FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the October edition of the UNSW Student Services Newsletter. In this edition we highlight important dates for Session 2 examinations, assessments and the university-wide timetabling project.

The September/October graduation ceremonies have been very well attended with bumper crops of graduating PhDs. Thank you to all who helped make them such a success.

If you have comments or suggestions for improving the Newsletter, please let me know. We would also love to use your photos with the incredibly well-traveled UNSW Red Bag.

Kind regards

Jane Gatwood

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unswstudentservices@unsw.edu.au
CAREERS AND EMPLOYMENT

National Association of Graduate Careers Advisory Services (NAGCAS) meeting held at UNSW
Taking the theme of 'UNSW by the Sea', Careers and Employment hosted the September NSW/ACT NAGCAS meeting in the Council Chamber. Delegates were greeted by a slide show of Paul Nicol's coastal photos with music by the Beach Boys.

Issues raised included graduate recruitment surveys and careers service policies on employment advertising, plus the meeting was an invaluable opportunity for networking. In the 'Careers Services Sharing their Practices' section we profiled our successful purpose-built intranet for employer management which attracted much interest from other careers services.

At the meeting Dawn White was elected as President of the NSW/ACT NAGCAS branch for the next year. Congratulations Dawn!

Fly on the Wall Program
Taye Morris recently participated in the Australian Association of Graduate Employers (AAGE) Fly on the Wall Program. The program is designed to give graduate recruiters and university careers advisors the opportunity to learn more about each other’s roles and organisations. Gemma Grennan, Assistant Manager, Development Programs for the Commonwealth Bank of Australia (CBA) spent a day at UNSW observing Individual Assistance sessions and assisting with a workshop and Taye spent a day at CBA observing part of their summer internship recruitment process.

Volunteer Program
Careers and Employment is running an Office Volunteer Program to offer UNSW students administration and office experience. Eight enthusiastic volunteers underwent a formal training program and will be working with our Information Officer in the coming weeks. Through interacting with staff members, employers and students in an office environment, the volunteers will be able to build on their level of confidence, improve their language skills and practice their customer service skills.

High School Careers Workshops
Ruth Wilcock and Rhyll Davey recently facilitated two one-hour workshops for Year 10 students at the International Grammar School, Ultimo. Having presented there in 2004 and 2005, we enjoyed the opportunity to show our revised and updated workshop program.

Staff Update
We would like to welcome our newly appointed Careers Consultants, Ruth Wilcock and Jill McAlister. They bring with them a great deal of knowledge and experience and are a fantastic addition to our team!

ACCOMMODATION SERVICES

Our longstanding plumber Steve Whiteoak, who serviced the university student apartments for 12 years with his son Scott, was tragically killed in a boating accident on 16 September. Besides being an extremely skilled and conscientious tradesman, Steve was an incredibly warm, good natured and charismatic gentleman. He is irreplaceable and will be sorely missed by his many friends in Accommodation Services and the Kensington Colleges. Our sympathy goes to his family.

For the first time in three years a recommendation has been made to increase rent levels at the UNSW Student Apartments in line with inflation. Should the increases be implemented the rents will remain very competitive with those for equivalent accommodation in the private sector.

Accommodation Services recently met with Pele Chan from EdTech to discuss improvements to our website. The new look website will be ready in the next few weeks.
STUDENT SUPPORT CENTRAL

STUDENT CENTRAL

During the first three weeks of September around 1,400 students have been served at the counter with the majority of enquiries relating to Transcripts and Special Consideration, closely followed by Graduation enquiries. Approximately 350 telephone calls have been received so far.

Student Central have recently taken over the production of electronic Confirmation of Enrolments for students who change their program, or are given advanced standing, in addition to submissions from students requesting extensions to student visas.

Due to the relocation of the Scholarships and Financial Support (SAFS) team to the Mathews Building, SAFS staff are providing training to Student Central to ensure continuity of service and enable more enquiries to be answered at the Student Central counter.

Heads of Student Administration (HOSA) conference in Adelaide 21-22 September

Clare Buckley attended the conference and has provided the following report.

The theme which ran through a number of the presentations was on working smarter to improve the quality of service to the student. To achieve this, many universities are looking to tools such as call centre software, customer relationship management systems and using consultants from other organisations to assess service delivery.

There was an interesting presentation from The University of Queensland (UQ) who have tried to address the issue of the impact of corporate memory loss. UQ developed a training program for six level 4/5 staff, which consisted of each member of staff working in one area within Student Services for a six month period before moving onto the next area. Despite initial reluctance from some managers, the scheme is working very well and UQ have managed to reduce their areas of vulnerability, ensuring that corporate knowledge is more widely spread, rather than held by one or two individuals.

The University of Otago, in recent years, has introduced a system of Business Area Reviews for Student Services. The review is undertaken by a panel of staff of different levels and includes a member of staff from another university. In theory, each area should only be reviewed once every five years, but the review is very thorough, taking into account the structure, management, core services, activities, physical environment, IT and health and safety. By constantly and consistently reviewing their services, Otago are ensuring that they do not fall behind or become stagnant.

My favourite presentation was from UTS who presented their Study Plan. The Study Plan is a personalised plan for each student and indicates which courses they may enrol in. If a student is not permitted to enrol in a certain course, then the option will not be visible in their plan. The Study Plan takes into consideration Advanced Standing and ensures that students are aware of all possible options available to them. UTS have found many advantages to using this system, such as;

- Greatly reducing the checking exercises required prior to graduation
- Students expectations of what they can and can’t do are aligned with reality
- Prevention of errors in enrolment which only come to light at graduation
- Ability to enforce all rules/requisites/co-requisites
- Minimises the need for Faculty involvement in academic advising

The next HOSA Conference will be held in New Zealand in 2007.
SCHOLARSHIPS AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

Website  [http://www.scholarships.unsw.edu.au/about/AboutUs.html](http://www.scholarships.unsw.edu.au/about/AboutUs.html)

As mentioned in our previous newsletter, the Scholarships website has been relaunched. Thanks go to colleagues in BSDS (IT Services) for collaborating with and supporting us on this project. Please take the opportunity to have a look at the various Scholarships on offer. If you are interested in information on Faculty-specific scholarships you will need to click on the top navigation bar then follow the links to your Faculty.

The design of the website also took into consideration that students will soon be able to Apply Online for scholarships.

We also have a link specifically for UNSW staff who would like to know more about administration matters surrounding scholarships. To access this information you will need to email Andrew Tucker at Andrew.tucker@unsw.edu.au with your staff number and details of your involvement in scholarships.

Feedback on the website is welcomed, so please email Andrew with your comments.

Closing dates

The closing date for the majority of First Year Scholarships was the end of September and our office has been inundated with applications. It is an extremely busy time and we aim to start disseminating applications to Selection Panels in the next few weeks.

Prizes

If you wish to nominate students for prizes the deadline for nomination for the 2006 academic year is 15 December 2006. The University publishes a list of its medal and prize-winners in the Sydney Morning Herald at the beginning of each year. The finalised list will be published on the UNSW website around the same time (January - February 2007).

For information about Prizes please contact Chummy, phone extn 53066, or email c.aluwihare@unsw.edu.au

AusAID

Judith Forder has joined our team as the AusAID Student Support Officer. Jude has a strong background in AusAID and we are very lucky to have her on board.

The AusAID team are in the midst of processing applications for S1, 2007 - to date we expect approximately 40 students, with further applications to follow next month for the new ALA award. This is an increase on 2006 and is especially encouraging, given that all Australian institutions can now accept AusAID sponsored students. For Session 1, 2007 we have received applications from a wide range of countries including Cambodia, Laos, the Maldives, Kiribati, Samoa and Fiji, as well as from our “regular” countries, such as Vietnam, Indonesia, PNG and the Philippines.

Our website is currently being updated to include information for current and prospective AusAID students with a comprehensive guide to their award and study at UNSW.
DIRECT ADMISSIONS

The Admissions Office has been in the process of reviewing and extending the current Conditional Offer arrangements for international students and has developed a suitable ‘once off’ academic conditional offer that will meet the needs of students who are applying for programs with clearly defined academic entry requirements. The new process helps facilitate the Pre Visa Assessment process from strategic markets such as China and India, as well as improving the efficiency of existing procedures, minimising double-handling and saving processing resources. It is expected that this will encourage early acceptance and better conversion rates. Ideally suited for certain undergraduate cohorts, it can also cater to postgraduate students, where defined entry requirements have been set. The offers have been trialled recently in Malaysia and have been well received by our representatives there.

Admissions staff have recently been assisting at off-shore recruitment events in India (see photo below) and Hong Kong - with future participation to take place in China, Singapore and Thailand. These activities have been further supported with the establishment of a regular admissions reporting cycle to the off-shore UNSW offices on the application status of all students from a particular region. The Admissions Office is providing a regular tailored report to enable those officers ‘on the ground’ to follow up on applicants and improve conversion numbers - essentially getting more value from every application we receive.

There has also been a number of staff movements recently and the team welcomes Dylan Kiazim, Anna Nguyen, Lynne Christians, Estel Merif and Nathan Allan - while farewelling Sargon Lazar, Gordon Chow, Sebastian Gonzalez and Carlos Garcia.

Photo below: From the New Indian Express, Julie Groth (in green) and UNSW colleagues at the recent Chennai recruitment exhibition
STUDENT SUPPORT CENTRAL continued

UAC ADMISSIONS

On time UAC applications for 2007 undergraduate admission closed on 29 September and the number of applications lodged is roughly the same as for this time last year. The next UAC closing date is 31 October. As usual, UAC preference statistics will be produced by Rebecca Kimber and distributed to Faculties at each closing date from now until December.

Recent activities for the team include Sonia Nitchell training staff at UAC for the centralised Educational Access Schemes (EAS) assessment process, rearrangement of our office space, preparation of training material for summer staff, review of processes, procedures and website information, staff training activities and managing the increasing number of enquiries in relation to undergraduate admission in 2007.

STUDENT SYSTEMS AND BUSINESS SOLUTIONS (SSABS)

UNI-WIDE TIMETABLING

A big thank you to staff in academic units for all your hard work in meeting the 22 September deadline for entering data regarding your 2007 offerings in the myUNSW Term Planning service. If you’re feeling a bit term-planned-out, you’re not alone! This deadline was a final deadline for Summer Session and Session One in order to meet our DEST reporting and publishing obligations. For Summer and Session One combined we have over 3,500 courses on the books. We understand that in some circumstances some of these offerings will need to be cancelled and in these cases you should contact the Scheduling and Academic Requirement Unit (SARU), at timetabling@unsw.edu.au to update this information, as the term planning pages will become read-only to Schools once the final timetabling requirements deadline has passed.

The final deadline for entering timetabling requirements into term planning for Session One is 6 October. Session Two offerings and timetabling requirements can be updated up until 16 March 2007.

After a long period of planning, communicating, systems implementation and data collection, the final stage of the timetabling exercise for Session One 2007 is upon us. All of the factors at play now converge to influence the final timetabling outcome. These factors include clash-free requirements (CFCCs), course scheduling requirements, staff availability constraints, teaching space considerations and a range of other (sometimes complex) factors including specialist requirements and requests.

We will be reliant on the participation of staff in Schools and Faculties to carefully review draft timetables throughout the October/November scheduling period. Following the review of draft timetables, the expectation is to have a provisional timetable released to Schools and Faculties by 17 November, with the final timetable due for release to students on 1 December in time for the commencement of Session One enrolment. For centrally timetabled courses, class records will be automatically created on NSS/myUNSW through an upload process. Schools will then have an opportunity to add to and adjust some aspects of the class records (reserve capacities, class notes, capacities, staff assignments and statuses) before enrolment.
STUDENT ADMINISTRATION AND RECORDS
(STAR)

GRADUATIONS AND DATA VERIFICATION

Potential Graduand Processing for Term 5067 (Session 2, 2006)
Potential graduand records for Session 2, 2006 have now been created. Program authorities can now review student eligibility for graduation and process status changes on NSS.

If you have students who completed requirements in Session 1 or Winter Session this year and who can be cleared for the December ceremonies, please notify the Graduations Section.

Graduation Information for students can be found at: www.graduations.unsw.edu.au. Staff enquiries regarding graduation processing should be directed to Cedric Poon on ext 58069 or email cedric.poon@unsw.edu.au.

COMMONWEALTH SUPPORT AND FEES

Denial of Services
The Denial of Services (DSI) block was placed on student accounts with outstanding debt on 18 September, 2006. The Denial of Services Block prevents access to:

- buildings and computer labs
- WebCT
- Transcripts
- Graduation
- Future course enrolment
- Receipt of examination results

The Denial of Services block appears as a Negative Service Indicator on a student’s record. Negative Service Indicators can be viewed from most NSS Panels including Student Program Plan, Customer Account and Enrolment Summary.

To view details of a student’s DSI block, click on the Negative Service Indicator that appears on the student’s record.

If a student has a Denial of Services block, advise them to access their online statement and arrange payment.

Refer students to the Commonwealth Support and Fees Section, phone 9385 8500 if they have any enquiries regarding their Denial of Services block.

Cancellation of Enrolment – Commonwealth Supported Students
A total of 12 Commonwealth Supported Students were cancelled for non-payment of their upfront Student Contributions. Five of these students have now been reinstated.
ACADEMIC PROGRESSION AND ASSESSMENTS

Withdrawal from Session 2, 2006 Courses
The last day to withdraw from Session 2 courses without Academic Penalty was 15 September. Students who now wish to withdraw are required to complete a ‘Special permission to withdraw without failure’ application. These are available from Student Central.

Assessment Schedule for Session 2, 2006
The Session 2, 2006 Assessment Schedule has now been finalised. Details, including dates and times of Assessment Review Group meetings will be sent to Program Authorities, Course Authorities and Presiding Members in the next few weeks.

The main Assessments dates (Kensington and COFA) are:

- Tue 31 Oct: Grade Rosters generated
- Tue 28 Nov: Examinations end
- Thu 30 Nov: 6pm DEADLINE for electronic submission of results by Eccles
- Fri 1 Dec: 9am DEADLINE for online entry of results on to Grade Rosters
- Tue 5 – Thu 7 Dec: Faculty Assessment Review Group Meetings
- Fri 8 Dec: 9am OFFICIAL RELEASE OF RESULTS - All students will receive a result email in their student email account
- Mon 11 Dec: 9am Results and provisional Academic Standing available on myUNSW
- Wed 13 Dec: 5pm DEADLINE for submission of University Medal Recommendation forms.

For enquiries regarding Session 2 assessments, please contact Kaaren Walker-Smith on extn 51487 or email k.walker-smith@unsw.edu.au

EXAMINATIONS AND ENROLMENT

Examinations
The provisional end of session examination timetable for Semester 2, 2006 was released on Tuesday 3 October. Please remind Course Convenors they can now check scheduling/materials and other details for all exams they are running through the personalised online examination timetable on myUNSW.

The final timetable will be published on Tuesday, 24 October.

It is a matter of concern that proof reading of examination papers remains an issue, with many papers requiring amendment. The co-operation of Schools and Faculties is sought in relation to maintaining academic standards through appropriate proof reading of examination papers.

For information about examinations or timetabling please contact Grant Walter on extn 53086 or g.walter@unsw.edu.au
Enrolment
Enrolment for Summer Session 2007 will open on Monday 16 October 2006. Information for students regarding Summer Session will shortly be available at https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/academiclife/enrolment/SummerSemesterOverview.html

Details about enrolment for Semesters 1 and 2, 2007 will be available soon.

For information about enrolment please contact Grant Walter extn 53086 or g.walter@unsw.edu.au

Important dates to note
16 October – Summer 2007 enrolment starts
24 October - final exam timetable will be published on myUNSW

COUNSELLING SERVICE AND

Dramatic increases in university students experiencing mental health problems: An international phenomenon

In recent times there has been considerable reporting from university counselling services (in Australia, New Zealand and overseas) about a noticeable rise in serious mental health issues amongst university cohorts.

What about the mental health of students at UNSW? From the ABS figures it can be estimated that from a student base of say 42,000 almost 7,500 students would suffer from a mental health issue in any one year.

Here at UNSW, the Counselling Service conducted a Student Wellbeing Survey of 2,800 students in 2003. This survey found that 26.2% of students scored in the moderately to extremely depressed range (8% were extremely depressed). Rates of depression were particularly high for the male students who completed the survey. A score of moderate to extremely severe for anxiety was found for 28.4% of the students surveyed. Students were also likely to demonstrate high levels of stress, with scores of moderate to extreme stress obtained by 18.7% of those surveyed.

During January to July 2006 the Counselling Service statistics show that 29% of our student clients were assessed as having symptoms of depression and 34.6% demonstrated symptoms of anxiety. Students presenting to the Counselling Service have reported being stressed or worried and these students amounted to nearly 21% of those participating on 1-1 counselling.

The Service is currently running eight concurrent therapy workshops over Weeks 6 - 13 for the benefit of anxious students. There are approximately 80 students enrolled in these groups for ‘Conquering Fear and Anxiety’. Relaxation and meditation classes are being run on a weekly basis and ‘ Managing Stress’ and ‘Time and Task Management’ were offered in Week 6.

Demand for 1-1 counselling is increasing as the Session progresses and most resources within the team are now focussing on meeting this demand.
STUDENT SERVICES REFERENCE GROUP

On Tuesday 9 October, UNSW Students have been invited to attend an open meeting of the Student Services Reference Group. Professor Richard Henry, DVC (Academic) will address the meeting. Students will be invited to raise questions and make comments about the UNSW student experience. The aims of the SSRG are:

- to promote dialogue with students around the student experience at UNSW and to identify unmet needs for student support
- to promote dialogue with students around their experience of student support initiatives, events and services offered at UNSW
- to promote dialogue with students about UNSW policies, procedures etc that carry a potential to impact on the student experience and/or student support
- to enhance student support across the student life cycle at UNSW

Further information on the group is available on the web at: https://my.unsw.edu.au/student/staff/ssrg/home.html or by emailing ssrg@unsw.edu.au

STUDENT ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES, UNSW@ADFA

Staffing News

After months of continuing staff changes, things have stabilised and we only have one new member of staff to welcome this month. Rong Wang joined SAS on Monday 25 September as a Client Service Officer and has been appointed for a 10 month period to fill the vacancy created by Karen Lees' secondment to the School of Business. Welcome to the team Rong!

Graduation Week at ADFA

Planning has begun for ‘Graduation Week’ at ADFA. The 2006 Degree Conferring Ceremonies will be held on Wednesday, 13 December. The Business, Humanities and Social Sciences ceremony will commence at 10.30am and the Engineering, Science and Technology ceremony at 2.30pm. As many other activities involving Defence and University staff are held during Graduation Week at ADFA - including Prizes and Awards Night and the Graduation Parade - joint coordination meetings are utilised to plan these events.

Staff Development and Training

Gerard Braddon, Head of the ESOS Management Unit, will be travelling to Canberra on 6 October to deliver an information session on ESOS compliance for staff at UNSW@ADFA.

All SAS staff will participate in cultural diversity training on Monday 30 October.