MEMBERS OF THE RESEARCH COMMITTEE

Professor D McEachern (Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)) in the Chair; Winthrop Professor S Anderson (nominee of the Chair of the Academic Board); Professor R Owens (Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training)); Mr R Oehmen (President of the Postgraduate Students' Association); Professor H Barrett; Associate Professor S Brophy; Professor M Gillooly; Winthrop Professor D Haskell; Professor K Miller; Professor I McLean; Professor D Pannell; Professor J Pillow; Professor C Raston; Winthrop Professor K Siddique; Winthrop Professor J Sweeney; Mr M Thomas; Professor L Vidovich

Standing Invitees:
Professor A Robertson (Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research Initiatives)); Mr T Shanahan (Director, Energy and Minerals Initiative)

By Invitation in an Observing Capacity:
Associate Professor A Buti; Professor R Cardell-Oliver; Associate Professor E Chapman; Professor K Croft; Winthrop Professor J Davidson; Assistant Professor K Guelfi; Dr D Jorgensen; Winthrop Professor T Mazzarol

Dr Judy Berman

RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING – 12 November 2009

The next meeting of the Research Committee will be held in the Senate Room on Thursday 12 November 2009 at 2.15pm.

Dr Campbell Thomson
Executive Officer, Research Committee

AGENDA

1. APOLOGIES

2. MINUTES

   Confirmation

   Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting of the Research Committee held on 13 August 2009.

3. DECLARATIONS OF POTENTIAL FOR CONFLICT OR PERCEIVED CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

PART 1 – ITEMS FOR COMMUNICATION TO BE DEALT WITH EN BLOC

4. UWA SUPPLEMENTARY TRAVEL GRANTS FOR NEW ACADEMIC STAFF – REF F896

   Attached (Attachment RC1) for noting are the final reports of Assistant Professor J Rubenson, School of Sport Science, Exercise & Health; Dr M Fiorentini, School of Earth & Environment; Dr U Ecker, School of Psychology; Dr A Amarasinge, School of Population Health; Dr M Renton, School of Plant Biology; Dr N Thebaud, School of Earth & Environment; Dr D Cvejanovic, School
of physics; and Dr M Taylor, School of Animal Biology for their UWA Supplementary Travel Grants for New Academic Staff.

5. MAJOR GRANT ROUND OUTCOMES – REFS RA/1/31/1, RA/1/54/1

A summary report of the 2010 ARC and NHMRC major grant rounds is attached (Attachment RC2).

For noting.

6. OUTPUT IN THE PERFORMING AND VISUAL ARTS – REF F23570

The allocation of funds to reward Output in the Performing and Visual Arts (OPVA) in 2009 was $130,000. Responsibility for allocation of these funds is delegated to the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences by the Research Committee, and attached (Attachment RC3) is a report on the deliberations and outcomes of the OPVA Audit Committee.

For noting.

7. UWA RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT AWARDS – REF RA/1/889/1

Attached (Attachment RC4) for noting is a report of the Convenors of the 2010 UWA Research Development Awards which provides a summary of the projects funded by discipline panel, as well as recommendations for improving the application form to provide better clarity about the information which is being requested of applicants.

For follow up by the Research Grants Office.

8. RESEARCH COMMITTEE MEETING DATES IN 2010 – REF 14662

The meeting dates for the Research Committee in 2010 are as follows:

    Thursday 11 February 2010
    Thursday 13 May 2010
    Thursday 12 August 2010
    Thursday 11 November 2010

For noting.

PART 2 – ITEMS FOR DECISION TO BE DEALT WITH EN BLOC

9. UWA RESEARCH AND TRAINING CENTRES

(a) Centre for the Study of Social Change – Ref F28381

Attached (Attachment RC5) is a proposal for the establishment of the Centre for the Study of Social Change as a UWA Research and Training Centre in the School of Psychology, Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences. The Director of the proposed Centre, appointed by the Vice-Chancellor, is Professor Carmen Lawrence. The proposed Centre is designed to harness research and teaching resources across the University to better understand the processes that lead to social change. It involves collaboration with staff in a number of UWA schools and faculties, and the Institute of Advanced Studies. It aims in the longer term to include participation from government, non-government organisations, arts practitioners, and researchers in the
region, especially Indonesia and Malaysia. It has a budget in excess of $800,000 over 4 years, including VCDF support. The proposal has the support of the Dean and the Head of the School of Psychology and approval is sought to establish the Centre from the current date until the end of 2012.

(b) Centre for Mathematics of Symmetry and Computation

Attached (Attachment RC6) is a proposal for the establishment of the Centre for Mathematics of Symmetry and Computation (CMSC) as a UWA Research and Training Centre in the School of Mathematics and Statistics, Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics. The proposed Centre aims to place UWA at the forefront of international mathematics capability by increasing visibility and providing a prominent platform for mathematics education and research. Its focus is around the cutting-edge research of UWA Federation Fellow Winthrop Professor Cheryl Praeger who will direct the Centre and whose group has international research collaborations with more than 12 countries from Europe, North America and China. The Centre aims to increase research training at UWA through PhD enrolments and exchanges with collaborating organisations, as well as outreach activities with high school mathematics teachers and students. The proposal is very timely and addresses an emerging national and international deficiency in mathematics education. The proposed Centre has a budget of around $2.7 million over the next four years, including VCDF support. The proposal has the support of the Head of School and the Dean and approval is being sought for the Centre to be established for a 5-year period.

(c) UWA Centre for Energy

Attached (Attachment RC7) is a proposal for the establishment of the UWA Centre for Energy (UWACE) as a UWA Research and Training Centre in the School of Mechanical Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Mathematics. The proposed Centre will build on the achievements of the former School of Oil and Gas, and aims to become an internationally renowned research facility in fuels, energy and sustainable development. Its overall aim is to develop new knowledge and advanced technologies for efficient, effective and environmentally-friendly use of fuels and energy in resources industries. The proposed Centre will be central to the continuing development of key relationships within the energy industry and the positioning of UWA as a global engineering hub. The Director of the proposed Centre will be Winthrop Professor Dongke Zhang, formerly Director of the Centre for Fuels and Energy at Curtin University. Collaboration is with organisations such as Chevron, Woodside Energy, BHP Billiton, the Chinese Academy of Scientists, Tsinghua University in Beijing, and WA:ERA. The proposed Centre has the support of the Head of School and Dean and a budget of over $2.3 million over four years, and approval is being sought for the Centre to be established for a 5-year period.

PART 3 – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION

10. REPORT OF THE DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR (RESEARCH AND INNOVATION)

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) will report on items of interest which have arisen since the last meeting, including the positive UWA results of the most recent ARC major grant round (see item 5).

11. REVIEW OF SOCRATES II INDEX – REF F18052

Feedback from the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences has pointed to the fact that the point system on Socrates II discourages the publication of research monographs.

Attached (Attachment RC8) is a paper prepared by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Research Training) which re-weights research monographs in Socrates in line with the weightings given in the UWA Faculty Funding Model. The paper shows that this re-weighting of
research monographs has little impact on the overall university Socratic index points, increasing the average by only 3%. However, there is a significant effect in the Faculties of Law, Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, and to a lesser extent Education. In these faculties research monographs are a significant indicator of quality and it is therefore important to encourage publication of research monographs for scholars in these disciplines so that they remain competitive in the national grants scheme.

It is recommended that the Research Committee approve a modification to the Socrates II index by increasing the publication points of research monographs to equal the UWA Faculty Funding Model weighting of these research outputs.

For discussion and approval.

10. OTHER BUSINESS