

DEPARTMENT OF OPTOMETRY AND VISIONS SCIENCES

STAFF-STUDENT LIAISON MEETING (RHD/HONS)

MINUTES

12:30pm, Tuesday 27th May, 2008
Optometry Building Prac Lab

Present:

Staff:

Dr Larry Abel (Chair), Dr Andrew Anderson, Ms Jacquie Burnheim, Ms Pianca Lun

Students:

Mr Phillip Bedggood, Ms Monica Jong, Ms Kumiko Percival, Mr Narayanan Rajeev, Ms Sujata Roy, , Ms Srujana Sahebjada, Mr Coimbatore Sivaramakrishnan, Ms Tina Tsai, Ms Vickie Wong, Mr Daniel Adler, Mr Edward Liu, Mr Jason Charng, Mr Nethrajeith Srinivasalu, Ms Sze Er Chin, Ms Renee Karas, Mr Stephen Tong

Absent: Ms Carla Abott, Mr Zheng He, Ms Yvonne Lin, Mr Alaster Meehan, Ms Richa Verma, Ms Ran Wan, Ms Bahar Erikoz

1. Apologies:

Prof Neville McBrien, Ms Elizabeth Bowman, Mr Kenny Cheong, Ms Lauren Ayton, Ms Josephine Li, Mr Ryan Maloney, Ms Deborah-Anne Hackett, Mr Baskar Arumugam, Mr Kwang Meng Cham

2. Minutes of the last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were approved, distributed and placed on the Department website.

3. Welcome new students:

New PhD: Ms Tina Tsai

New Masters: Mr Jason Charng, Ms Renee Karas, Ms Sze Er Chin, Mr Nethrajeith Srinivasalu,

New Honours: Mr Stephen Tong

4. Nomination of new RHD representatives:

Ms Vickie Wong and Mr Narayanan Rajeev were nominated as the RHD representatives for 2008.

5. New Matter Arising:

Journal Club:

-Andrew Anderson reported that the Journal Club had been going well after implementing a new regulation, and the average length of a journal paper was shorter from 8.5 last year to 6.6 this year.

- Feedback from students about the Journal club:

- It was reported that the amount of discussion was varied, sometimes it was not much discussion amongst students, most of the discussion was between the presenter and the moderator.

- Some students preferred the previous discussion style to the current style. It was reported that the current style was focusing on understanding the papers, some students believed that it was more stimulating when all academic staff participated and discussed, which helped develop their skills. Majority of students suggested having at least 2 academic staff attend.

- Andrew was concerned that if too many academic staff participated, there would be less discussion from students. In the past, often only academic staff discussed the paper; if this style was used again, the number of students who read the paper beforehand would be diminishing.

- Larry explained that students should be doing the discussion and a moderator should be keeping it going.

- Andrew said he would consider having 2 academic staff to attend the meeting and one of the moderators could be a presenter's supervisor.

- Andrew reminded students again they should read the papers before the meeting, and he encouraged them to be more proactive to ask questions. He also commented all presentations were actually a good challenge for students. It was an opportunity for students to present methodology from their areas to people who were not familiar with it, and as a presenter, students had to work out the structure and how to give an explanation in general terms that people could understand in a particular area. For the discussing groups, students would have an opportunity to learn about different areas and to discuss other people's methodology.

Research student support allowance (RSSA):

Jacque reported that a new student supporting fund "RSSA" which replaced the RAGS and previous travel grant schemes.

The new funding scheme is to provide allowances to RHD students (maximum of 3 years for PhD and 1.5 years for Masters). Therefore, no funding is provided during any extension period of a candidature.

All students who would have received RAGS allocations in 2007 and beyond will be moved across to the RSSA.

Allocation is calculated at the commencement of candidature.

A report of funding allocation will be sent to students' supervisor(s) in a monthly basis. A separate RSSA summary report will also be provided to students and the supervisor(s) on an annual basis.

Additional funding/support is also provided for appropriate skills course e.g. statistics, computer skills or animal handling.

For Honours students, there is also a support allowance allocated to support them to do a research project or attend conferences.

Jacque welcomed any feedback about the flexibility in the system.

Area of resources:

- Jacque reported that a new position of Professor had been advertised, the current old Prac Lab would be renovated by the end of this year, ultimately it would become a new Professor's office with his/her research staff.

- Jacque also reported that the new Pre-clinical teaching laboratory had been removed from the Optometry Building to the McCoy Building on the ground floor. Also the University's Eye Clinic (named University of Melbourne EyeCare) was open. The eyecare assessments are provided free of charge and University staff and students are offered a substantial discount (20-30%) off retail for contact lenses, prescription glasses and sunglasses. Jacque encouraged students to visit the new clinic and make a booking for an eye test

New Spaces:

- Jacque reported that a major building work was being done on campus. By 2011, there would have more spaces allocated for the department in the Neuroscience Building.

6. **Any Other Business**

- Jacquie thanked students for entering their own pay claim on "THEMIS" system. She expected that students found the system more useful than a paper claim form. She reminded students to activate their staff e-mail and group all e-mails in one place.

- Jacquie thanked for students' support and flexibility to do the demonstration and teaching this semester.

-Pianca reminded students to clean up their desks, return all keys and building access card to John Dascoli, the building manager, upon completion of their degrees.

7. Next meeting - Tuesday, 7th October 2008 at 12:30pm in Optometry Building Prac Lab

Meeting closed at 2:00pm