Minutes for HDR subcommittee meeting on Monday 26 March 2015

Present: Sharon Bessell, Tim Legrand, Premachandra, Bingqin Li, Keith Barney, Thu Roberts, Megan Poore and Belinda Thompson

1. Director update

- The formation of HDR committee under Crawford research committee: in the past, the research committee was dominated by HDR issues. Also, in line with the strategic direction of research within the school and the increasing difficulty of financial situation, it is important to ensure HDR issues are attended

  The student representative, Belinda Thompson, raised a concern over the split of HDR and research committee as there is strong linkage between the two, therefore HDR students may be marginalised. Research Director assured that the school is providing adequate support to HDR students so there is no negative impacts on students.

- Update on the compulsory coursework being introduced to HDR program: a minimum of 12 units of coursework will be part of PhD programs. The College is working hard on it so compulsory courses are ready for 2016. There is no much work for Crawford, with the exception of NSC and RE&D, because we already have coursework components in our PhD program. We can learn from other schools so our school can send our students to other schools. The Dean encourages cooperation within schools so this gives us an opportunity to look at their courses and get their students to our courses.

2. HDR convenors give a brief overview of respective programs

- **Chandra**: IDEC PhD program has no problem with coursework requirements as it is well-established. Economics is viewed differently as it has part A and B (research). entry requirements compatible with other areas. Research component has to made compulsory but econ needs strong mathematical components. If we introduce 20% research component then we can't get students from other Uni with good undergrad results to enter PhD program. Increase IELTS from 6.5 to 7. CBE efforts to increase to 7 but CAP did not join in as no response to that.

- **Keith**: the program overview and coursework requirements are now with RE&D program director – Frank Jotzo. RE&D plans to establish a course in research

methods; research proposal and research projects. There will be coordination with POGO regarding research design course but so far no discussion this year. MP: satisfactory/un to no one can kick you out of program except your supervisor.

- **Bingqin**: last year POGO set up a formal recruitment criteria, which requires an average of 75% for an equivalent Australian master degree and a substantial thesis proposal. Currently PhD students are required to take POGO8196 Research Design and POLS8004 Research Methods. POGO8196 teaches basic skills toward how to write a PhD. One of the issues is that Horiuchi cannot teach next year. If POGO plans to expand this course, POGO can take an opportunity to work with READ. A POGO PhD student needs to be at least have one POGO academic staff so POGO department can help students create network and talk to academic staff.

- **Tim**: NSC's HDR program is quite rudimentary at the moment. There is no coursework requirement. The program requires a thesis proposal review, research plan and annual progress reports. NSC is very keen to put something together for the next year. At this stage, NSC began to encourage PhD students to take Research Methods POGO8196 or audit other courses. Given that NSC only has 3-4 PhD students each year, it is more sensible to ask PhD students to take existing courses therefore NSC does not plan to develop its own courses.

3. Milestone reports

Currently HDR convenors do not need to endorse milestone reports which is efficient. In few cases, critical issues emerges in the report. Thus if there is a serious issue, convenors will get involved as a message that we take it seriously. Additionally, by doing so, we can give adequate support they need. It is predicted that there will be only a small number of cases per year that committee needs to give support. It is possible to establish a subcommittee to look at milestone.

4. Discussion of new approach to funding approval

Last year a guideline was developed for funding of conferences and fieldwork across the school. There is no clear amount that each student is entitled. As an estimate, each student can apply for $7000 over their candidature. However, as budget changes annually and school has budget issues at the moment, this amount cannot be guaranteed.

At the moment, funding applications go to research director for consideration. Before this, respective supervisors are required to sign off on the applications. In fact, some supervisors discuss the funding applications with their students

thoroughly, however some do not and sign off on everything. As Research Director does not have skill sets to assess application alone, it is suggested that conference/fieldwork funding applications should be assessed by HDR committee collectively. Documents/paperwork will be prepared by Thu. The committee will publish the dates of committee meetings and approvals can be made pending of approval of conference or human ethics approval. Each student is encouraged to apply for one conference which is relevant to their thesis and potential for publications.

PhD scholars will be asked to submit their applications two months in advance (exception can be made). There are concerns that some conferences are profit-making and some are genuine so distinction should be made. For this matter, HERDC conference requirements should be used as a guideline.

5. Report on induction day for new PhD students

Last week induction was organised to provide new PhD students with information about PhD programs, admin basics and funding. People form OHS, CartogGIS, Statistical Consult Units, student panel.

6. Nomination of Crawford students for the JG Crawford Prize

The committee ranked four candidates as follows:

1. Cody Hsiao
2. Ben Wong
3. Kien Nguyen
4. Patrick Carvalho

The committee nominated Cody and Ben to the CAP college level.

On a related business, it is suggested that Crawford school should develop a process or criteria for the JG Crawford Prize in the future.

7. Other business

Tim raised a concern regarding space issue at NSC as PhD students' offices have no windows. Phd students should get a space where they have natural lights. NSC is

unsure where it fits in the school, however the Research Director said that this is beyond this committee mandate.

8. Action items:

- Megan redrafts the funding guideline
- Megan looks into the satisfactory/unsatisfactory requirements for POGO students. If a student receives an unsatisfactory result, what is the policy on this?
- Chandra sends the committee admission criteria for IDEC PhD program
- Sharon writes to Renee McKibbin if we agree to draft a message regarding the missing of qualitative unit at central University and whether CAP should make a suggestion to Margaret Harding