SUBMISSION TO SEG CURRICULUM AND COURSE PLANNING COMMITTEE
16 October 2013
REPORT ON THE FACULTY CURRICULUM RENWAL PILOTS
Authors: Simon Barrie, Adam Bridgeman, Carole Cusack, Leanne Piggott
Authorisation: Marie Carroll, DVC Academic Affairs

Recommendation
That SEG CCPC considers the reports on the remaining three Curriculum Renewal pilots and the Curriculum Working Party’s recommendations arising from these pilots for the CCPC Curriculum Renewal process.

Background
As part of the curriculum renewal work of the Curriculum and Course Planning Committee (CCPC) of SEG, four faculties agreed to pilot an aspect of the University’s Curriculum Renewal principles as part of the faculty’s existing curriculum renewal activities.

The four faculties piloted different elements of the Curriculum Renewal Principles previously endorsed by SEG, and one faculty piloted the reporting process:

1. The pilot in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences was focused on Principle 4 from the CCPC Guidelines, *Ensure pathways and coherence*, through the faculty’s ‘Refocusing the Majors’ initiative:

   *Principle 4: The curriculum renewal process should support current and prospective students in more clearly identifying pathways into, through, between and beyond degrees and support staff in ensuring degree program coherence, and the University in articulating a clear and rational structure to its degree offerings. (Ensure pathways and coherence)*

2. The pilot in the Faculty of Science was focused on Principle 2 from the CCPC Guidelines: Embed Engaged Enquiry, with a particular focus on embedding research-enriched learning and teaching, to develop graduate attributes.

   *Principle 2: The curriculum renewal process should support faculties in being confident that their degree program curricula are aligned with the University’s strategic directions. In particular it should support the embedding in disciplinary curricula of ‘Engaged Enquiry’ as a Sydney signature learning experience using research-enhanced and community-engaged learning and teaching, which facilitates the development of the ‘Sydney Graduate Attributes’ by our students. (Embed Engaged Enquiry to foster graduate attributes)*

3. The pilot in the University of Sydney Business School was also focused on Principle 2 from the CCPC Guidelines: Embed Engaged Enquiry, but with a particular focus on Community Engaged Learning and Teaching (as Work Integrated Learning and Internships), to develop graduate attributes.

4. The pilot in the School of Nursing and Midwifery focused on reporting, in particular on the faculty’s approach to curriculum renewal.

The School of Nursing and Midwifery previously reported to CCPC on its curriculum renewal work in 2012. The reports on the remaining three pilots have now been provided by the other faculties and are attached. A summary developed from the previous Nursing and Midwifery report is also attached and the report is available as a resource on the ITL’s Curriculum Renewal website.

In reporting on the pilots faculties were reminded that the CCPC Principles for Curriculum Renewal (available at http://www.itl.usyd.edu.au/projects/curriculumrenewal/), note that reports on curriculum renewal should be supported by data. For the specific purpose of the pilots, faculties were invited to comment on:
1. The processes used to achieve curriculum renewal in the faculty
2. How the curriculum renewal process engaged staff and students in the faculty
3. What data the curriculum renewal process has drawn on
4. The curriculum renewal outcomes from the faculty’s focus on the selected CCPC principle
5. Any recommendations for curriculum development in the faculty that have resulted.

The three remaining faculty reports are attached for CCPC.

Key issues from the pilots and introductory phase of Faculty-led Curriculum Renewal process

Each of the reports includes recommendations for curriculum renewal in the faculty. The following issues are worth noting in relation to curriculum renewal at the University in general:

1. There is extensive curriculum renewal occurring in Faculties, however this is rarely visible to the Senior Executive Group or the broader university community except through reports such as the CCPC curriculum renewal pilot reports. In some cases this work is outstanding, as seen in the two faculties (Nursing and Midwifery and Pharmacy) recognised for the excellence of their curriculum renewal in this year's Vice Chancellors awards. The Curriculum renewal process should encourage further dissemination of curriculum renewal practices, expertise, and outcomes to support curriculum development in other faculties.

2. In some faculties curriculum renewal is focused on updating the curriculum of a single degree, often with a driver of meeting external constraints (accreditation, markets, accountability), but in other faculties it occurs as a series of diverse curriculum development initiatives that share a common pedagogical enhancement goal, across several degrees in a faculty. Both approaches are effective and the Curriculum Renewal process should support both.

3. The CCPC Principles align well with faculties’ actual priorities and provide a range of opportunities for faculties to address university priorities in their existing reviews. During the pilots there were no faculty priorities that were discussed with Curriculum Working Party members that were unable to be accommodated within the existing CCPC principles. However these need for these priorities to be reviewed annually to ensure they encompass emerging faculty, university and national priorities. Two issues currently emerging in faculty planning are ‘cost effective pedagogies’ and ‘program level standards based assessment’. Both priorities are accommodated within the existing priorities. CCPC is invited to suggest any additional priorities for inclusion in the 2014 priorities.

4. There is more work to be done in building engagement with curriculum renewal for Engaged Enquiry across the University. However, at a local level in many faculties, there is a growing and in some cases, well developed, understanding by those leading curriculum and teaching renewal of the meaning of Engaged Enquiry. For teachers this is primarily in the form of an understanding of how research-enriched and community-engaged teaching manifest in teaching and curriculum in their discipline context. It is a priority for the CCPC Curriculum renewal process to build greater awareness, particularly amongst senior faculty leaders, of engaged enquiry and the working party has proposed that addressing the first CCPC principle (Implement Engaged enquiry to foster graduate attributes) is a mandatory requirement for all 2014-15 reviews.

5. There is a need in many faculties for additional data, in the form of more coherent, accessible ‘curriculum mapping data’, to support curriculum review and planning. While important, it was noted in in the faculty reports and discussion, that the provision of curriculum mapping data was only the starting point. Faculties also need mechanisms to meaningfully engage teaching teams with this data if it is to inform curriculum renewal, rather than simply facilitating external accountability reporting. Faculties are making use of student experience data to inform curriculum renewal, and making some use of student learning outcomes and student performance proxies (progression, retention and assessment results). Faculties are not routinely making use of data on infrastructure or teaching and curriculum delivery costs as part of curriculum renewal. The CCPC Curriculum renewal process should ensure reviews draw on appropriate data.
6. There are examples of innovative curriculum renewal making good use of existing traditional curriculum ‘structures’ and ‘systems’, for example using a traditional unit of study shell to house new integrative learning experiences and innovative community engaged learning activities. During curriculum discussions there were often perceived ‘barriers’ to innovation reported. These often reflected local faculty ‘practices’ rather than actual university policy barriers (e.g. Assessment). However, the CCPC Curriculum renewal process should ensure that through CCPC, the Academic Board, SEG committees, and those responsible for the design of university administration systems (e.g. Sydney Student) are advised of any curriculum limitations imposed by current policy and practice.

7. Effective and engaged senior faculty leadership of curriculum renewal, as well as the development of local expertise and capacity, is essential to the support of curriculum renewal. Building cross-university understanding of, and engagement with, the institutional curriculum renewal strategy is required. Building productive and explicit synergies with other university processes, particularly Academic Board reviews, is required. Allocating resources to support curriculum renewal and explicitly allocating time in senior academics’ and managers’ workloads for curriculum renewal supported effective renewal.

8. Establishing effective faculty curriculum governance mechanisms and staff engagement is key to sustainable curriculum renewal. The Curriculum Renewal Process should encourage faculties to address this neglected issue.

9. Support for planning, implementing and reporting Faculty-led curriculum renewal can be provided through the Curriculum Working Party and the Education Portfolio and new networks of Curriculum Scholars in faculties. The faculties’ schedules of proposed reviews are essential to allow coordination and timely provision of this support. A website has been developed with resources and step-by-step guidelines to support faculty engagement with the process. A member of the Curriculum working party will be assigned to provide liaison for each faculty curriculum review that CCPC has been advised of through the faculty 2014-15 review schedules.

(Faculty Pilot reports attached)

******