and Environmental Studies in the School of BioSciences, Faculty of Science, gave a most interesting talk on his research on invasive weeds. This research has been connected primarily with weeds affecting agriculture but, more recently, with weeds that have become prevalent on shorelines. Professor Cousens described a project conducted by an interdisciplinary team which had assessed, *inter alia*, the effects of introduced species on native fauna, including the fairy penguins on Phillip Island. In answering numerous questions he touched on the effects of species imported not only from Europe but from other parts of the Australian continent (and of Victorian species introduced to other states). The likelihood of climate change causing the movement of species to new areas was also mentioned.

Professor Cousens was warmly thanked by those present for his engaging and wide-ranging talk.

#### 3. Attendance

##### Members Present:

Ros McMillan (President), John Scott (Secretary), David Bellair, Cecily Close (Minute-taker), John Harcourt, Gary Israel, Irene Jablonka, John Nelson, Barbara Perry, Ian Rechtman, Beverley-Anne Rodan, Laurence Simpson.

##### Apologies Received:

Anne Ada, Lesley Boston, David Ford, Peter Ross (leave of absence), Jenny Stillman (leave of absence), Noel Whiting.

#### 4. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 15 April 2015, were confirmed without amendment. Moved: John Nelson. Seconded: Barbara Perry. All in favour.

#### 5. Membership

No change.

#### 6. Report of the President

The President reported on the very cordial luncheon meeting of our representatives (herself, John Harcourt and Gary Israel) with representatives of the Advancement Office, Jaclyn Birchnell and Sarah Banks (who acted as hosts). This took place at Graduate House on Thursday, 14 May.

The President, with Mr Israel and Dr Harcourt, had prepared a paper giving information concerning the Committee of Convocation, covering its composition and activities and expressing the desire of the Committee to extend its contact with graduates and to cooperate with the Alumni Council and the Advancement Office. The paper also stated that the Committee was not intentionally seeking a revival of its former recognition by the University.

The matter of our application for a grant of \$250 was raised and the requirements for the award of such grants were provided for the consideration of the Committee. These requirements include information concerning relationships between members and their faculties, and with alumni, including and in particular, students; the usefulness of the Committee to the University and the use to which the money would be put.

In the discussion of the report of the President that followed, members raised the difficulties in mentoring current students, the question of whether the Committee would continue to be named in the University Statutes (which are currently under review) and the apparent lack of a digital link between our website and that of the Advancement Office.

## **7. Financial Report**

The Treasurer reported a bank balance of \$155.20.

Ian Rechtman moved and John Scott seconded that, in view of the small amount sought, the Committee should abandon the application for a grant from the Advancement Office in favour of another levy on members of \$20 each. This motion was carried.

The Treasurer requested that the payments be made either in cash (in person) or by bank deposit to BSB 633-000 Acct No. 141509497.

## **8. Faculties and School Reports**

Irene Jablonka had attended a lecture on "Invisibility" by Mr Philip Ball, British broadcaster, writer and scientist, who drew examples of man's attraction to the invisible from history, literature and science. Irene also reported on a talk by Dr Gill Brown, curator of the University of Melbourne Herbarium. Its 150,000 specimens include items from collectors as early as Banks and Solender, and some 3000 specimens recently acquired from the Burnley Campus. DNA analysis has now been added to the traditional methods used in investigation. The talk complemented the exhibition of watercolours from the Herbarium now at the Baillieu Library.

Irene Jablonka advised that, following the recent restructures of the Faculty of Science, the Faculty is now composed of the following Schools: Bio-sciences, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Ecosystems and Forest Sciences, Geography, Mathematics and Statistics, and Physics.

Gary Israel had attended a talk sponsored for Museum Day by Special Collections and held in the Baillieu Library. Dr Andrew Jamieson of the Archaeology Department of Classics reported on the work that has been carried out over many years to excavate ancient sites in Syria. This work is now under threat as a result of the turmoil in that country.

Barbara Perry had attended the opening of the "Pack up your Troubles" exhibition at the Percy Grainger Museum, which included an enjoyable recital of WWI songs.

Laurie Simpson circulated a finely-produced, and illustrated, book, *Compassion and Courage: Australian Doctors and Dentists in the Great War*, prepared to accompany the exhibition at the History of Medicine Museum marking the centenary of WWI.

John Harcourt advised as to new information (concerning University graduation dates) that had arisen subsequent to the issue of his most recent Dental Advisory Committee report.

**9. Key Matters for Consideration**

**a) Actions Update**

The Actions listing was reviewed and updated (see attachment).

**b) University Funding**

Deferred until next meeting.

**c) University Teaching**

Deferred until next meeting but members were requested to provide feedback to Laurence Simpson, in the interim, in respect of his recently circulated discussion paper entitled "University De-regulation".

**10. Other Business**

**a) Social Media Project**

David Bellair distributed a paper entitled "The role of Social Media and the Committee of Convocation", which set out the difficulties associated with the use of social media by the Committee. His suggested alternative, which he related to certain aspects of the role of the Committee as agreed at the meeting of 20 March 2013, would be make use of the website to discuss particular topics. David agreed to investigate how to set up a forum for discussion and members were asked to submit suitable topics.

It was also realised that use could be made of existing University discussion group websites. To this end, members were requested to develop topics for entries at social media University discussion group sites and to consider the areas in which University representation within the membership of the Committee may need to be strengthened by recruitment.

**b) Website**

There was nothing to report on this matter.

**c) Tours and Speakers**

Professor Philomena Murray of the School of Social and Political Sciences will be the speaker at the June meeting. After her B.A. studies at University College Dublin, she took a Diploma in Advanced European Studies at the College of Europe, and a Ph.D. from the European University Institute, Florence. Among her research interests are EU-Australia and EU-Asia relations.

**d) Laurie Simpson suggested that a congratulatory letter should be written to former member Jocelyn Chew, who is progressing well in her career. Details are to be provided to assist the President in doing this.**

**11. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 17 June 2015, at 5.30 p.m.

**12. Close**

The meeting closed at 7.30 p.m.

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**Attachments:**

Updated Actions listing

**Papers Circulated:**

“The role of Social Media and the Committee of Convocation”

**Future Speakers and Tours:**

The speaker for the meeting to be held on 17 June 2015 is to be Professor Philomena Murray of the School of Social and Political Sciences (see item 10 (c), above).

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## COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION - ACTIONS

| Ref. No. | Date       | Description   | Responsibility | Status      | Ref. No. |
|----------|------------|---|----------------|-------------|----------|
| 76       | 2015-05-20 | Each member to pay \$20 into Melb Univ Committee of Convocat BSB 633-000 Acc No 141509497 or cash | All            | In progress | 76       |
| 77       | 2015-05-20 | Identify membership category deficiencies for the purposes of recruitment                         | All            | In progress | 77       |
| 78       | 2015-05-20 | Develop topics for entries at social media sites  | All            | In progress | 78       |
| 79       | 2015-05-20 | Provide feedback to Laurie Simpson in respect of University Teaching discussion paper             | All            | In progress | 79       |
| 80       | 2015-05-20 | Write congratulatory letter to former member Jocelyn Chiew  | President      | In progress | 80       |

## Committee of Convocation

### Minutes of Meeting

held on Wednesday, 17 June 2015, in the Jim Potter Conference Room,  
Old Physics, University of Melbourne, commencing at 5.30 p.m.

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#### 1. Welcome

The President, Ros McMillan, took the chair and opened the meeting. She then welcomed the guest speaker.

#### 2. Guest Speaker - Dr Bina Fernandez - Lecturer in Development Studies in the School of Social and Political Sciences, University of Melbourne

(The guest speaker originally invited was Professor Philomena Murray of the School of Social and Political Sciences but, in the event, she was not able to attend and sent her apologies. Dr Fernandez, at short notice, kindly agreed to replace Professor Philomena Murray.)

Dr Bina Fernandez has studied in and she has held lecturing appointments in universities in Britain, the United States and India. She has a professional background in the development sector, where she has worked extensively with international NGOs, community organisations and governments in multiple countries. Her professional roles have included project management, as well as research and evaluation.

Dr Fernandez researches gender and social policies, drawing on her professional experience and with the aim of being relevant to policy practice. Her recent book *Transformative Policy for Poor Women: A New Feminist Framework* (Ashgate 2012) presents an innovative new feminist framework for the analysis of policy in developing countries, and it has been welcomed by reviewers as an important contribution to the analysis of the gap between well-intentioned, gender-sensitive policies and their often inadequate implementation.

Currently, Dr Fernandez has two particular research projects under way. The first focuses on the migration of Ethiopian women as domestic workers to countries in the Middle East. Fieldwork for this research was supported by a competitively awarded British Academy Small Grant. The second project is investigating rural poor women's collective livelihoods initiatives in India and is supported by an Early Career Researcher Grant from the University of Melbourne.

Broader research interests within developing country contexts include feminist interventions in the state and policy processes, local self-government and decentralisation. Dr Fernandez is also interested in research on social movements, human rights and identity politics as they pertain to communities marginalised by ethnic, caste and sexual identities. Research in this area has focussed on lesbian and gay rights, and violence against lesbians in India.

During her talk, Dr Fernandez enlarged upon her professional and academic background and she discussed her research work, in detail. This year Dr Fernandez received funding for three years from the Australian Research Council for a study of migration from Ethiopia. This will include the supervision of three PhD students. She feels that during 2015 she will work on this in Australia, next year she will travel to Lebanon and in the final year of the grant she intends to complete the project, working from Ethiopia. She intends to publish this work in the form of a book after the completion of the project.

Dr Fernandez was warmly thanked by those present for her enlightening presentation to the Committee.

### **3. Attendance**

#### **Members Present:**

Ros McMillan (President), John Scott (Secretary), David Bellair, Cecily Close, John Harcourt, Irene Jablonka, John Nelson, Barbara Perry, Ian Rechtman, Beverley-Anne Rodan, Laurence Simpson, Noel Whiting (Minute-taker).

#### **Apologies Received:**

Anne Ada, Lesley Boston, David Ford, Gary Israel, Peter Ross (leave of absence), Jenny Stillman (leave of absence).

### **4. Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 20 May 2015, were confirmed without amendment. All present were in favour.

### **5. Membership**

No change.

### **6. Report of the President**

There was no report from the President who, instead, brought forward general discussion of the agenda items relating to University Funding and University Teaching. These matters had been held over from previous meetings and it was desired to allow ample time for discussion of them.

In preparation, there had been written input from David Bellair, Barbara Perry, John Scott and Laurence Simpson. It was generally recognised that there was linkage between funding and teaching outcomes.

There was consensus that these matters should be raised and discussed, bearing in mind the good of the University and of the students who rely on the University for their education. It was recognised that there has been community concern in relation to these matters. There have been newspaper articles, radio and television programs and, importantly, a range of comment from the universities, themselves. The effect on educational standards has been a matter of major concern.

No motion was passed to authorise a statement on behalf of the Committee and it was felt prudent to consider these items as questions rather than to offer pronouncements. Questions that arose during discussion included:

- a) Students come to the University of Melbourne for teaching and learning so in what ways will changes in funding impinge on outcomes in respect of these?
- b) In view of their size and the costs, how best can Universities still be supported?
- c) There have been changes in relation to university governance but have they been positive and has there been a loss of staff morale?
- d) There have been opinions about the education of students in some faculties but what is the overall picture?

- e) What is the perception of our graduates by potential employers?
- f) A newspaper report mentioned at the meeting claimed that the majority of the funding received by the University of Melbourne goes to research and, if this is so, how does it affect education outcomes?
- g) There seems to be no doubt that the education of teachers at the former teachers colleges was excellent but has there been maintenance of that standard by the University, especially in the arts and music areas?

## **7. Financial Report**

The Treasurer reported a bank balance of \$315.20. It was advised that, so far, eight members had contributed the requested \$20 each to the balance.

The Treasurer requested that the payments be made either in cash (in person) or by bank deposit to BSB 633-000 Acct No. 141509497.

## **8. Faculties and School Reports**

From the Faculty of Science, Irene Jablonka reported that she had attended a lecture by Dr Tom May from the Royal Botanical Gardens in the series From Botanical Illustrations to Research. The lecture was the last in the series held in conjunction with an exhibition of Botanical Illustrations from the University of Melbourne Herbarium.

Irene Jablonka also reported on the pre-meeting visit to Queens College. All who attended had been greatly impressed. In particular, the beautiful chapel and the library holdings of Wesley papers are both of historical significance.

## **9. Key Matters for Consideration**

### **a) Actions Update**

The Actions listing was reviewed and updated (see attachment).

### **b) University Funding**

(Refer to item 6, above.)

### **c) University Teaching**

(Refer to item 6, above.)

## **10. Other Business**

### **a) Social Media Project**

Time did not permit extensive treatment of this matter. It will be further considered. Members were requested to continue to develop topics for entries at social media University discussion group sites and to consider the areas in which University representation within the membership of the Committee may need to be strengthened by recruitment.

### **b) Website**

There was nothing to report in relation to this matter.

c) Tours and Speakers

The pre-meeting tour on 19 August 2015 is to be to the Carlton Connect Initiative and the guest speaker for the meeting is to be Professor Joseph Lo Bianco of the Graduate School of Education. Details to follow.

**11. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 19 August 2015, at 5.30 p.m.

**12. Close**

The meeting closed shortly before 7.30 p.m.

As there will be no formal meeting during July, we are to meet, with partners, for LUNCH at Romeos Restaurant, 450 Toorak Road, Toorak on Wednesday 15 July 2015 at 12.30 pm.

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**Attachments:**

Updated Actions listing

**Papers Circulated:**

“Some Thoughts on University Funding”

E-mailed discussion input

**Future Speakers and Tours:**

(Refer to item 10 (c), above.)

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## COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION - ACTIONS

| Ref. No. | Date       | Description   | Responsibility | Status      | Ref. No. |
|----------|------------|---|----------------|-------------|----------|
| 76       | 2015-05-20 | Each member to pay \$20 into Melb Univ Committee of Convocat BSB 633-000 Acc No 141509497 or cash | All            | In progress | 76       |
| 77       | 2015-05-20 | Identify membership category deficiencies for the purposes of recruitment                         | All            | In progress | 77       |
| 78       | 2015-05-20 | Develop topics for entries at social media sites  | All            | In progress | 78       |
| 80       | 2015-05-20 | Write congratulatory letter to former member Jocelyn Chiew  | President      | In progress | 80       |

## Committee of Convocation

### Minutes of Meeting

held on Wednesday, 19 August 2015, in the Jim Potter Conference Room,  
Old Physics, University of Melbourne, commencing at 5.30 p.m.

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#### 1. Welcome

The President, Ros McMillan, took the chair and opened the meeting. She then welcomed the guest speaker.

#### 2. Guest Speaker - Professor Joseph Lo Bianco of the Graduate School of Education, University of Melbourne

Professor Joseph Lo Bianco was introduced by Ros McMillan, who was clearly enthused by the willingness of Professor Lo Bianco to speak on his knowledge of Language, Literature and Intercultural Education. Professor Lo Bianco also noted his collaboration with UNESCO and UNICEF. Our group listened with increasing understanding and awe at the power of language policy to reduce conflict in areas where Professor Lo Bianco travels, such as Burma and Thailand.

Brief basics of the power of language to influence ethnicity, identity, and religion, and contribute to conflict or peace were used to underline the importance of the first years of language acquisition at home from parents. Professor Lo Bianco spoke of the need to develop fluency in two or more languages, and this would be of necessity during the early childhood years where pronunciation was tied to maturation age. The Finnish system, where all children were expected to speak four languages, was lauded. We learnt that there are 560 sounds in human language that are pronounceable at age 4 to 5, and that the associated skills are discarded after this age, if not used.

Without successful speech skills the ability to read and write is hampered. This was positively related to bullies in school who were hampered in their ability to express themselves.

Professor Lo Bianco expressed his belief that without the ability to read; to live for a short time in an imagined world, it can be difficult for illiterate people to imagine the perspective of others. Conflict resolution then can become more difficult. The use of language to help people to see the points of view of others is central to successful conflict resolution.

The meeting was told of the systemic murder of 200 teachers in Bangkok, and of the preference in Burma for less education and hence less debate. Every one of us can think of more instances.

For world conflict to subside, people must “learn to disagree in a civilised way”.

Professor Lo Bianco was warmly thanked by those present for his memorable presentation to the Committee.

#### 3. Attendance

##### Members Present:

Ros McMillan (President), John Scott (Secretary), Anne Ada, David Bellair, Lesley Boston, Cecily Close, David Ford, John Harcourt, Gary Israel, Irene Jablonka, John Nelson, Ian Rechtman, Beverley-Anne Rodan (Minute-taker), Laurence Simpson, Noel Whiting.

**Apologies Received:**

Barbara Perry, Peter Ross (leave of absence), Jenny Stillman (leave of absence).

**Visitor Present:**

Ann Rusden – past member.

**4. Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 17 June 2015, were confirmed without amendment (Moved: Noel Whiting, Seconded: Ian Rechtman, all present were in favour).

**5. Membership**

No change.

**6. Report of the President**

- a) The President proposed a vote of thanks to Ian Rechtman for his organisation of the mid-year lunch held on 15 July 2015. Agreement was unanimous.
- b) Gary Israel provided the following report at the request of the President (who, by omission, had not been invited to the event described).

“On the evening of Thursday August 6th the Alumni Relations section of the University hosted an alumni function at the National Gallery of Victoria for the purpose of viewing the Catherine the Great Exhibition. Alumni were parcelled into groups with, as it was later announced, approximately 1000 University guests moving through in waves but in a manner which ensured that overcrowding did not occur.

Several present and former members of the Committee were included as well as the President and members of the Alumni Council, recent graduates who have achieved distinction and other alumni guests and partners / guests.

We were treated to a cocktail party with drinks and nibbles before the viewing which provided opportunities for guests to mingle and chat. There were two speeches, one from a representative of the Gallery talking about the history of Catherine and the works on display and the other from James Allan the new head of Alumni Relations.

The exhibition was, in my opinion, truly magnificent with wonderful art works and other beautiful objects from the Hermitage on display.

The whole evening was superbly organised by Alumni Relations and Gallery staff and must have taken much planning. I have no idea how they decided whom to invite as it seemed to be quite a cross section of alumni. It was very significant that C of C and Alumni Council members were together in the same social situation.

The evening was followed up by an electronic survey to gauge responses. Personally, I sent off an email of congratulations to James Allan the next morning.”

**7. Financial Report**

The Treasurer reported a bank balance of \$355.20. It was advised that a few members still had not contributed the requested \$20 each to the balance.

The Treasurer requested that the payments be made either in cash (in person) or by bank deposit to BSB 633-000 Acct No. 141509497.

## **8. Faculties and School Reports**

- a) John Scott reported that he had that day attended the Engineering School of the University to meet with Kasey Baines, the new Development Manager of the Melbourne School of Engineering, at her invitation. In her e-mail Ms Baines had explained that part of her role is to reach out to alumni and to share exciting developments within the School.

The connection with the Committee of Convocation was explained and its role and activities were discussed. Ms Baines mentioned the 2025 Vision for the Melbourne School of Engineering and that University approval was currently being sought for that to become a defined strategy. The understanding is that the capabilities and reach of the Melbourne School of Engineering are to be greatly enhanced. Part of this is to be strengthened engagement with external stakeholders, including graduates.

- b) Lawrence Simpson reported that the Dean of medicine, Professor Stephen Smith, had resigned and that a search for his replacement was under way.

A new clinical medicine school is to be opened at the Epworth Hospital, the first such establishment at a private hospital.

- c) Irene Jablonka reported that the Director of Advancement of the Faculty of Science, Dr Jennifer Henry, had recently been appointed to the Alumni Council. Irene also reported that she was happy for us to invite other interested people to our tours.
- d) John Harcourt reported on the appointment of Professor Mike Morgan as head of the Dental School.
- e) It was noted the Commerce Faculty had a new magazine "Exchange".

## **9. Key Matters for Consideration**

- a) Actions Update

The Actions listing was reviewed and updated (see attachment).

- b) Membership development

After some discussion it was agreed that a possible initial approach would be for members of the Committee to join the University of Melbourne Alumni group at [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com), should they agree.

## **10. Other Business**

- a) Alumni relations

John Scott reported that on 06 August 2015, whilst attending the University of Melbourne Alumni event at the National Gallery of Victoria, to view the treasures from the Hermitage Museum, he had met Sarah Banks, Deputy Director, Alumni Relations, who led the organization of the event. He discussed the Committee of Convocation with Ms Banks and she showed considerable interest in the Committee. She indicated that such a base of committed people could constitute a foundation on which to build.

Ms Banks explained that the Advancement Office was in the midst of reorganization under the new Director of Alumni Relations, Dr James Allan. She expected that before long, the time would be right for some form of joint engagement, between the Advancement Office and the Committee of Convocation.

**b) Website**

There was nothing to report in relation to this matter.

**c) Tours and Speakers**

(Refer below, as arranged by Irene Jablonka)

**11. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 16 September 2015, at 5.30 p.m.

**12. Close**

The meeting closed shortly before 7.30 p.m.

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**Attachments:**

Updated Actions listing

**Papers Circulated:**

E-mailed discussion input

**Future Speakers and Tours:**

The guest speaker on 16 September 2015 is to be Associate Professor Helen Goldsworthy of Engineering, who specialises in infrastructure engineering.

The pre meeting tour on 16 September 2015 will be of the University of Melbourne Grimwade Centre for Cultural Materials Conservation. Meet at the Thomas Cherry Building (201), Swanston St Carlton at 4.30 p.m. The tour contact is Irene Jablonka 0422 464 464.

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## COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION - ACTIONS

| Ref. No. | Date       | Description   | Responsibility | Status      | Ref. No. |
|----------|------------|---|----------------|-------------|----------|
| 76       | 2015-05-20 | Each member to pay \$20 into Melb Univ Committee of Convocat BSB 633-000 Acc No 141509497 or cash                   | All            | In progress | 76       |
| 81       | 2015-08-19 | Consider joining the University of Melbourne Alumni group at <a href="http://www.linkedin.com">www.linkedin.com</a> | All            | In progress | 81       |
| 82       | 2015-08-19 | Provide input to David Bellair towards the completion of a Record of Tours  | All            | In progress | 82       |
| 83       | 2015-08-19 | Invite the new Director of Alumni Relations, Dr James Allan, to speak to the Committee at his convenience           | President      | In progress | 83       |
| 84       | 2015-08-19 | Refer members of the Committee to <a href="http://honesthistory.net.au/">http://honesthistory.net.au/</a>           | President      | In progress | 84       |

**Committee of Convocation  
Minutes of Meeting**

held on Wednesday, September 16, 2015, in the Jim Potter Conference Room,  
Old Physics, University of Melbourne, commencing at 5.30 p.m.

Attendance: David Bellair; David Ford; John Harcourt; Gary Israel; Irene Jablonka;  
Ros McMillan; Barbara Perry; Ian Rechtman;

Apologies: Anne Ada; Lesley Boston; Cecily Close; John Nelson; Bev Rodan; John Scott;  
Laurence Simpson; Noel Whiting;

**1. Welcome;**

The President welcomed all members and wished the various members absent due to illness and operations a speedy recovery.

**2. Guest Speaker**

The President then welcomed the Guest Speaker Ass. Professor Helen Goldsworthy from the Melbourne School of Engineering.

Ass. Professor Goldsworthy outlined her personal background with its family academic influence, her undergraduate degree from the University of Adelaide, to her Masters degree in the USA, and PhD at Melbourne Engineering during the era of Len Stephens, followed by a transition into a teaching career, balancing family and work life demands.

The members were treated to a fascinating and educational discussion on earthquakes and their effects on buildings and research into the methods for protection to avoid catastrophic failures and injuries/fatalities. New approaches are being sought to allow energy absorption but without the requirement for major reconstruction after an event. We were advised that medium height buildings represent the major danger. Australia is not immune from a Christchurch type event, although the probability is relatively low (2% in 50 years is the present Australian criterion) but are recognised in updated codes for public buildings. The historical construction methods used by the Romans and their selective use of different types of concrete was also most informative.

After numerous resulting question, the President and the members warmly thanked Ass. Prof Goldsworthy for her most interesting and informative discussion.

**3. Membership**

No discussion.

**4. Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed.

## **5. President's Report**

The president gave a brief overview of the 2015 year to date and raised a question as to the agendas and optimum time for our meetings.

A consensus was reached amongst all present that we should allow 1 hour for the administrative sections of the meetings. It was agreed a nominal ½ hour would be allowed for the Guest Speaker section but there would be flexibility to extend to allow for more discussion and where there was particular interest in the presentation.

Meetings would thus commence at 5:30 PM with a nominal finish time of 7:00 PM but this could extend to 7:15/7:30 for some presentations.

## **6. Tours & Speakers**

David Bellair was still seeking more information from members to help flesh out the summaries he was preparing of prior speakers and tours. He would circulate the present draft for comment and requested any additional input available.

It was agreed that with a broad cross-section, not every prior tour needed to be included.

The optimum number of tours per year was then discussed. Irene summarised the results of the survey she had created. Some consistent themes were - start earlier to allow more time; more walking and less talking; main interest is in seeing what is presently being done in the areas we visit. Irene also advised that the number of attendees should not be regarded as a significant factor as the hosts are told that there usually are between four to six members on each tour. There was very good support for the tours being both before a meeting and on a different day such as the tour of the VCA and the Burnley Campus.

A suggestion was made by the President on reducing the total number of tours to 4 per year. There were varying opinions but, following discussion, it was agreed that a base of 4 tours per year be adopted (in the months of March, May, August, October) but with flexibility to add one or two more, if opportunities for tours of special interest arose.

Members were requested to notify Irene of suggestions/preferences for future speakers and possible timing. We will have a speaker from Criminology for October and there will not be a speaker in November as the Annual Dinner will be held that evening.

For 2016 it was agreed that a tentative plan be established for February, with a target of April for confirmation of the year's speakers with an opportunity for discussion and input from members on the list. It was recognised that this must be flexible based on the speakers' schedules and unavoidable changes.

## **7. End of Year Dinner**

Ian Rechtman advised that he will be absent for October but had arranged for the Keragheusean room at University House for the End of Year Dinner. Ian advised an indicative price of \$65 for non-alcoholic drink attendees and a suggested \$70/75 for others. The general consensus was that this was fair and the wine/beer drinkers should not be subsidised by the other members.

Ian will circulate an invitation email to members and former members with payments via cheque to John Nelson. An attendance of 20+ is anticipated.

## **8. Financial**

There is presently a balance of \$435.20 in the bank account. It was requested that any members for whom payment of the \$20 annual subscription is still outstanding, close this matter as soon as possible.

## **9. Faculties and School Reports**

(a). Gary Israel advised of an interesting presentation by the Heritage Society of the University. This included a display of historic maps, including two dating from 1<sup>st</sup> century AD and an early Handel score of an oratorio. The displays indicated the amazing range and quality of items held in Special Collections.

(b). Irene Jablonka informed members of her attendance at the final of the "Three Minute Thesis" competition. The winner was a medical graduate, currently doing a PhD. His thesis is on the early detection of glaucoma. This may enable the awakening of the nerve cells that have become unresponsive due to the disease. He won a \$4500 travelling scholarship and also has his name inscribed on the McPhee Cup.

Refer [http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/prof\\_dev/grad\\_researchers/3MT/index.html](http://www.cshe.unimelb.edu.au/prof_dev/grad_researchers/3MT/index.html)

Irene also advised of the following forthcoming events of potential interest to members:

- On Oct 15, 2015 at 4.15 in the Fritz Loewe Theatre in the McCoy Building. "Dating, Understanding and Appreciating the Aboriginal Rock Art of the Kimberley." Speaker Dr Helen Green.
- There is to be a production of Stella, an Australian Opera, by Marshall Hall at Swinburne University at their Prahran campus theatre between Sept 25 to Sept 30. Refer to LYRICOPERA.COM.AU There are only 4 performances planned and this will mark the 100th anniversary of the death of the composer.

## **10. Actions Update**

# 76. Discussed earlier under Item 8, Financial.

# 81. David Bellair advised members that they can apply to join the Melbourne Alumni Group on Linked In via the links Interest -> Groups. David will follow up and advise members further.

# 82. Discussed earlier (Item 6)

# 83. No discussion.

# 84. Completed.

The President requested that a new Item be added "Membership Development". Members are requested to identify contacts, and suggest ideas for people who could be approached, to determine their interest in joining the Committee of Convocation.

### **11. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held in the Jim Potter Conference Room at 5:30 PM on October 21, 2015.

### **12. Close**

There being no further business the President closed the meeting at 7:25 PM.

### **Attachment**

Updated Actions List

## Committee of Convocation

### Minutes of Meeting

held on Wednesday, 21 October 2015, in the Jim Potter Conference Room,  
Old Physics, University of Melbourne, commencing at 5.30 p.m.

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#### 1. Welcome

The President, Ros McMillan, took the chair and opened the meeting. She then welcomed the guest speaker.

#### 2. Guest Speaker - Professor Fiona Haines, Professor of Criminology, Faculty of Arts, University of Melbourne

Professor Haines first began her studies in Criminology at University of Melbourne in the 1980s when the subject concentrated on youth crime. It has now broadened in focus. Professor Haines is interested particularly that many grievous crimes in our community, including white collar crimes and crimes by professionals, receive slighter punishments than do some crimes which are less serious in the "scale of things". This is the area of her teaching and research at present. Others in the Department are concentrating on issues of genocide and reconciliation, the trauma of people surviving atrocities, the effects on emotions of legal actions which change the status of the "victim" and the disproportionate punishment of Aboriginal people coming before the Courts. One PhD candidate has written a play about issues in criminology using a background in history, relating to an actual Australian Aboriginal Mission issue, which is being performed to various audiences. Issues related to the aftermath of industrial disasters, effects of globalization and abuses of human rights in developing countries by multinational companies are other areas of interest.

There are large enrolments in the area by students from a wide range of faculties. There are over 500 first year students and graduates are working in the Australian Institute of Criminology, teaching and lecturing, local government in crime prevention, police and their research and in juvenile justice and corrections fields.

The President thanked Professor Haines for a most interesting address and for her time and detail with answering questions from members.

#### 3. Attendance

##### Members Present:

Cecily Close, John Harcourt, Gary Israel (Minute-taker), Irene Jablonka, Ros McMillan, John Nelson, Barbara Perry, Beverley-Anne Rodan, John Scott, Laurence Simpson.

##### Apologies Received:

Anne Ada, David Bellair, Lesley Boston, David Ford, Ian Rechtman, Peter Ross (leave of absence), Jenny Stillman (leave of absence), Noel Whiting.

#### 4. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 16 September 2015, were confirmed without amendment on the motion of Barbara Perry, seconded by John Harcourt.

## **5. Membership**

No change.

## **6. Report of the President**

The President indicated that she wished to nominate a person having an Education / Arts background for membership of the Committee and that this person had signalled her interest in joining. The President also gave notice that she is aware of interest in membership, from 2016, on the part of a person in the music faculty who will soon retire.

Discussion then occurred in respect of the Membership Rules of the Committee, particularly as to the required balance of faculty / school representation. It was also mentioned that the Committee needed to advertise itself, perhaps via the University "events" page.

It was unanimously agreed that both persons indicating interest in membership should be encouraged to join and that the Membership Rules of the Committee should be revised to make it clear that graduates could be welcomed into membership of the Committee regardless of faculty / school representation. The Secretary undertook to draft revised Membership Rules.

## **7. Financial Report**

The Treasurer reported a bank balance of \$365.50. Fifteen members have paid the levy of \$20.

The end of year dinner will cost \$75 per head for those having wine or \$65 dollars if not having wine. Payment is to be made to the bank account of the Committee by 11 November. Electronic transfer is the preferred method of payment (see below for account details). Names are to be included in the reference space. The President and Vice President will confer to confirm details.

There was some discussion about small gifts for speakers.

The Treasurer has requested that any payments to the Committee should be made by bank deposit to BSB 633-000 Acct No. 141509497.

## **8. Faculties and School Reports**

- a) Barbara Perry reported on her attendance at a fine lecture, on 27 September at the Grainger Museum, on the subject of Songs of the First World War. The lecture was accompanied by the playing of some recordings of songs. On 06 October she attended an excellent lecture by Oliver Everett, Emeritus Royal Librarian, on the subject of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert as patrons of the Arts and collectors. The latter event was for the Friends of the Baillieu Library.
- b) John Harcourt indicated that he would attend the forthcoming Dental School Planning Day at the MCG. John mentioned that mentoring of dental students was being well provided for within the School and that, following implementation of the Business Improvement Plan, Information and Communications Technology problems in the School have to be referred to a centralised ICT service for resolution.
- c) Ros McMillan attended, on 20 August, the Grainger Museum recital by a Royal Australian Air Force ensemble of World War 1 music. She mentioned that the group had composed some of their own music, based on music of that period.

- d) Irene Jablonka reported on three excellent events that she had attended: the annual musical event of VCA students and staff in Jazz and Improvisation, 'Delivering the Promise of Precision Health and Medicine' (a half day conference of the Science Convergence Network) and a lecture on the Magna Carta by Lord Igor Judge.

**9. Key Matters for Consideration**

a) Actions Update

The Actions listing was reviewed and updated (see attachment).

b) Membership Development

Refer to the Report of the President.

**10. Other Business**

a) Alumni relations

No report.

b) Website

The account for website maintenance was recently paid.

c) Tours and Speakers

(Refer below, as arranged by Irene Jablonka)

The thanks of the Committee to all of the speakers and tour guides are to be recorded on the website in recognition of the excellent program of speakers and tours from which the Committee has had great benefit during the year.

**11. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 18 November 2015, commencing at 5.30 p.m.

**12. Close**

The meeting closed shortly at 7.10 p.m.

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**Attachments:**

Updated Actions listing

**Papers Circulated:**

E-mailed discussion input

**Future Speakers and Tours:**

There will be no guest speaker at the November meeting, nor a pre-meeting tour, as that meeting will be followed by the End of Year Dinner at Graduate House.

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## COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION - ACTIONS

| Ref. No. | Date       | Description   | Responsibility | Status      | Ref. No. |
|----------|------------|---|----------------|-------------|----------|
| 81       | 2015-08-19 | Consider joining the University of Melbourne Alumni group at <a href="http://www.linkedin.com">www.linkedin.com</a> | All            | In progress | 81       |
| 82       | 2015-08-19 | Provide input to David Bellair towards the completion of a Record of Tours  | All            | In progress | 82       |
| 85       | 2015-09-16 | Identify individual graduates who may be approached to determine their possible interest in joining the Committee   | All            | In progress | 85       |
| 86       | 2015-10-21 | Draft revised Committee membership rules  | Secretary      | In progress | 86       |
| 87       | 2015-10-21 | Post thanks to speakers and tour guides at website  | Webmaster      | In progress | 87       |
| 88       | 2015-10-21 | Investigate possible gift items for speakers and tour guides  | President      | In progress | 88       |

## Committee of Convocation

### Minutes of Meeting

held on Wednesday, 18 November 2015, in the Jim Potter Conference Room,  
Old Physics, University of Melbourne, commencing at 5.30 p.m.

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#### 1. Welcome

The President, Ros McMillan, took the chair and opened the meeting. She then welcomed new member Dr Christine Oldham.

#### 2. Guest Speaker

There was no Guest Speaker on this occasion.

#### 3. Attendance

##### Members Present:

Anne Ada, David Bellair, Lesley Boston (Minute-taker), Cecily Close, David Ford, John Harcourt, Gary Israel, Irene Jablonka, Ros McMillan, Christine Oldham, Barbara Perry, Ian Rechtman, Beverley-Anne Rodan, John Scott, Laurence Simpson, Noel Whiting.

##### Apologies Received:

John Nelson, Peter Ross (leave of absence), Jenny Stillman (leave of absence).

#### 4. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 21 October 2015, were confirmed.

#### 5. Membership

Dr Christine Oldham has become a member of the Committee of Convocation. She has specialist expertise in the realm of music technology.

An updated Committee of Convocation Membership Directory has been issued.

#### 6. Report of the President

The President noted the re-appointment of the Vice-Chancellor and undertook to write a letter of congratulations to him on behalf of the Committee of Convocation. The desire of the Vice-Chancellor to see through the third stage of Growing Esteem, which is to include an ambitious capital expenditure of some \$2b (including a new Medical School building), has been reported.

The President prioritised discussion of the draft amendments to the rules for membership of the Committee of Convocation so the meeting proceeded to address that matter.

#### 7. Financial Report

The Treasurer was not able to be present but the President relayed the information that the current bank balance stood at \$1995.50. These funds included subscriptions from members in respect of the End of Year Dinner at University House, to be held following the meeting, so it was anticipated that the balance would fall significantly following that event.

The Treasurer has requested that any payments to the Committee should be made by bank deposit to BSB 633-000 Acct No. 141509497.

## **8. Faculties and School Reports**

- a) Gary Israel reported having attended the annual Heritage Society Luncheon on November 12th with some other members of the Committee also present. The Vice Chancellor spoke of his commitment to the University in accepting a further term of office to 2018 and introduced the guest speaker, Professor Sir Jonathon Mills, AO. Sir John is a prominent Australian born composer and festival director. He has composed operas and musical compositions and has directed festivals in NSW, Brisbane, Melbourne and Edinburgh. He has accepted a position as a Vice Chancellor's Fellow at the University of Melbourne. Professor Mills spoke eloquently of the importance of collective memory of University members and our collective contributions to it. He spoke of some contributions of the past which are still very relevant today and that link us to this rich past.
- b) Anne Ada reported on a review of the Agriculture and Veterinary Science curricula (post amalgamation) with an emphasis on the establishment of industry partnerships.
- c) Irene Jablonka reported her attendance at the 2015 Annual Nossal Institute Global Health Conference. Many interesting papers were presented, including one by Prof Michele Kermode who was one of our Committee of Convocation.
- d) Christine Oldham reported on an Education Faculty Forum that dealt with a new Quality Teaching Model. This incorporates Design (the intellectual aspect), Process (for a quality learning experience) and Impact (by the creation of incentive).
- e) David Bellair reported on an Innovation Forum in the Centre for Higher Education where ideas were presented as to how the University could better liaise with Industry. He offered to circulate a summary to members.
- f) Ros McMillan reported on the excellent success of several members of the Melbourne Graduate School of Education (of which she is a Senior Fellow) in being awarded ARC grants.

## **9. Key Matters for Consideration**

### **a) Membership Rules**

Agreement was reached on amendments to the rules and the updated Membership Rules are attached to these minutes.

### **b) Actions Update**

The Actions listing was reviewed and updated (see attachment).

### **c) Membership Development**

To continue.

## **10. Other Business**

### **a) Alumni relations**

No report.

**b) Website**

It was agreed that the record of Speakers and Tours is sufficiently complete for it to be posted at the website. It can be added to, as further information becomes available.

**c) Tours and Speakers**

(Refer, below, as arranged by Irene Jablonka.)

**11. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 17 February 2016, commencing at 5.30 p.m.

**12. Close**

The meeting closed at 6.50 p.m.

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**Attachments:**

Updated Actions listing

Updated Membership Rules

**Papers Circulated:**

E-mailed discussion input

**Future Speakers and Tours:**

To be advised.

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## COMMITTEE OF CONVOCATION - ACTIONS

| Ref. No. | Date       | Description   | Responsibility | Status      | Ref. No. |
|----------|------------|---|----------------|-------------|----------|
| 81       | 2015-08-19 | Consider joining the University of Melbourne Alumni group at <a href="http://www.linkedin.com">www.linkedin.com</a> | All            | In progress | 81       |
| 85       | 2015-09-16 | Identify individual graduates who may be approached to determine their possible interest in joining the Committee   | All            | In progress | 85       |
| 88       | 2015-10-21 | Investigate possible gift items for speakers and tour guides  | President      | In progress | 88       |
| 89       | 2015-11-18 | Write letter of congratulations to Vice-Chancellor following his recent re-appointment                              | President      | In progress | 89       |

# Committee of Convocation

## Membership Rules

1. Every member of the Committee of Convocation shall first be a member of Convocation, the whole body of all graduates of the University of Melbourne.
2. The Committee of Convocation shall elect a President from amongst its members for a term of two years.
3. A retiring President may continue as a member of the Committee of Convocation and may serve additional terms as President, subject to re-election as may be required.
4. An employee of the University shall not be eligible for membership of the Committee of Convocation if engaged in that employment for more than the equivalent of one day per week.
5. The Committee of Convocation shall aim to reflect the spread of faculties and schools of the University of Melbourne by arranging, as far as is practicable, for representation of each of them by at least one member of the Committee.
6. Any graduate of the University of Melbourne may nominate for membership of the Committee of Convocation by an expression of interest addressed to the President of the Committee.
7. Before accepting any nomination for membership of the Committee of Convocation it shall first be ensured that:
  - a. the nominee is a graduate of the University of Melbourne; and
  - b. the nominee has expressed willingness to meet the objects and purposes of the Committee.
8. The acceptance of each nominee for membership shall be by a majority of those members present at a duly convened meeting of the Committee of Convocation.
9. The membership of any member who fails to attend at least half of the properly convened meetings of the Committee of Convocation held in any calendar year without leave of absence may be deemed to have lapsed.
10. Any interested graduate of the University may attend any meeting of the Committee of Convocation but without voting rights if not a member.