Research School of Humanities and the Arts

Change proposal- staff discussion

Professor Howard Morphy, Director, RSHA

Monday 24 July, 2.00-4.00pm in the Conference Room, 1.02, (lower ground floor), Sir Roland Wilson Building

Points of clarification

The purpose of today’s meeting is to clarify anything that is not clear in the document and to discuss initial responses, however it is very important that staff make written submissions to be represented to the Steering committee (SC)

I would like to note a point of clarification in the change proposal, both SCI and SLS will all be disestablished to create a new School.

There was a very constructive meeting held yesterday with students and no major issues came up.

The first meeting of the SC took place on Monday 22 July.

This meeting was opened for comments.

Questions

1. Membership of the SC. Why is SCI not represented?

Q 1. Supplementary- Why not have all HOS on the SC as it will be hard not to represent your own School interests?

Membership of the Steering Committee is not representational and members are not representing their individual School or any specific element of the College. The Heads of Schools in RSHA jointly agreed on the 2 nominees for the Steering Committee. Along with the School of Cultural Inquiry the draft document also includes a proposal to disestablish the Interdisciplinary Humanities Group and this School is also not included on the Steering Committee.

2. On Page 2, Item 1, there is a short paragraph stating there will be no changes to educational offerings. Surely you want changes?
Curriculum renewal is an ongoing process and a number of initiatives are underway that are not related to this process; for example, the current review of the BA and the recent disestablishment of the Bachelor of Digital Arts due to the changing nature of that discipline.

The outcome of this change process will not see the disestablishment of any program. Any changes to educational offerings as part of this process will be administrative and not content based and students will not see any academic difference.

3. Realignment of the research Centres – 3 points for clarification:
   - Item 2, number 3, states that disestablishment of IHUG will occur with co-location “wherever possible? What does this mean for the Centres and what if there is no suitable AOU fit?
   - Refer page 10 and second last sentence regarding alignment to a particular discipline? What is meant by this statement for an interdisciplinary cluster and how can the Centres be aligned to only one discipline cluster?
   - Clarification sought that if an AOU requires at least 20 FTE and UG and graduate teaching, the current IHUG Centres will not qualify as AOU’s?

Q3. Supplementary It was noted that no Humanities group globally sits within a discipline department and it is important that the HRC continues to be visible as an independent Centre.

The consultation period is an opportunity for staff to comment and provide possible solutions.

4. What is the temporal framework of changes to educational offerings?

The outcome of this change process will not see the disestablishment of any program. Any changes to educational offerings as part of this process will be administrative and not content based and students will not see any academic difference.

5. How many students attended the student forum yesterday? Where did they come from and what questions did they ask?

The student representative present indicated 23 students attended. See “RSHA Change Student Forum”.

6. Comment made regarding the load for Literary Studies as outlined in the document when other Schools have also lost load and this might appear to suggest SCI were alone in a drop in load. There was also a question about drop in load related to the cancellation of courses in Gender, Drama and Film and that this should be qualified in the document.

This change process is not related to this. The intention is to make disciplines more visible and more attractive to students in order to increase load and grow programs.

7. Has the VC already approved this document and these changes?
The VC has approved the consultation process.

8. **Page 4 – Please clarify the statement regarding possible impact on changes in responsibility.**

As an example, if there is a larger School created the HOS will have greater responsibility than they might currently have. In the case of the administrative staff there may be different roles. There may be a structure which is not obvious yet and which will require different positions than are in the current Schools.

9. **With the disestablishment of IHUG, are you hoping for submissions from the Centres as to where they would like to be located?**

The consultation period is an opportunity for staff to comment.

10. **How can the Digital Humanities Hub indicate one particular AOU location when its members have different disciplinary alignments? Is there a suggestion that the DHH may be split between Schools?**

The consultation period is an opportunity for staff to comment.

11. **On Page 5 and the statement regarding enrolments, are you suggesting that Literature has not been made visible by the College?**

No the document is not saying that the area has not been doing a good job. The intention is to make disciplines more visible and more attractive to students in order to increase load and grow programs.

12. **The nomenclature of the new Schools is going to be very important. At what point are the names going to be determined and at what point should staff comment?**

Now is a good time for staff to provide their comments and proposals.

13. **What is intended by the suggested name School of Languages and Literature?**

This is what we are seeking from staff and now is the time to provide this feedback. It may mean broader relationships between European Languages and the English or Australian language, with lexicography and digital humanities relationships combined with current strengths in languages and literatures.

14. **Why has the term “younger” staff been used in the case of Art History when the staff are not young? Surely a more correct term would have been ECA?**
This reflects on the Universities commitment to staff renewal. The further context is that the paper is saying there is an opportunity to looking forward to what a larger unit could do.

15. The suggestion that no SCI ARC grants have been submitted is not due to teaching load but more in relation to the part time nature of staff or the unsuitability of individual research interests. The claim is inaccurate and offensive and should be changed in the document.

Noted.

16. How much ERA publication data is available, in order to see where other Schools are publishing and how much synergies currently exist? This would assist the discussion for possible re-alignment?

The data could be provided to the HOS for their information. As an example the data for Art Theory (SOA) and Art History (SCI) are already in the one FOR code.

17. Is SLS being disestablished?

Yes, it is true that the School of Cultural Inquiry and School of Language Studies will not exist as separate entities. They will be replaced with a new School which is proposed to be named the School of Languages and Literature.

18. In reference to page 3 which says that Art History is a small group of staff with 4FTE, it should be noted that 4FTE is a large group of staff in comparison to some other areas.

This reference was made in reference to Art Theory and it is a relative statement. Creating critical mass in clusters gives more possibilities to manage exigencies and hence provide staffing advantages to that area. It also helps to highlight the strengths that the ANU has in certain disciplines.

19. We need a more constructive discussion regarding the meaning of interdisciplinarity and what is the future vision for interdisciplinary studies in the four AOU's? We have established reputations in teaching and research for interdisciplinary studies and we should consider what it would mean for the Centres to align within discipline units. The realities of ERA force us to consider our discipline strengths and alignments however we need to discuss how to keep our interdisciplinary experience alive and strong. What is the best way to do this?

Noted. Some staff at the meeting noted that many areas with Schools are interdisciplinary and an example of this is Classics.

20. The document states that the rationalisation of languages and literature into a single School will create economies of scale in supervision and teaching opportunities. How can the amalgamation of colleagues with different skills contribute to this? Can you comment on this view?

HDR supervision panels are already interdisciplinary. In terms of doctoral supervision we need to be operating in some ways outside our areas of expertise and the very fact they we can combine people with disparate expertise means there is no reason at all why we can't create even more
opportunities by combining more fields of interest. A larger framework will continue to grow these opportunities. In addition while there are many reasons why people do not apply to the ARC it is incredibly important that they do and having more colleagues at close hand to mentor and support this will help.

21. **The VC said he gave funding to CASS for Art. Will this be revisited?**

   No. This commitment will continue.

22. **In terms of the 17 people in IHUG can you detail the salaries of those people?**

   No. The salary sources are very varied. For example there are two people in the Freilich Foundation funded from endowment funds.

23. **Recurrent funding - is it possible to have the same table showing what is funded by the block grant etc.?**

   Yes, it is available on the CASS web site. 

24. **What are the implications for the future of these changes? If the academic staff profile of a School increases what will it mean for the sessional budget of languages? For example extra academic staff in general does not mean there will be an increase of staff with the required skills to teach a specific language and a sessional budget will still be required.**

   The sessional budget will not be affected by this proposal however assurance cannot be provided beyond this as it is subject to the budget provided each year.

25. **Is SRE funding ceasing?**

   No. Funding is based on the university research performance. Any changes to SRE funding would only be due to government funding changes.