

Meeting 1/19

5 April 2019

For general publication

Present: Assoc Prof Joanne Blanchfield (in the chair for Items 1 to 3), Mr Marley Chia (in the chair from Item 4), Miss Julia Buczynski, Miss Laura Coe, Mr Alexander Dunstan, Miss Susanna Huang, Ms Jessamine O'Carroll, Ms Elizaveta Plakhotnik, Mr Mark Starkey (for Dr Denise Adams), Mr Mehershah Wadia (until part way through Item 7). Ms Lucy Holyoak.

Apologies: Miss Zoe Garson, Mr William Hunt (observer), Mr Wilson Tait, Dr Simon Worrall.

Absent: Ms Nahain Binte Aziz, Mr Liam De Villiers.

1. Welcome and introductions:

Joanne Blanchfield welcomed members, particularly new members, to the first meeting of the year of the CSAG. She apologised that the meeting was occurring a little later in the semester than planned, due to staff changes. The cohorts represented by each student member of the Group appeared on the School's webpage under 'Student Support'.

2. Terms of reference:

Members noted the terms of reference of the Group, as published on the School's webpage.

3. Election of chairperson:

Student members of the Group were invited to consider nominating for the role of Chairperson of the Group meetings, the main role of which is to preside over the business of the meeting and ensure that agenda items are discussed in an inclusive but timely fashion. The Chairperson also reviews the draft of agendas and minutes of meetings.

Susanna Huang, who had chaired in 2018, indicated that she was willing to vacate the chair if another member was interested in taking on the role. Marley Chia nominated himself and, there being no other nominations, was appointed.

4. Secretary:

Since the inception of the Group in 2009, secretarial support had been provided by School administration staff. The Secretary's role includes administration of the membership, issuing calls for agenda items, compiling the meeting agenda papers, drafting and publishing the minutes and ensuring action items are followed up.

It was agreed that the role is probably best undertaken by a staff member, but any member of the Group with committee support experience who would like to assist was invited to become co-secretary. No nominations were received at the meeting, but Mark Starkey indicated that he could be contacted subsequently.

5. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held 3 October 2018:

The minutes of the meeting held 3 October 2018, having been circulated in November 2018, were taken as read and were confirmed by those who had been present.

6. Business arising out of the minutes:

6.1 'Art of Science' competition

Members noted that four entries had been received, copies of which were in the meeting papers.

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6. Business arising out of the minutes – ‘Art of Science’ competition: (cont’d)

A judging panel consisting of Jo Blanchfield (Chair, SCMB Teaching & Learning Committee), Ross Barnard (Director, Biotechnology Program and artist) and Jeanette Stok (Early Career Researcher and artist) had chosen Armira Azuar’s entry (geometric monochrome drawing) as the winner. Armira had won a \$50 gift voucher.

Suggestions for displaying the pieces received prior to the meeting from staff included:

- Submit for publication in the ‘Unveiling the Right Side’ section of the journal Clinical Chemistry. Ross Barnard has published several paintings/sketches there, and as a fellow of the American Association for Clinical Chemistry, could assist with the process.
- Publish on the cover of the SCMB student projects book.
- Display on the screens on the Chemistry Podium and in the foyer of Level 2 of the MBS Building.

Members endorsed these suggestions.

MARK, LUCY

Following discussion, members resolved –

- (a) that the competition run again in 2019;
- (b) that the advertising collateral to promote the competition be updated to mention the prize and where the entries/winner could be published;
- (c) that the collateral be circulated by flying minute to members for consideration/approval; and
- (d) that the competition opens soon and continue until just prior to the last meeting of the CSAG for 2019, to enable the Group to judge the entries.

MARK, LUCY

6.2 Undergraduate ‘Discipline Mixer’ event

The final SCMB Teaching and Learning Committee meeting of 2018 had noted that the undergraduate discipline mixer event run in August 2018 had been a success and was supportive of the event being held again in 2019, advertised and organised by students. The Chemistry Club had run the 2018 event.

The October 2018 CSAG meeting noted that the timing of the event, early in second semester (the Tuesday of Week 4), had worked well for students and staff.

Although William Hunt, representative of the Chemistry Club, was not present, Marley Chia said that he understood that the Club was willing to assist CSAG to organise the event again this year. Jo Blanchfield added that it was important the students invited other students to the event, rather than the invitation come as an email from the School. The School would work on getting academic staff to attend.

Confirmation that the Chemistry Club was willing to assist again would be sought by Marley for the next meeting, which it was hoped William would be able to attend.

MARLEY,
WILLIAM

6.3 Review of Levels 2 and 3 Chemistry courses

At the October 2018 meeting, members had noted a revised curriculum for second and third level Chemistry courses which had been developed over the preceding two years. At the meeting, Jo Blanchfield had foreshadowed that a review of Biochemistry courses would commence in 2019.

Jo spoke to the new CHEM3XXX courses coming on stream in 2019 and responded to a query about prerequisites. She added that the new second and third level courses had been designed with student employability in mind, based on feedback from industry contacts. She confirmed that the Biochemistry courses were next for review.

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6. Business arising out of the minutes: (cont'd)

6.4 UQ Chemistry Club NMR course

The October 2018 meeting had heard that the Chemistry Club had received only a small number of registrations for a nuclear magnetic resonance course it had planned to offer. Jo Blanchfield had suggested that the course be run in first semester.

No office bearer from the Chemistry Club was present to speak to the item. Marley Chia said that he would pass suggestions he had about the course to the Club. Jo Blanchfield indicated that the item was on the business of CSAG because of the Group's capacity to endorse and promote the course.

MARLEY

6.5 Assistance for international students

Jo Blanchfield reported that the matters raised at the October 2018 meeting were now being considered by the Faculty of Science Teaching & Learning Committee and she would report back as she was able to.

JOANNE

6.6 Course profiles and medical certificates

Lucy Holyoak reported that advice in SCMB course profiles regarding the submission of medical certificates had been made consistent from this semester.

Jo Blanchfield added that it is important for students to appreciate the difference between submitting a medical certificate as part of an application (through University channels) for extension of time to submit assessment, and submitting a certificate as part of an application (through the course coordinator) for the reschedule of a compulsory practical class.

6.7 Text of lecture recordings

Jo Blanchfield reported that she had followed up with UQ's Institute for Teaching and Learning Innovation (ITaLI) regarding alternative access options for students having trouble hearing lecture recordings. Additionally, a staff member assisting Jo with the recasting of CHEM1100 as part of the UQ2U multi-modal learning initiative (see Item 7 below) had tried using voice recognition software to write text from a recording, but it had been unsuccessful, largely due to the amount of uncommon scientific terminology to which the software did not adapt well.

Jo said that ITaLI was seeking a UQ-wide solution, but none had yet become apparent.

7. Student feedback on new UQ2U courses midway through semester (CHEM1100 and BIOC2000):

Members noted that two large, cornerstone courses in SCMB had been chosen to undergo a program of renewal under the UQ2U project late last year. This project aims to improve student flexibility and engagement by providing significant content on-line and ensuring that face-to-face contacts are interactive and engaging. The School welcomes CSAG members' input into how these courses are being received by the students.

First Year representative, Julia Buczynski observed that the online content of CHEM1100 was not the subject of an assessment hurdle in the way BIOL1020 was and that, accordingly, not many students looked at the CHEM1100 content ahead of lectures.

Second Year MBS representative, Elizaveta Plakhotnik, said that she had gathered feedback in relation to BIOC2000. Members noted a report of that feedback in their meeting papers, to which Elizaveta added the results of a Facebook poll she had conducted.

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7. Student feedback on new UQ2U courses midway through semester (CHEM1100 and BIOC2000):
(cont'd)

While a small part of the feedback was appreciative of the multimodal way of teaching, most was negative. Points included:

- Disjointedness between and within the class contact and the online content. Some students felt the class contact did not add enough value to the online content and that smaller groups or multiple tutors in a large group would be better than lecture theatre style contact. The online content had clearly been written by different people and there was inconsistency in language to the extent that even concept statements clashed, causing confusion.
- It is unclear which online content is necessary for achieving the learning objectives of the course and for assessment, as opposed to optional/desirable. Clearer boundaries would be appreciated.
- There is room for improvement in communicating assessment items to students.
- The structure and layout of the practical manual needs improvement – it is not always clear what needs to be done prior to the lab class as opposed to during it.
- Questions posted online by students to the appropriate channel are going unanswered for lengthy periods.

Elizaveta said that she felt that dissatisfaction with aspects of the course organisation were being conflated with the new style of delivery to give the appearance that the new online approach was the problem.

Jo Blanchfield thanked Elizaveta for the report, which would be considered in terms of what could be done for the remainder of the semester as well as for future offerings of the course. She encouraged students to complete the SECaT evaluations when they became available, as this would help in getting more resources allocated to improve delivery.

JOANNE

Arising from the report, members said that video clips were now common in online content, but they preferred content that was tailored to the course rather than recycled content originally published by other providers. This was because terminology could differ across domains, causing confusion. Jo observed that whilst facilities to produce videos locally was becoming increasingly accessible in the University, the editing and post-production of the content was labour intensive and resources were not always available – hence her encouragement to students to provide SECaT feedback.

A member suggested that consideration be given to a mechanism for providing SECaT style feedback midway through a course. Jo observed that staff could conduct a SECaT during a course as well as at the end, but the results of both were not released to staff until after student results were published at the end of semester. However, she would check with the ITaLI Evaluations Unit if a SECaT with a limited number of questions could be run during a course and anonymised feedback provided quickly to the course coordinator, Chair of the Teaching & Learning Committee and Head of School.

JOANNE

8. Next meeting:

A lack of time precluded the consideration of three further agenda items:

- Spectra analysis software training/support/guides;
- Laboratory manual review; and
- New Faculty of Science assignment lodgement facility.

It was agreed that these items be considered at the next meeting, to be scheduled if possible for the week following the mid-semester break (Week 9).

MARK, LUCY

(Suggestions made by a member to Mark Starkey at the end of the meeting about how the assignment lodgement facility could be improved are being pursued and will be reported on at the next meeting.)

MARK

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