



Southern Cross Business School 2011 Annual Report

Overview

The year was one of renewal for the Business School after a merging of the Graduate College of Management and School of Commerce and Management. A new management structure was devised and implemented and the School quickly started work on integrating many of its operations and activities. Curriculum refreshment was a central activity with the implementation of the Bachelor of Business (BBus) review outcomes and the first stage of the Masters review. The research agenda focused on clarifying the School's research strengths and a determination to focus on four research nodes; Entrepreneurship/Enterprise Development, Information Technology and Information Systems, Hr/Workforce and Marketing. This approach will further enhance the research performance of the School which in 2011 saw a continued increase in publication output, in excess of \$1M in research funds being secured from external sources and a continued large number of doctoral completions from PhD and DBA programs. Across the administration area the School started to make appropriate changes to facilitate and stream-line its management and administration processes to ensure clear lines of responsibility and improve student and broader stakeholder support.

Goal 1: We will provide inspirational learning experiences for our students through high quality teaching engaged with scholarship.

To pursue this goal the School has implemented an approach consistent with AACSB Assurance of Learning frameworks that aim to ensure that outcomes achieved by the School reflect its mission and that mechanism are implemented that ensure outcomes are achieved. The primary implication of this approach is that student learning becomes the focus of unit, major and course development and quality assurance processes and that evidence based practices are implemented.

Associated with this philosophy work continued on the implementation of the 2010 Bachelor of Business / Bachelor of Business Administration review. The new course will include a new Digital Marketing major and be compliant with AQF and industry accreditation body requirements. Industry accreditation has now been secured in the fields of accounting, marketing, human resource management, finance and management. With the BBus / BBA implementation under way the School also embarked on the first stage of the 2011 Masters Review incorporating all masters courses offered by SCBS. Review experts Professor Art Shriberg from Xavier University and Emeritus Professor Bill Caelli from QUT met with the School and course advisory committee in November as part of the process. The preliminary process resulted in several courses being moved immediately into teach out.

With the merging of the Graduate College of Management and School of Commerce and Management a new course advisory committee was also constituted and met during the year. It comprised industry representatives Dr James Cowley (Entrepreneurship), Mr Gavin Tulk (Accounting), Ms Julie Peters (Product, merchandise, supply chain management), Mr Warwick Harman (IT), Ms Emilie Emond (Marketing) and Ms Cara Bartlett (Student/Alumni). The initial group meeting has already focused on industry requirements and will make a strong contribution to the relevance of the School's programs.

A team from the School's IT group led by Ms Raina Mason were awarded an ALT Citation for their Women in Technology (WIT) Program. Raina with colleagues Mr Tim Comber and Ms Joanne Phythian's award was for successfully reaching out and empowering current and future female students to pursue Information Technology studies. A further two staff, Dr Nicola Jayne and Dr Tania von der Heidt were recognised by the Vice Chancellor's for outstanding contributions to student learning. Dr Nicola Jayne received her citation for creating a learning environment which gives students the confidence and skills to succeed in quantitative units while Dr Tania von der Heidt's citation was for taking a scholarly approach to improving learning-centred curriculum design in first year marketing. Dr Pat Gillett, Ms Elisabeth Sinnewe and Mr Jakob Trischler also undertook research focused on the PhD process and experience which resulted in a conference publication and a forthcoming journal.

Finally, an engaged group of Staff participated in the Festival of Teaching program with a presentation by Dr Bill Smart and appearances at other activities by many of the staff. The Back to School session was held using the on-line Elluminate discussion forum and appropriately titled *You are the Best Teacher: Refreshing Teaching Programs for New Programs* building on the theme of the Bachelor of Business review.

Goal 2: We will generate and disseminate research and undertake research training in key areas that have global and regional impact.

An inaugural *Research Week* was conducted in October and included a comprehensive range of symposiums, workshops, invited speakers and research related events. It culminated with the DBA symposium and was well received by Staff and Students across the School.

Four research nodes have been identified with the aim to focus and improve the Schools research performance within selected ERA codes. The nodes include Entrepreneurship/Enterprise Development, Information Technology and Information Systems, HR/Workforce and Marketing.

The School has utilised funds provided to the University under the Collaborative Research Network to develop relationships with Professor Brian Head, Program Leader, Institute for Social Science Research, The University of Queensland and Charmine Hartel, Management Cluster leader, UQ Business School as a result of the CRN. Under this arrangement the School received funding for the appointment of a Professor of management for 3 years which will be filled in 2012.

School staff were successful in obtaining research funding from the Cooperative Research Centre for Rail Innovation during the year. Project leaders included Associate Professor Michael Charles for *Future Growth Strategies* (\$90,340), Associate Professor Michelle Wallace for *Career Pathways for Rail* (\$239,896), Associate Professor Keith Sloan for *Understanding Urban Rail Travel Behaviour for Improved Patronage Forecasting* (\$253,136) and Dr Peter Vitartas for *Mobile Technology* (\$210,066).

Associate Professor Jeremy Buultjens (CI) and Amanda Shoebridge received a grant (\$27,133) from The Regional and Rural Research and Development Grants Program for the project: *Indigenous Industry, an Emerging Industry: Identifying skill gaps, career aspirations and enterprise opportunities for Indigenous Australians within the Bundjalung Nation, NSW.*

Professor Stephen Kelly and Dr Simon Wilde in association with colleagues from Gnibi Professor Adrian Miller and Mr Johnnie Aseron secured a grant (\$220,000) from HEPP for the project: *Identifying Target Markets – Indigenous Community Directed Capacity Building.*

Goal 3: We will develop a high performance culture in an environment which encourages collaboration and the free exchange of ideas.

Ensuring engagement by faculty is the key to securing a high performance culture. Through the implementation of processes consistent with AACSB accreditation, biannual planning sessions, monthly staff meetings, fortnightly management group meetings and effective delegations to department heads and deputy heads with specific responsibility for teaching & learning and research agendas, the School is developing opportunities for staff to engage, offer ideas and implement new practices. For example the School has instituted regular research meetings on each campus referred to as TAGs (Trollopean Agraphia Groups) following in the tradition of writing groups who acknowledge the prolific Victoria novelist Anthony Trollop. "TAGs" have been developed and promoted throughout the School by Dr Simon Pervan who encourages researchers to meet each week to discuss their achievements, problems and goals related to their individual research agendas with the aim of increasing output. This is supported by the 'research week' that was established in 2011 as an extension of the long running DBA colloquiums.

Similarly, in line with the view that visitors bring fresh ideas, the School hosted three Visiting Professors during the year. Finance academic Dr Bruce Costa from the School of Business Administration, University of Montana made presentations to MBA students and staff on risk-adjusted return performance of US and Australian fund managers. Professor Tim Kloppenborg, Castellini Distinguished Professor of Management from Xavier University in the USA made presentations on leadership and operations management and research and Associate Professor Sameer Deshpande from the Centre for Socially Responsible Marketing at the University of Lethbridge presented a workshop *When Education isn't Enough: Applying Social Marketing to Change Behaviour.*

Finally the School has developed and is now implementing a formal unit development and review process that will ensure a team based approach to unit development and review achieves consistent high quality outcomes.

Goal 4: We will enhance our performance in a sustainable and responsible manner

Sustainability includes both financial and non-financial elements. The School has been focused on a review / rationalisation of units and courses, modes of delivery, locations and content quality to ensure we focus our resources to achieve the best possible outcomes for students. It has also established a review of administrative functions and activities and established a set of research nodes that will bring a focus to our research activities. The impact of these changes in future years will be improved student feedback and outcomes, increased research performance and more proactive and stakeholder focused administration.

Further performance gains are expected from ongoing utilisation of technology, a greater focus on the key goals of the university and school and a recognition of the tight financial environment. Efficiency and effectiveness across all operations is imperative.

Major projects and/or new initiatives

In 2011 the School identified its top 10 priorities for 2012 as being:

1. Implementation of the outcomes of the BBus / BBA review
2. Finalization of the Masters review and academic board approval supporting implementation in 2013
3. Repositioning and re-launch of the DBA
4. Securing AACSB pre-accreditation
5. Implementation of a School wide teaching and learning delivery model and associated quality management processes
6. Implementation of a research and research training support and incentive framework including establishment of a School oriented research centre
7. Development and implementation of a 5 year marketing and business development plan including the establishment of a clear brand statement and market position
8. Completion of a School review following university guidelines
9. Reconfiguring administration teams and functions to focus on stakeholder support and proactive service
10. Implementation of changes to commercial programs focusing on continuance / establishment of financially significant and academically sound partnerships and foreclosure of marginal relationships.

Staff Achievements/awards

Dr Michael Charles was promoted to Associate Professor.

School appointments included Dr Patrick Gillett, Dr Michael Kortt, Dr Scott Niblock, Dr William Smart, Dr Albert Wijeweera and Dr Simon Wilde

Dr Michael Kortt received the Southern Cross Business School Outstanding Early Career Research Award.

Dr Scott Niblock had his doctorate confirmed and was awarded a “Best Paper in Session” for his conference paper “*Do dynamic linkages exist among European carbon markets?*” which was co-authored by Dr Jennifer Harrison.

Mr Stephen Rowe was invited and sponsored by Blackboard to deliver presentations to Blackboard Collaborate Forums in Hong Kong and Melbourne and he also delivered online training and presentations for Swinburne University and University of Western Sydney. Swinburne and UWS academics have been given access to the weekly Friday Blackboard Collaborate “Community of Practice” “Drop-In” online sessions facilitated by Steven Rowe and Toni Ledgerwood.

Teaching Awards

Six academics were recognised in the School’s inaugural excellence in teaching awards with a further six staff receiving highly commended certificates for their efforts.

Recipients of the teaching awards included: Dr James Cowley for doctoral student supervision, Dr Dave Arthur for course development, Ms Sue Vinnicombe for positive student experience, Dr Xiang Gao for transitioning students into University, Ms Elisabeth Sinnewe for innovative teaching and Dr Graham Cooper for supporting student learning.

Certificates of recognition for highly commended teaching were also presented to: Mr Trevor Davey, Dr Tania von der Heidt and Sue Livotto for creating positive student experiences, Dr Pat Gillett and Mr Scott Niblock for innovative teaching and Dr Don McMurray for supporting student learning.