Welcome: Mark Starkey and Gary Schenk welcomed members to the first meeting of the Committee for 2010 and thanked them for volunteering. Four of the student members were continuing from 2009, so that there was a good mix of continuing and new members.

1. Terms of reference and membership composition:

Members noted the terms of reference, mode of operation, and membership composition of the Committee, viewable on the School’s public website.

In terms of the operation of the Committee, it was anticipated that discussions would be open and relatively informal.

2. Election of Chairperson and Appointment of Secretary:

Mark Starkey advised that the School would prefer that the Committee be chaired by a student member.

Following a call for nominations, foreshadowed in the agenda papers, Daniel Westlake was the sole nominee and so was declared elected unopposed. Daniel took the chair from this point of the meeting onwards.

It was agreed that Mark provide secretarial support to the Committee, backed up by Jill.

3. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held 14 December 2009:

Those who had been present at the meeting agreed that the minutes were a true reflection of the business conducted, and so the minutes were confirmed.

4. Business arising out of the minutes (not elsewhere listed in the agenda):

Transport of chemicals and biologicals

Mark reported that a guideline on the transport of biologicals had been published on the School intranet. A guideline on transport of chemicals was still under development by the School’s Occupational Health & Safety (OH&S) Coordinator, for review by the School’s OH&S Committee. (A guideline on the transport of cryogenic liquids and dry ice had been published earlier.)

OH&S Committee vacancy

Mark reported that a vacancy remained for a Chemistry Building RHD student representative on the School’s OH&S Committee. (The former representative, Wei Zhong, had completed her PhD.)

Members were informed that the Committee met approximately every 6 weeks for up to two hours at a time. Wei had reported that she had enjoyed serving on the Committee – she had learned from it and enjoyed the camaraderie. Daniel Westlake added that, as the MBS Building representative, he had found the meetings informative. Gary Schenk pointed out such service would look good on one’s CV.

Attempts had been made since December of the previous year source a representative, including an email to all RHD students.
4. Business arising out of the minutes (not elsewhere listed in the agenda): (cont’d)

OH&S Committee vacancy (cont’d)

Eligible student members of the RSCC were asked to consider undertaking the role or proposing colleague students who might be approached to undertake the role.

5. Annual SCMB Research Students’ Symposium:

Members were informed that the 2009 RSCC had fulfilled the role of steering committee in overseeing the organisation of the symposium. The student members of the Committee, assisted by other willing RHD student volunteers, had undertaken all of the various tasks to organise and run the event. Staff members of the RSCC had offered advice. It was agreed that this model should be adopted for the 2010 event.

The School’s External Relations Committee had made two suggestions regarding this year’s event:
(i) that the date be Thursday 25 November (ie, late in the week following the end of the second semester examination period, after results had been uploaded by staff); and
(ii) that the RSCC consider inviting Professor Ian Frazer, Director of the UQ Diamantina Institute for Cancer Immunology & Metabolic Medicine, to be the guest speaker.

Members endorsed both of these suggestions.

It was felt by the 2009 members present that the program format had been successful and should be retained for 2010.

In relation to other preparations that should be commenced now or in the near future, Daniel suggested that venue, catering, securing the speaker, and seeking out sponsors be attended to.

Following discussion, it was resolved –
(a) that Daniel approach Prof Frazer to be the guest speaker;
(b) that Setoh, Lucy and Bianca work on venue and catering options; and
(c) that Eve and Pegah seek sponsors.

Mark suggested that the student members of the Committee refer to the minutes of the 2009 meetings of the RSCC (available on the School web page) for how the students had approached these and other preparation tasks last year and for suggestions made for the future at the debrief meeting held in December. Additionally, resources compiled by student volunteers of previous years’ symposia were held by Jill Sheridan and were available to those working on the 2010 event.

It was further resolved –
that a full list of tasks for the symposium be compiled for the next RSCC meeting.

6. Postgraduate Students’ Society:

Xiang Setoh proposed the establishment of a SCMB Postgraduate Society that would be involved with organising social activities for the School, and also the planning of the Research Students Symposium at the end of the year. He pointed out that there are RHD students who are not formal RSCC representatives, but who are happy to contribute in some way.

Mark Starkey advised that prior to the formation of the RSCC, there had been a Postgraduate Committee that informally fulfilled the role of the RSCC as well as organising social events, etc. When the RSCC had been formed in 2009, it (the RSCC) had taken on planning the Research Students Symposium as one of its items of business. Mark suggested that a Postgraduate Society could co-exist with the RSCC, dealing with the less-formal aspects of SCMB RHD and Honours life, such as social events, and providing a pool of volunteers to assist RSCC committee members for events such as the Research Students Symposium.
6. Postgraduate Students’ Society: (cont’d)

Ross McGeary said that he could recall RHD social groups in the School in the past. He felt that they had worked well, but were usually driven by only one or two motivated students. When those students had moved on, the groups had tended to discontinue functioning. He observed that the School now had the Podium facility which lent itself as a suitable venue for social events.

Setoh invited RSCC student members to help him form a SCMB Postgraduate Students’ Society.

Mark indicated that the School would be happy to promote student social events via email lists, the printing of posters, etc and with booking venues such as the Podium and the Secret Garden and sourcing BBQs to use. He added that the 2009 RHD social group had held an Easter function, raising $274.35. These funds could be used by the proposed Postgraduate Students’ Society as seed funding to cater for an event, at which further funds could be raised. The funds were currently held by Jill Sheridan, and the School would appreciate if the proposed Society could take over responsibility for the funds.

7. RHD Discussion Forums:

Gary Schenk pointed out that forums had been held in recent years and had been well received by students. He asked student members to consider whether they would like the forums to continue in 2010 and what topics they would like to see covered.

Topics covered in the past have been:

2008:
• Career options in the University sector: Teaching and Research, Research-focused and Teaching-focused.
• Thinking outside the box: Career options in Government, Industry and commercialisation.
• Travel opportunities for research higher degree students at UQ.

2009:
• Applying for stuff: tips on preparing a CV and applications for scholarships, travel awards, fellowships and jobs.
• How (not) to present a talk.
• How (not) to present a poster.

Mark Starkey said that he believed that Melissa Brown, when she had been Chief Postgraduate Research Program Director, had felt that successful topics could be recycled about every three years, given a substantial new cohort of RHD students would be confirmed candidates by then.

Members were invited to think of topics for the next meeting.

8. Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting be held in mid to late May.

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