

6 November 2009

Dear Colleagues,

As previously advised, the Faculty will be reviewing and reforming administrative (enabling) support services to ensure that our administrative structures and processes respond effectively to the ongoing functional reviews, and deliver optimum support to our core business of teaching and research.

The University's Strategic Plan and the Vice-Chancellor's paper Changing La Trobe: A Program for Renewal has identified the way forward for LTU. The University has agreed that major change in our core business of teaching and learning and research as well as in the way this core business is supported is essential for our future growth and development.

In this context, the University's Changing La Trobe – Administrative Change Program was established to improve the quality of administrative service delivery, reduce expenditure on administrative support and to establish a strong service culture, i.e., to look at our enabling functions in the context of our core business.

This Faculty needs to be able to respond effectively to the ongoing functional reviews and in particular respond to the recommendations of the Faculty Services Review.

Faculty Futures Project Team and Enabling Capacity Review

The Faculty will be reviewing the way we support our core business through its Faculty Futures Project Team and Enabling Capacity Review.

The Faculty Futures Project Team comprises: myself, Dr Nick Bisley (Politics), Dr Claudia Haake (History), Dr Chris Scanlon (Media Studies) and Deborah Hewitt (Senior Project Officer).

Objectives of the Faculty Futures Project are to:

1. Develop Strategic Operational Plans for core functions that are aligned with the University's and governmental objectives and compacts funding implications.
2. Develop a Green Paper for the Faculty's Enabling Functions predicated on an integrated service delivery model that is flexible and responsive to change as required.
3. Submit a White Paper – Enabling Capacity in FHSS for approval by the University.
4. Implement Core Function and Enabling Capacity Plans for the Faculty.

How to achieve these objectives

The HUSS Enabling Capacity Review will review and reform our enabling functions to achieve the objectives.

In particular the Faculty is seeking to develop a Faculty 'brand' of best practice that is:

- Resilient, sustainable and flexible; and yet
- Retains valued staff, skills and corporate memory within a strategic integrated service delivery model

By:

- Identifying what is our enabling capacity, i.e., what it is we do?
- Evaluating how well we enable core business.
- Agreeing how to enable capacity more effectively.
- Determining what is the most appropriate organisational structure to support this in the future.

The Review will provide opportunities for staff to be involved in deciding how we should support core business more effectively in the future by:

- Providing regular information from the Faculty Futures Project Team about progress and identified issues.
- Enabling Capacity Focus Groups to be held.
- Administering Surveys.
- Undertaking one-on-one interviews.
- An ongoing rationalisation of existing procedures.

Timeline

The timeline for these activities has commenced with meetings of the Faculty Futures Project Team. It is anticipated that the review will be completed by March 2010. One of our principles should be for the process of implementing change to limit the period of time taken so that people can reach certainty as early as possible. Initial focus groups will commence shortly.

The Review will include the Faculty Executive Group, Heads of School, Program Coordinators representing academic staff, School Managers and all General staff in the Faculty.

The consultation process will comprise:

- Initial diagnosis and analysis of the way we currently support core business.
- Focus groups, surveys and interviews will explore issues and gather information with staff.
- The Faculty Futures Project Team will analyse this information and design draft proposals of future state organisational structure and services. Staff feedback and advice will be incorporated into this service delivery model by the Project Team.

- Draft proposals of future state including cost/benefit analysis, indicative timeframes, implementation strategies, impact assessment on staff and work design to be provided to staff for feedback.
- Focus groups will review and test the draft proposals by seeking more input before finalising recommendations for change.
- The Faculty Futures Project Team will report and make recommendations to the University for approval.
- Commence implementation with appropriate consultation via an Organisational Change Impact Statement if necessary.

A website is being established to provide staff with as much information as possible and the url will be announced shortly.

Staff engagement and communication

The Faculty Futures Project Team values the hard work administrative staff do but it is imperative that we provide a strategic integrated service delivery model that optimises resource allocation, and integrates and standardises our systems more effectively. We are focussed on providing a framework for staff engagement within a flexible, strong and adaptive culture that values performance that supports the core business but one that also provides staff with professional development and career progression that meets their needs and those of the Faculty.

Your valuable input to the review can help us identify:

- a vision of what we want to look like in the future;
- a clear sense of our identity;
- flexible organisational structures to support our core business; and
- creative and innovative ways to consider ongoing change.

The Project Team understands that the process of change is confronting and some staff will feel anxious about what the future will look like for them. We feel confident that the process of reviewing our enabling capacity and rebuilding it in an integrated service delivery model will be a rewarding experience for all.

Yours sincerely,



Professor Tim Murray
Dean
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences