3.4 FACULTY OF LIFE AND PHYSICAL SCIENCES: PROPOSAL FOR A DIFFERENT STRUCTURE – NEW PSYCHOLOGY UNDERGRADUATE DIPLOMA – REF: F39332

By R26/11 the Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences resolved to propose that an alternative structure for Psychology in the new graduate-entry Diploma be established. The proposed alternative structure would:

- comprise third-year units to a value of 48 points leading to the completion of both the Social and Applied Psychology major offered in the Bachelor of Arts and the Neuropsychology and Cognitive Science major offered in the Bachelor of Science; and
- have 1st and 2nd year units as prerequisites (that is: PSYC1101, PSYC1102, PSYC2203 plus 3 Level 2 Psychology units).

By R45/11 the Bachelor of Science Interim Board of Studies resolved to recommend to the Board of Coursework Studies that revised structure for the graduate-entry Diploma in Psychology be approved.

Members had before them the following:

- Extract from minutes of the Bachelor of Science Interim Board of Studies meeting held on 10th November 2011
- Proposal to offer a different structure for the New Psychology undergraduate diploma
- Extract from minutes of the Faculty of Life and Physical Sciences meeting held on 18 October 2011

The proposed alternative structure, which combined the Social and Applied Psychology offered in the Arts and the Neuropsychology and Cognitive Science major offered in the Sciences, was suggested as a way forward in addressing:

- the cumbersome problem of having overlapping units at first and second year levels;
- the requirement of completing the two majors within the proposed structure for honours and postgraduate studies and ultimately for registration as a Psychologist

Members were, in principle, supportive with the establishment of an alternative pathway in Psychology, and also recognised the need to meet relevant professional accreditation requirements. At the same time, the following points were noted in the ensuing discussion:

- The rationale for proposing an alternative structure was queried. It was argued that the proposed alternative structure does not comply with the intent of the review of course structures and it was heading towards a different academic direction.
- It was clarified that opportunities for professional development has been already provided within the two-tier (3+2) structure of the New Courses.
- The academic soundness of the proposed structure, which has been designed for graduates of any degree and who might not have any background in Psychology, was questioned.
- Concerns were also expressed in regard to the duration required to complete the proposed diploma in Psychology and the appropriateness of this leading to honours.

It was unanimously agreed that the faculty be asked to reconsider its proposal, within the scope of the University’s approved structural framework. In so doing, the Faculty might consider one of the following options:

**Option 1:** That the faculty consider the development of a conversion course in Psychology, such as that available in the Master of Professional Accounting, which might also satisfy accreditation requirements. [Executive Officer’s note: “Conversion courses tend to be more eclectic in terms of applicants’ academic background, may use upward articulation as a screening mechanism and, in some cases, may make provision for applicants who do not have an undergraduate degree but who do have substantial relevant experience.”]

**Option 2:** The faculty might consider providing a “bridging pathway” (such as the Master of Professional Engineering (Preliminary) for graduates, who had not completed the equivalent of a full major in either the Social and Applied Psychology major offered in the Bachelor of Arts or the...
Neuropsychology and Cognitive Science major offered in the Bachelor of Science. The “bridging pathway” might be a pathway for students to pursue a postgraduate study in Psychology.

**Option 3:** That graduates be permitted, by way of enrolling in a second degree (either in the Bachelor of Arts or in the Bachelor of Science), to undertake a selection of units that might qualify them for professional recognition, but not necessarily for graduation.

**Option 4:** Consider whether honours would be the only pathway in which students would be able to meet both the academic requirements for pursuing a postgraduate study in Psychology and the professional accreditation requirements.

**RESOLVED – 105**

That the proposed alternative structure for the Diploma in Psychology be not accepted and that the faculty be asked to resubmit its proposal in light of the discussion and suggested options, as minuted above.
18 May 2012

Dr Kabilan Krishmasamy
Education Policy Officer
Academic Policy Services
University of Western Australia
M456

Dear Kabilan

Undergraduate Diploma in Science in Psychology

Thank you for your advice on this matter. Please can you forward our proposal to the Board of Coursework Studies for consideration.

By way of background, students are required to complete 6 years of study in Psychology (3+1+2) to be eligible for registration as a Psychologist. To be eligible for entry to the master's program in Psychology at this University, students need to have completed an Honours degree in Psychology with a grade of at least 2A. We have a number of students who decide after completing a bachelor's degree in another field that they want to pursue a career in Psychology. The current Graduate Diploma in Psychology allows students to complete the requirements of majors in Neuropsychology and Cognitive Science and Social and Applied Psychology (accredited major sequence) and by doing this satisfy eligibility requirements for entry into Honours. Entry to Honours in Psychology is competitive with over 130 applications for around 70 places (places are dependent on capacity within the School to supervise students in a given year).

Students who are currently enrolled in the Graduate Diploma in Psychology include some of our best students. We are keen to ensure that these students continue to have an opportunity to pursue a career in Psychology after completing a degree in another field and in 2011 (October and November) sought approval for a variation on the normal structure of the undergraduate diploma program to enable students to enter the Honours program. Since then several meetings have taken place to consider how the Psychology Honours entry requirements and accreditation requirements can be met within the rules of the new undergraduate diploma.
We would like to propose that the structure of the Psychology program in the Diploma in Science comprise units to a minimum value of 48 points and maximum value of 78 points as prescribed for the Neuropsychology and Cognitive Science major and in addition co-requisite units to the value of 30 points (four units at third-year level and one at second-year level). The reason for the proposed range in points is to accommodate students who may have completed components of Neuropsychology and Cognitive Science major or prescribed co-requisite units in a previous degree and therefore we believe, should not be required to complete these units or find a replacement unit.

The attached table details the units that will need to be completed as part of the Diploma.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you would like us to provide additional information.

Yours faithfully

[Signature]
Professor Andrew Page
Acting Head of School

cc: W/Prof Brendan Waddell
    Marjan Heibloem

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TABLE OF UNITS FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAM IN PSYCHOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unit Code</th>
<th>Unit Name</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Level</th>
<th>Prereq</th>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC1101</td>
<td>Psychology: Mind and Brain</td>
<td>Core</td>
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<tr>
<td>PSYC1102</td>
<td>Psychology: Behaviour in Context</td>
<td>Core</td>
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<td>Option#</td>
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<td>2 or 3</td>
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<td>Psychological Research Methods: Design and Analysis</td>
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<td>PSYC3310</td>
<td>Psychology: Specialist Research Topics</td>
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<td>PSYC3302</td>
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<td>PSYC3303</td>
<td>Psychological Science in the Modern World: Challenges and Controversies</td>
<td>Co-requisite</td>
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<td>PSYC1101, 1102, 2203</td>
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*Two of the following units at second-year level*

*Four of the optional units listed in Level 2 above, but taken at third-year level*

#Optional units are core units for neuropsychology and cognitive science major and co-requisite units for the Program