

Meeting 2/22

12 May 2022

For general publication

ACTION

Present: Ms Kusumitha Shrinivasan (Chair), Mr Zakaria Ahmed, Miss Charne Crous (observer) Mr Vishaak Gangasandra, Mr Abdulwahad Gnawy, Mr Ben Smith (minutes), Miss Brooke Thorpe, A/Prof Nick West, Dr Simon Worrall.

Apologies: Miss Rebecca Leonard, Miss Faith McKay, Ms Phuong Nguyen, Miss Madeline Thompson, Miss Thu Vy Tran, Mr Jinyang Yang.

Absent: Nil.

1. Welcome and apologies:

Kusumitha Shrinivasan welcomed members to the second CSAG meeting of the year and noted the apologies.

2. Recognition:

An Acknowledgment of Country was spoken by the Chairperson, in recognition of the traditional owners of the land on which the meeting was taking place.

3. Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting held 8 April 2022:

The minutes of the meeting held 8 April 2022, having been circulated to group members and published on the School website with SCMB constituent students notified via email that the minutes were available, were taken as read and were confirmed by those who had been present.

4. Membership changes:

Kusumitha Shrinivasan welcomed Abdulwahad Gnawy as the postgraduate molecular biology student representative, and Charne Crous as an observer from the UQ Chemistry Club.

5. Art of Science Competition:

Ben Smith confirmed nine entries had been received for 2021. The winning entries were enclosed in the agenda.

Ben noted that advertising materials for 2022 were being prepared.

Kusumitha Shrinivasan proposed advertising through relevant student clubs to extend the reach of the Art of Science competition.

Vishaak Gangasandra noted that in previous years the Art of Science competition had been promoted through student clubs and proposed expanding to a wider audience.

Nick West clarified that the Art of Science competition should be restricted to students undertaking courses run by the School of Chemistry and Molecular Biosciences.

Kusumitha queried if it would be possible to advertise the Art of Science competition through Blackboard sites directly.

Ben answered that generally only course specific information could be posted on Blackboard sites.

Simon Worrall proposed sending the Art of Science competition information to School of Chemistry and Molecular Bioscience course coordinators who could share this in class.

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6. Other business/open discussion:

Kusumitha Shrinivasan queried if there were any changes to courses being offered in semester 2 2022.

Simon Worrall reported that the new course framework would be introduced in 2023 which would include significant changes to courses and programs.

Ben Smith added that the majority of courses being run in semester 2 2022 were only being offered in internal mode.

Vishaak Gangasandra asked if a new Head of School had been appointed for the School of Chemistry and Molecular Biosciences.

Nick West reported that Professor James De Voss had been appointed as Head of School.

Vishaak raised that it would be beneficial to have a member of the UQ Biotechnology Society attend future CSAG meetings. Vishaak noted his role in the Biotechnology Society and stated that in future years inviting a Biotechnology Society representative would be a good idea if the group did not have a representative as part of its membership.

Nick stated that if a member of the Biotechnology Society was invited to attend meetings this would be an observational role.

The group agreed that a Biotechnology Society representative should be invited to future CSAG meetings.

Brooke Thorpe shared the difficulties she has experienced finding courses that address her areas of interest. Specifically, biomimicry, and a general focus on environmental impact and sustainability.

Nick suggested that relatively niche topics of interest were ideal for Honours research projects.

Charne Crous suggested looking at courses run by the School of Earth and Environmental Sciences that may be relevant for this topic.

Zacharia Ahmed added that CHEM2054 has a module that touches upon these issues.

Abdulwahad Gnawy expressed concerns about his program structure, stating that he was seeking real work placement experience with molecular laboratory equipment and machines.

Simon assured Abdulwahad that there would be ample opportunity for placements of this nature under the Master of Molecular Biology program. Simon continued that the first two semesters of the School of Chemistry and Molecular Biosciences masters programs were primarily focused on competency training and background knowledge to ensure that students were adequately prepared for practical experience in research laboratories in later semesters.

Abdulwahad shared that international students sometimes had restrictions on the volume of research courses they can undertake without impacting their employability.

Kusumitha suggested volunteer work in a laboratory would be a possible avenue to gain laboratory experience without having this formally credited on a student's academic transcript.

Brooke queried if the Winter Research Project scheme was being run in 2022.

Ben reported that Winter Research Projects were not being run in 2022, but the 2022 Global Change Youth Research Program was being offered as an alternative.

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6. Other business/open discussion: continued

Kusumitha thanked the group members for their attendance and contributions to the meeting.

7. Next meeting:

The next meeting is scheduled for Thursday 25 August at 1pm in Building 68, Room 306.

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