AGENDA: PARTS I – III

The next meeting of the Board of the Graduate Research School will be held in the Senate Room on Tuesday, 13 May 2008 at 2.15p.m.

Parts I and II of the agenda are to be dealt with en bloc by motion of the Chair. Parts III and IV are for discussion. A member may request the removal of an item from Parts I or II to Part III.

DR JOANNE CASTELLI
Executive Officer
Board of the Graduate Research School
1. CALL FOR DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST – REF: F34

The Chair will invite members to declare potential for conflict or perceived conflicts of interest, if applicable, with regard to items on the agenda.

2. MINUTES – REF: F36

Confirmation of the Minutes of the meeting of the Board of the Graduate Research School held on Tuesday, 8 April 2008.

PART I – ITEMS FOR COMMUNICATION TO BE DEALT WITH EN BLOC

There are no items

PART II – ITEMS FOR DECISION TO BE DEALT WITH EN BLOC

3. RECOMMENDED CELT BRIDGING COURSE GRADES FOR HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH STUDENTS (Ref F19237; F983)

Members will recall that a recent Review of English Language Skills of UWA Graduates recommended that from 2009 admission to postgraduate research study at UWA requires an IELTS score of 6.5 (or the equivalent), with scores no lower than 6.0 for speaking and listening and no lower than 6.5 for reading and writing. This recommendation was endorsed by the Academic Council at its March 2008 meeting. The Graduate Research and Scholarships Office has received advice from the Director of the Centre for English Language Teaching (CELT) that the following grades in the CELT Bridging Course would be equivalent to these requirements:

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Minimum Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overall</td>
<td>B+ (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>B+ (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>B+ (75%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>B (70%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking</td>
<td>B (70%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Further, the Director of CELT has advised that, where completion of the CELT Bridging Course is used as a demonstration of research preparation for entry into postgraduate research courses, a minimum grade of B+ (75%) for the Research and Study Skills Portfolio should be required.

This last advice is based on observations by the CELT Director of Studies that while students bound for research programmes tend to achieve higher grades for their research portfolios than do other students, those who achieve poor grades tend to not do as well in their research studies as those who have achieved higher grades. CELT recommends further testing of this observation for extended evidence.

If the recommendations are accepted, it would be desirable to place a link to the Bridging Course on the Graduate Research School website to encourage take-up of this course as research preparation, especially when deficiencies are identified early in candidature despite candidates having met entrance standards, or in the case of students who have transferred from other institutions.

For endorsement
4. MASTER OF FINE ARTS - PROPOSED RULE CHANGES (Ref F6432)

Attached for members' consideration (Attachment A1-3) is a proposal from the Faculty of Architecture, Landscape and Visual Arts to amend the Rules for the Master of Fine Arts. This Proposal was endorsed by the Faculty Board at its meeting on 17th April 2008.

As background, members should note that the current Master of Fine Arts (Research) rules require students to submit for examination a 25,000 word thesis, an exhibition of original artwork and a catalogue containing an essay of between 4500 and 5500 words on the work in the exhibition. The proposal is that the catalogue no longer be an examinable component, but that the essay be retained in the form of an exegesis of the exhibited artwork. The exegesis would not exceed 5,000 words and would be submitted by the Faculty to the examiners one week prior to the exhibition opening.

The rationale for the rule change is that the catalogue was required to be submitted two months prior to the exhibition, resulting in problems in development of the artwork, curatorial direction of the exhibition and any changes in artistic direction in the interim, thus compromising the examination process. It is also suggested that the non-examination of the exegesis component would result in the examination process being concentrated on the exhibited artwork.

For endorsement

5. MASTER OF SOCIAL WORK (RESEARCH) (10750) - PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS (Ref F5252)

Attached for members' consideration (Attachment B1-4) is a proposal from Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences to amend the admission requirements for the Masters of Social Work (Research). The amendments have been proposed by the Discipline of Social Work and Social Policy and are detailed in the extract of the Agenda of the meeting of the Teaching and Learning Committee of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences held on 20 March 2008.

In summary, the proposed amendment is the removal of the reference to an Honours degree from the current admission requirements, thus requiring all applicants for the Masters of Social Work to complete a Graduate Diploma of Advanced Social work or equivalent and have two years of professional work experience as a social worker. The proposal is designed to offer two different pathways for Social Work graduates: those with Honours interested in research into the Master of Arts and those seeking career development through the Graduate Diploma in Advanced Social Work and into the Masters of Social Work.

For endorsement

PART III – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

6. PROPOSED JOINT OR DOUBLE-BADGED TRANSNATIONAL PHD PROGRAMME BETWEEN UNIVERSITÉ PARIS DIDEROT (PARIS VII) AND THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA REF: F

Attached for members’ consideration is a proposed Joint and/or Double-badged Transnational PhD Programme between the Université Paris Diderot (Paris VII) and the University of Western Australia (Attachment C1-38). Sato Juniper will speak to the item.

For Discussion and approval
7. REVIEW OF THE STRUCTURE OF THE PhD

At the meeting of the Board of the Graduate Research School on 12 June 2007, members of the Board were asked to consider a recommendation by the Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences for the establishment of a four-year PhD programme with a coursework component. The coursework component would be administered by the Faculty and offered in the first year of the programme, with the remaining years to be administered by the Graduate Research School. Students not achieving 65% pass mark in the first year would have the option of transferring to the Master of Science and Technology programme.

The Board was generally supportive of the inclusion of a coursework component in the PhD programme, but not entirely convinced of the proposed scheme. Broader issues and other options were identified, including restructuring the existing PhD with amendments to the current rules and requirements, or the development of a parallel programme.

The Board requested Dr Sato Juniper

- to review the rules of the existing PhD programme to increase flexibility with respect to the inclusion of coursework as preparation, the establishment of exit strategies and the notion of programmes of study
- to provide feedback to the Faculty and request further clarification from them on the issues raised in the decision

The Chair has suggested an open discussion on the matter. A document will be circulated closer to the date of this meeting.

For discussion