Meeting 1/15 10 April 2015 For general publication

Present: Miss Melinda Ashcroft (in the chair from item 3), Miss Imogen Bermingham, Miss Jessica Bilyj, Dr Abigail Downie (minutes), Miss Paige Erpf, A/Prof Stuart Kellie (in the chair up to and including Item 2), Ms Jill Sheridan, Miss Sonya Tadrowski, Mr Nick Westra van Holthe, Mr Alan Zhang.

Apologies: Miss Saiyuri Naicker, Ms Loan Nguyen, Miss Bita Sedaghat, Prof Paul Young.

1. Welcome: New members were welcomed to the committee and continuing members welcomed back. Each member introduced themself.

2. Terms of reference and membership/introductions

2.1. Terms of reference, membership and responsibilities:

Members were referred to the terms of reference and mode of operation of the committee and its membership for 2015, as set out in the agenda papers (and viewable on the School’s website). Stuart Kellie reiterated to students that one of the key roles of the committee was to facilitate two-way communication between staff and students. Stuart also advised members that they would be tasked with the responsibility of organising the SCMB Research Students Symposium which would be a major endeavour.

Abigail invited members to discuss the guidelines for committee membership. Members agreed that the chair would be responsible for making a call for agenda items and collecting apologies prior to each meeting. Members will provide a short written update (1-2 sentences or more when appropriate) in response to the chair’s call for agenda items.

In addition to a chairperson and deputy chair, members agreed to appoint a social secretary and treasurer. The social secretary will oversee running of the social functions and the treasurer will monitor committee funds and budgets. Members also agreed that project leaders would be appointed throughout the year to take ownership of specific projects or events. Project leaders will be able to request assistance from committee members and the wider RHD community.

Finally, members agreed that anyone in a leadership role (e.g. chair, deputy chair, social secretary, treasurer and project leaders) will be required to appoint tasks, set completion deadlines and follow up on outstanding tasks. In the event that the member cannot attend a committee meeting, members can nominate a representative to attend on their behalf and update the committee on the project.

2.2. Election of office bearers and provision of secretarial support:

It had been foreshadowed in the agenda papers, circulated ahead of the meeting, that the committee’s chairperson be elected from the student members. Following a call for nominations in the meeting, the committee voted Melinda Ashcroft as chairperson, Jessica Bilyj as deputy chair, Sonya Tadrowski as Treasurer and Imogen Bermingham as Social Secretary. All nominees accepted their roles.

Abigail Downie will provide secretarial support to the committee.

3. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held 30 October 2013:

The minutes, having been circulated, were taken as read and were confirmed by those who had been present at the meeting.

4. Honours and RHD applications and enrolments 2013:

Members noted the current cohort size and recent enrolment trends for the SCMB BSc Honours and RHD programs. At 31 March 2015 (first semester census date) there were 55 BSc Honours students enrolled (23 Chemistry, 19 Biochemistry & Molecular Biology, 13 Microbiology & Parasitology). This includes students who commenced in second semester 2014. This compares with 72 students at 31 March 2014 (16 CHEM, 21 BMB, 35 MICR/PARA) and 46 students at 31 March 2013 (13 CHEM, 17 BMB, 16 MICR/PARA).

At 31 March 2015 there were 159 RHD students enrolled in SCMB, compared to 151 at the same date in 2014 and 159 in 2013.
5. RHD Forums:

Members were advised that the School is committed to providing research students with professional development and skills training fora. Past events have covered topics such as: how to write a paper; how to prepare a poster; public speaking; where to from here: speakers from industry, academia, government sectors; and how to get a post-doc overseas. Abigail advised members that the 2014 RSAG had suggested they would be interested in attending workshops on “tips and tricks” for commonly used commercial software such as ChemDraw.

Members were invited to think of forum/workshop ideas for the next meeting.

6. Annual SCMB Research Students Symposium:

Abigail advised that the date tentatively set by the School for the 2015 symposium is Thursday 26th November, nothing that the School’s examiner’s meeting will be held on Wednesday 25th November. This date is equivalent to the same date in the academic calendar as symposia of recent years – i.e. after exam marking but before staff start to depart for conferences and leave. Members responded that they were happy with the proposed date.

It was recommended that an organising committee be formed as soon as possible to commence planning for the event. In recent years, the student members of the RSAG had formed the core organising committee. They have been assisted by other RHD students and were able to call on staff members of the RSAG and Jill Sheridan, the School’s Research Administrative Coordinator, for advice.

It was suggested that members refer to the minutes of meetings of the RSAG in previous years for organising hints. Resources, in the form of documents from student organisers of previous years’ symposia, were available on a School file share directory, to which all members would be given access. Members were advised of existing preparations lists and Gantt charts that have been used by previous committees to overview planning.

Members are requested to review material from previous years as preparation for the next committee meeting. At said meeting, members will begin allocating tasks for the 2015 Research Students Symposium.

Staff representatives advised members that they should finalise the date, location and plenary speaker for the symposium as soon as possible. Members inquired as to what factors should influence their decision when selecting a venue. Jessica advised that the sponsors like to be positioned near the meal area, poster boards will need to be transported to the venue and the caterers require a powered parking space. Abigail advised members that previous symposia have involved concurrent oral sessions and a combined welcome and plenary address. Members agreed to investigate venue options (taking into account location, layout and size) for the next meeting.

7. Social event for Science RHD students:

Abigail advised committee members that the 2014 RSAG ran a number of social activities for Honours and RHD students. The events were held on the third Friday afternoon of each month (as appropriate). Committee members used a small kitty of money to pre-purchase food and beverages. The costs were then re-couped via donations made by event attendees.

Members agreed to continue holding regular social functions on the third Friday of the month (to minimise clashes with research theme events) and to advertise early to promote increased attendance. Members agreed to go ahead with the previously scheduled function for Friday 17th April as UQ Security approval had already been granted. The event will be advertised by email and posters to Honours, Masters, RHDs and ECRs. Organisation tasks were agreed as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Job</th>
<th>Assigned</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Venue/Security approval</td>
<td>Jessica</td>
<td>Check with admin staff that the secret garden is booked Security approval has already been granted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising</td>
<td>Imogen</td>
<td>Prepare a poster and email advertising Posters to be displayed in lifts, tea rooms and communal areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budget &amp; Purchases</td>
<td>Imogen</td>
<td>Check current supplies and purchase additional stocks as required</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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| Setting up, Service & Pack Up | Imogen (will call for volunteers) | To request assistance from volunteers
| Members with RSA certification to facilitate service |
8. SCMB Student ambassadors

In previous years, a number of members of the RSAG volunteered to become student ambassadors, becoming involved with engagement events such as:

- Requests from high schools to supply students for short presentations and/or to participate in Q&A panels. (HoS has confirmed that the volunteers could use either a School car or School-funded taxi to get to venues such as high schools and back.)
- Help answer questions from prospective students, teachers and parents at events such as the Open Day and Titration competition (admin person usually present as well).
- Providing a statement of one’s experience as a student for promotional publication.

Student members were asked to consider volunteering to be SCMB Student Ambassadors. Names would be passed on to the School Manager, who would contact volunteers about upcoming events. Imogen Bermingham, Jessica Bilyj, Paige Erpf and Alan Zhang advised that they would like to be considered. The remaining members would consider the proposal and respond at the next meeting.

9. Next meeting:

It was agreed that meetings would be held on the second Friday of the month in the 68-305 (pending availability). The next meeting is scheduled for Friday 8th May.

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