Development of School Teaching and Learning Plan

The School has undertaken 2 major initiatives in the area in 2006

1) Curriculum Mapping

As a result of the SISTM restructure and the market research that was conducted as a part of our report to the then Dean (Greg Whittred), the School identified the need to reorient our undergraduate course offerings. A curriculum group was established (Deborah Bunker (Chair): Ken Stevens, Christine Van Toorn, Fletcher Cole, Lesley Land, Greg Stephens) and over a period of six months the group’s recommendations were put to, and accepted by a number of School Advisory meetings.

The Faculty of Commerce and Economics have been widely consulted via the Standing and Education Committee structures. The School of Computing Science and Engineering were consulted at 2 separate meetings with senior management (March 2006) and with the School at large (March 2006).

The SISTM Industry Advisory Group has also been extensively consulted and has offered advice on content and marketing issues.

The rationale behind the decisions of the curriculum group is as follows.

1. Re-orientation of the SISTM BCom curriculum to reflect a Business Information Systems focus and alignment with the Faculty.
2. SISTM BCom curriculum re-orientation that reflects current and future changes in IS jobs in industry.
3. No additional number of course offerings due to small staff numbers in the immediate future.
4. The ability to use this curriculum re-orientation to provide a core which reflects IS professional core competencies.
5. The provision of a number of training paths for our majors by allowing combinations of INFS courses and other School’s courses with this core.
6. Minimisation of program changes to the BSc due to the effect on the BSc (BIT)
7. Minimisation of program changes to facilitate the University and FCE approval processes.
8. Business Information Systems to be a “sample” for the rest of the curriculum (including BSc) offering a) an overview of our degree programs b) streamed to accommodate students with differing requirements (looking at differences between BCom and BSc for instruction and marketing purposes) and: c) examples of possible career paths to students considering INFS as a major or minor.
9. Entry to our major (waiving of CIS for HSC Information Processing and Technology students who attain a good mark).
10. Level 1 and 2 courses to be the focus of our core (major).
11. Level 3 courses to be the focus of BCom and BSc service teaching offerings to other Schools within and external to FCE.
12. Meeting of ACS and CPA requirements.
13. Consideration of curriculum mapping to UNSW graduate attributes.
14. Consideration of the IS tools and methods that are appropriate for course delivery (keeping them independent of the programs and courses offered).
15. Changes to course names to reflect the business orientation of our offerings.

The revised Information Systems programs and plans have been presented to the FCE Education and Standing Committees. They reflect minimal changes to the Information Systems specialisation within these plans and programs and have no impact on their overall structure. Existing SISTM courses will be maintained (with modified course names/numbers, handbook entries and slightly modified content).

As a result of this process the curriculum group is now finalizing course details while entering into a formal curriculum mapping process with the FCE Educational Development Unit. The finalised curriculum (with detailed course content) will be referred to student representatives (such as BITSA) to fine-tune course content, delivery and learning outcomes, as they impact students on a day-to-day basis. There will also be close consultation with the Australian Computing Society (ACS) in order to maintain existing accreditation of courses.

2) Long term Workload Planning

As a direct result of the School restructure in late 2005 a decision was made by the School to develop a 3 year rolling plan for course workload allocation. The loss of over 1/3 of SISTM teaching staff meant new and innovative ways to resolve workload issues needed to be applied to ensure consistent course quality and continuity of course development. There was also a recognition of the critical requirement to allow staff to develop their skills and subject knowledge in an environment of relative stability. The ability of staff to actively research in their domain of knowledge is also of the utmost importance (to maintain leading and competitive edge in course offerings) and so a 3 year rolling plan also allows the School to understand the impact (and benefit) of SSP allocation to the School’s long term teaching direction.