Faculty of Information Technology

Strategic Review

Plan C

Some suggestions for restructuring the faculty

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Professor Pennington has produced a document with some significant challenges to the faculty. The present document is partly a response to Professor Pennington’s document but it includes some other suggestions.

The ideas presented here are not entirely those of the writer. Various other people, who did not wish to have their names explicitly mentioned, have contributed substantially to the ideas in this document.

The detailed arguments for each point have been only barely indicated, if at all. This is simply to save space and to focus the discussion.

If you have any comments or questions, please telephone me on 9905-5206.

No email please!
Basic principle 1 Individuals work well when there is a maximum of about 15 people reporting to them on a regular basis. (Observation.)

This suggests about 15 senior people reporting to the Dean.

Basic principle 2 “To the extent possible, we must delegate responsibility for certain decisions to particular colleagues and allow them to discharge their responsibilities free from interference.” (Ron Weber, 4.04.04, Proposed Senior Committee Structure, DAT Document.)

1 People reporting directly to the Dean

- AD(R)
- AD(T)
- AD(External affairs)
- One Academic Director for each campus, including Malaysia and South Africa
- Faculty Administrative Head
- Technical services Head
- I am inclined to add a Financial Head, and an Academic Services Head (looking after Staff and Student matters).

It may be necessary to increase the number of Academic Directors in the cases of Clayton and/or Caulfield if the number of staff on the campus is very large.

Note 1 The AD(T) and AD(R) positions are statutory positions required by the university.
The academic director\textsuperscript{1} would be responsible for the operational aspects of the faculty’s work on the particular campus.

2 Senior people

These are Associate Deans or similar highly placed members of the faculty including Heads of School-type appointments. “Senior” here means reporting directly to the Dean. It has nothing to do with age or status otherwise.

1. Nature of post: Mixture of academic and administrative. More than one person may be required to discharge all the duties so the senior person should be the leader of a team.

2. Appointment: For three years with a six month overlap at both ends of the period of office. First six months to be probationary.

3. Appointment procedure: Open and advertised to all faculty. Small selection committee to produce (say) three names, Dean to select one.

4. Rationale: The Dean has to work with the person and therefore should have the power to nominate, and some responsibility for choosing that person.

5. Career paths: Two models have been proposed: a senior (in age/status) person giving back something to the faculty (and academe); a short term appointment with the possibility of continuing other activity, e.g. teaching or research (but possibly not both).

\textsuperscript{1}“Academic Director” means a person with academic knowledge looking after a programme or programmes of academic content. It does not assume that only an academic could fill such a post.
6. Accountability: Directly to the Dean. To cover monies and duties allocated to the position.

7. Responsibility: For a defined (and agreed) portfolio. Staff under the position to report to it.

Note 2 This idea of responsibility means that some people might be reporting to more than one such person. In particular a person might be accountable to the AD(R) for their research and to the local director of an academic programme for teaching.

Basic principle 3 Units of the faculty should be able to call upon the appropriate skills that can be found in the faculty and should not be restricted to employing those who simply happen to be nearby (e.g. on the same campus).

Example 1 There is no reason why a person should not have their basic office on campus A and do a certain amount of teaching on campus B (but see below Note 3).

3 Contracting out

The faculty to contract out teaching, research etc. to units for teaching and research teams for research; the units to be campus based but the research teams would often run across campuses.

Example 2 Running of a particular bachelors degree at a particular campus. This would permit the unit to employ someone from campus B to teach into a degree programme on campus A.

Note 3 If a person from campus A is to teach on campus B then that person must also take an appropriate role in filling out the other duties associated with teaching, for example, tutorials and consultation hours as well as administrative meetings relevant to the units being taught.
Example 3 Funding of research. Research team leaders would contract to do particular research. The budget would include grant and similar monies but would also include the nominal amount of time (part of the, say, 30%) that a staff member would be carrying out under his/her contract with Monash.

4 Budgeting

1. The Dean has already put in place a procedure to mark out monies, previously coming under the Dean’s budget to now come under the AD(R). A significant amount is involved.

2. The Heads of School have approved in principle that they will report their expenditure under the headings of teaching, research, administration, and community service.

Note 4 The percentages may vary significantly from school to school.

5 Administration

Basic principle 4 Administration should not be duplicated. Therefore entities such as student services and the research office should be centralized at one location on each campus. There should be co-ordination of their efforts in the various sectors.

This would mean that there was no distinction between campus administration and faculty administration as far as degree programmes and research are concerned. Thus the sum of the campus administrations equals the faculty administration.

Example 4 The heads of the campus research offices should constitute the central administration of the research sector (and likewise for teaching or other activities).
There is a potential problem here with the contracting out model as it might introduce another later of administration. It would be highly desirable not to duplicate administration.

6 Resource allocation

Basic principle 5 Both academic administrators and general administrators are usually required for our activities. As a very rough rule of thumb the total number of people (or the salary costs for) servicing an area should be proportional to the amount of money funding, or being garnered, by that area.

7 Academic programmes

Professor Pennington has questioned the need for our present 37 (sic) bachelor degree programmes. Given that degree programmes appear for honours and combined/double degrees as well as for the basic degree this is really a question of reducing about 12 degree programmes to a handful.

Basic principle 6 There should be one degree programme per campus.

Basic principle 7 The first year should, essentially, be common to all degrees.

This does not mean that it should be identical. There is always the possibility of including certain electives. What is crucial is that any student could move directly into any second year of any degree after successfully completing the first year.

Basic principle 8 There should be no inhibition on people transferring from one degree programme to another (provided they have the appropriate prerequisites). In particular students should be free to transfer to another campus after first year.
This could mean that part of the rôle of the non-metropolitan campuses could be to act as feeders into the metropolitan campuses.

Clayton should have a traditional university degree programme. This might be called Bachelor of Computing and Software Engineering (BCS&SE). Students should be free to move into or out of this degree (see below Note 6).

Caulfield should have a single degree of Bachelor of Applied IT. This would include options in Computing, Business Systems and Information Management and Systems.\(^2\)

Berwick, Frankston, Gippsland, Malaysia and South Africa should each have their own degree programmes. The content and orientation would be determined by the local environment.

**Note 5** It is possible that we could have one basic degree name with a specialization indicated in brackets, for example, Bachelor of Informatics (Information Management) or Bachelor of Informatics (Multimedia).

**Note 6** The Clayton degree should require a very high ENTER score and be the flagship degree of the faculty. However students should be able to move into this degree, especially from the Caulfield degree programme if they do well. Likewise, students finding the Clayton degree too theoretical should be able to move to the Caulfield (or some other) degree programme.

**Note 7** There is a strong argument for taking Business Systems to Caulfield. Its subject matter and the structure of the present undergraduate degree programme are very close to that of Information Management and Systems. However there is also a case for taking the more mathematical parts of Business Systems into the BCSSE degree programme and strengthening ties with the Faculties of Science and of Engineering.

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\(^2\)Long-standing members of the faculty will recall that this is similar to what happened before 1990.
Note 8 The present BBusSys, which has an excellent reputation and considerable industry support, should perhaps not be disturbed. Indeed such a style of degree programme should be more common in the faculty since it strengthens our ties with industry.

Note 9 In following the contracting out model, the non-metropolitan campuses would enter into a contract with the Faculty of Information Technology for the provision of degree programmes and research. In this way the Faculty would retain control of those programmes and be able to ensure their quality, even if the central university administration of each individual campus is run on a one-line budget.