

SENATE DIGEST FOR MEETING OF 8 DECEMBER 2022

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chancellor welcomed Senators and attendees to the meeting and apologies were noted for Annette Schmiede, Chapter Nominee (NSW) and Karl Morris AO, Chapter Nominee (QLD).

2. Report from Chancellor

The Chancellor provided a summary of the events and meetings in which he had participated since the previous meeting, including:

- ACU Sport and Performer Awards 2022, Melbourne
- Rome Blessing Briefing
- Meeting 02/2022 of the Honorary Awards Committee, Virtual
- Meeting of NSW/ACT Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors, Sydney
- ACBC Dinner, North Sydney
- Academic Board meeting, North Sydney
- Banyo Diaconate Ordinations
- Constitution Review Discussion, Virtual
- ACU's 2022 Federal Parliamentary Interfaith Breakfast, Canberra
- ACU Constitution Review Working Party Meeting #3, Virtual
- UQ Dinner for Queensland Universities' Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors, Brisbane
- Queensland Premier's Christmas Function, Brisbane
- Meeting with Archbishop Comensoli, Melbourne

The Chancellor provided the following updates in relation to the Constitution Review Working Party (WP):

- The WP was established as a sub-group of Members of Corporation to work through a draft scoping paper and come up with a final version for Members. The WP proposed that it conclude its work so far as it can by early March 2023;
- The WP sought Senate's view of what the nature, size and composition of Senate might look like under the revised Constitution. Since the views were sought, the Chancellor advised the WP that further clarity was required in relation to the path of consultation with Senate and Senior Management which is expected to be provided to Senate and Executive Management for consultation on 30 March.

Senators discussed the Constitution Review.

- The Chancellor led Senate in extending congratulations to Tim Kirk, Panel Nominee (ACT) on becoming a grandfather; expressing thanks to Emily Ginis, Student Member, for her contributions to Senate during her two terms in office; and acknowledging retiring academic staff Senator Dr Josephine Ryan, for service to Senate through her filling of two casual vacancies between 2018 and 2022.

3. Report from Vice-Chancellor and President

The Vice-Chancellor and President (VC) provided an overview of the Report and highlighted the following:

- The importance of a series of engagement activities, including:
 - A Parliamentary interfaith breakfast;
 - Vice-Chancellor's Staff Talks that have been conducted across ACU campuses;
 - Presentation of the 2022 Vice-Chancellor's Staff Excellence Awards and Award for Excellence in Teaching;

- Ramsay Scholarship applications have opened;
- Welcome address and panel discussion at the Australian Academy of Humanities event, Citizenship, Diaspora and Belonging;
- Meetings with Hon Jason Clare MP, Minister for Education;
- Meetings with NSW school principals that are praising the way ACU engages with sector;
- Meeting with Sally Sitou MP, Federal Member for Reid; and
- Attended WEXPO.

The VC also provided updates on:

- Discussions regarding the HE reform agenda and process;
- The Department of Education and Training (DET) Victoria approval of an additional 50 students in 2023 for ACU's innovative Bachelor of Early Childhood Education (Birth-to-Five Years) (Accelerated) program – providing an additional \$1.9 million. The program has also been extended into 2024, granting ACU an additional \$6.75 million if student targets are met;
- Since the launch in August of the new ACU Research and Enterprise funding schemes, a total of six grants have been awarded;
- Appointments as follows:
 - Dr Philip Parker – Acting Pro Vice-Chancellor, Research Impact, based in North Sydney. Dr Parker has accepted a fixed term position from 1 November 2022 to 11 May 2023. Dr Parker is a current ACU employee who has been working as the Dean, Graduate Research.
 - Dr Matthew Pink – Associate Director, ACU Engagement, based in Brisbane. Dr Pink has accepted a fixed term position from 7 November 2022 to 5 November 2027. Dr Pink is a current ACU employee who has been working as National Community Engagement Manager.
 - Ms Rena Christmann – Associate Director, Employment Relations and Safety based in North Sydney. Ms Christmann has accepted a fixed term position from 7 November 2022 to 5 November 2027. Ms Christmann is a current ACU employee who has been working as National Manager, Employment Relations and Safety.
- The Faculty of Education and Arts at ACU will establish an Australian Centre for the Advancement of Literacy next year. A formal proposal to establish the Centre will be considered by Senate in March 2023.

Senate discussed:

- VC Staff Talks;
- Staff travel costs; and
- Announcement of Australian Centre for the Advancement of Literacy.

4. Recovery Transition Program

The Vice-Chancellor and President (VC) and Pro-Chancellor provided an overview of the Recovery Transition Program and highlighted Finance and Resources Committee (FRC) met in late 2022 to discuss further details of the Budget and Recovery Transition Program and recommended it for approval by Senate; this was subsequently approved by Senate via circular resolution. FRC assessed the assumptions and risks, enrolment numbers and containment of costs as well as reporting mechanisms to ensure ACU remain on track with savings. Ongoing reporting will proceed to Senate via FRC. A \$30m reduction requires not only a tactical approach but also sustainable considerations. It was also noted that Robert Baker, Chair, Audit and Risk Committee met with Korda Mentha and tested various assumptions and KM were pleased with responses and the speed with which management are responding.

Senate discussed:

- Rationale for reduction of only professional staff and not academic staff;
- Marketing strategies;
- Timeline for implementation; and
- Ensuring students aren't negatively impacted by professional staff cuts.

5. ACU Vision 2033

The Vice-Chancellor and President provided an overview of the ACU Vision 2023 and highlighted the following:

- The first stage of consultation has concluded and involved over 840 contributors across the organisation and beyond; and
- The Findings Report: ACU Vision 2033 has been provided and feedback has been synthesised into six overarching topics which reflect key strategic questions for the University. These will be further developed into transformational strategic themes to enable key strategic choices on the direction and components of ACU Vision 2033. The categories reflect some of the gaps identified in Senate conversations.

Senate discussed:

- The timeline for the Strategic Plan and Execution Framework to be in place.

6. Report from Interim Provost

The Interim Provost provided a brief overview of the Report and highlighted the following:

- 2023 student enrolment figures in the Report are from 17 November and are moving rapidly with EFSTL above target vs the previous cycle. Continuing enrolment has been largely triggered by the communications strategy with students regarding subject enrolment;
- There is a reduction in full time enrolment. Students are being encouraged to enrol in the maximum full time capacity of 8 units to address current under-load patterns;

Senate discussed:

- ACU providing pastoral care in teaching students how to build resilience and help teachers to identify challenges in the classroom;
- Pathways for students that don't meet ATAR;
- Strategies for attracting international students; and
- The influence of industry on unit design.

Senate:

- noted the Provost Portfolio Report and the ACU Widening Participation Action Plan and Implementation Roadmap.

7. Report from Chief Operating Officer

The Chief Operating Officer provided an update and highlighted the following:

- In order to find budget savings under the Recovery Transition Program, a specific delegation for consultancy has been proposed.
- A Senator Email Protocol, similar to the Senate and Corporation Travel Protocol, has been drafted following the setup of Senator ACU email addresses. The initiative is important in the context of cyber security.

8. Report from Academic Board

The Chair of Academic Board provided an overview of the written Report of the Academic Board and highlighted the following:

- A summary and analysis of activity for Academic Board throughout 2022 will be provided at next Senate meeting;

- Academic misconduct and efforts of ACU to manage academic integrity. The issue of academic misconduct is rampant across universities and students are being encouraged to understand what it is to behave properly in terms of the disciplines and skills they need to develop.
- Senators discussed academic integrity during COVID as well as ways to address the issue.

Senate:

- noted the Digest of Academic Board meeting 06/2022, held on 16 November 2022.

9. Report of the Finance and Resources Committee

The Pro-Chancellor provided a brief overview of the meeting and in particular highlighted the work of the Recovery Transition Program.

10. Report of the Audit and Risk Committee

Senate:

- noted the report from meeting 05/2022 of the Audit and Risk Committee held on 15 November 2022.

11. Report from Honorary Awards Committee

The Chancellor presented the Report from Honorary Awards Committee.

Senate:

- noted the Report from the Honorary Awards Committee from its meeting of 02 November 2022;
- approved the awarding of a number of Honorary Degrees of Doctor;
- approved the granting of the Honorary title of Emeritus Professor to Professor Pauline Allen FAHA FBA; and
- approved the granting of the Honorary title of Emeritus Professor to Professor James McLaren.

12. Reports from State Chapters

Senate:

- noted the Report of the ACT State Chapter meeting of 3 November 2022; and
- noted the Report of the NSW State Chapter meeting of 24 October 2022.