

Whole of university approach to changing culture: Policies and procedures for sessional staff

Professor Sandra Wills & Alisa Percy
University of Wollongong

UOW Sessional Teaching Project

- 2006-7 UOW Teaching and Learning Performance Funding
- \$65,000 for leadership, project management and research assistance
- Awarded in September 2006

2006 initiative

- Develop a profile Commerce satellite campus teaching staff
- Implement 2 day professional development program for them
- Run in Autumn and Spring session
- Overwhelming positive response from sessionals
- Challenge: fostering faculty ownership

2007 preliminary objectives

- Extend 2 day professional development conference to **all** satellite campus sessional teaching staff
- **Insights:** highly complex sector with diverse professional needs
- **Challenges:** bringing faculties on board
- **Response:** review approach

Revised Objectives

1. Develop a deeper understanding of the breadth and complexity of the casual teaching sector at UOW
2. Explore the professional needs of casual teaching staff
3. Instigate University-wide change processes to facilitate sustainable and systemic improvements to the management, preparation and recognition of casual teaching staff

Project Objectives (cont.)

4. Continue working with the Faculty of Commerce to foster and explore ownership and implementation issues
5. Foster sustainable practices at the Faculty/School and teaching team level that provide formal and non-formal professional learning opportunities for casual teaching staff
6. Foster practices that support Subject Coordinators in their capacity to lead (MLT) teaching teams

Scoping activities

- University-wide typology of casual teaching staff (Interviews and survey)
- UOW data (DEST & UOW HR)
- Develop and pilot university-wide **Tutor Engagement Survey**
- Focus groups and interviews with casual teaching staff and supervisors
- Literature review, national policy and practice review

Turning Point

*Working Paper on the professional needs of
satellite campus sessional teaching staff,
December 2006*

- Identification of key systemic issues
- Series of recommendations

UEC/ASDC Sessional Teaching Steering Committee

Assoc/Prof. Kay Maxwell, Chair and **Associate Dean, Faculty of Law**

Assoc/Prof. Ian Brown, **Associate Dean, Faculty of Education**

Assoc/Prof. John McQuilton, **Associate Dean (UG), Sub Dean, Faculty of Arts**

Assoc/Prof. Janette Curtis, **Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences**

Prof. Trevor Spedding, **Deputy Dean, Faculty of Commerce**

Prof. Philip Ogunbona, **Head of CSSE, Faculty of Informatics**

Ms Maureen Bell, **CEDIR**

Dr Geraldine Lefoe, **CEDIR**

Ms Irene Burgess, **Personnel and Finance**

Ms Paola Ciccarelli, **Policy and Governance**

Mr David Reynolds, **Professional and Organisational Development**

Ms Alisa Percy, **Coordinator, Sessional Teaching Staff Project**

Dr Rosemary Beaumont, **Co-researcher, Sessional Teaching Staff Project**

Terms of Reference

Aim

To develop a **broad policy framework** and **implementation plan** for enhancing policy and practice to foster an inclusive and engaging professional environment for casual teaching staff across all onshore locations.

Objectives

- **Review current policy and practice** as it pertains to casual teaching staff to identify good practice and areas for improvement.
- **Establish a benchmark** of current faculty policy and practice to measure future improvements.
- **Consult widely with Faculty** and engage them in the development of the Policy and Guidelines.
- **Develop Code of Practice and Good Practice Guidelines** that can be implemented at the Faculty, School and program level.



University Framework

Code of Practice: Casual Academic Teaching Employees

Good Practice Guidelines

Educational services and resources (ASD)

Monitoring and reporting

Academic Services
Division

Faculty Responsibilities

Faculty Operating Procedures
document to improve and formalise
processes

Faculty, School or Program
Induction

Integration, resources and
communication

Ongoing professional learning and
development opportunities

Teaching Team Practices

Appropriate communication strategies

Marking schemas and parity processes

Mentoring and integration

Evaluation and feedback

2008 Projections

- 1. Further development and consolidation of the policy, monitoring and reporting framework**
- 2. Development of tools, templates, examples and models for faculties and schools to adapt**
- 3. Broadening the scope to investigate the professional needs of subject coordinators leading casualised teaching teams.**

Key Elements

- Leadership
- University Governance Structure
- Scoping and wide consultation
- A clearly articulated framework
- University policy and procedure
- Facilitated implementation
- Monitoring and reporting mechanisms
- Iterative improvements