ruminations

future of camden campus

On 18 February the Faculty hosted a planning day to look at the long-term future of the Camden Campus and to develop a shared vision for the next ten years. Participants included Sydney and Camden Faculty staff, key senior University staff, representatives from the Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Natural Resources (including the Plant Breeding Institute at Cobbitty), Faculty of Rural Management at Orange, School of Biological Sciences, and external stakeholders such as NSW Fisheries and NSW Agriculture.

The session was instigated to enable a diversity of stakeholders to exchange views and ideas, and commence a process for collectively planning the continuing development and management of the Camden Campus as a key research and education asset of the University of Sydney. In her introductory remarks, Professor Beryl Hesketh, Pro-Vice-Chancellor, College of Sciences and Technology, highlighted areas of current Camden campus activity, successes and potential. Professor Hesketh expressed enthusiasm for and confidence in the campus becoming an increasingly important multi-user research and education asset of the University. She emphasised that future success would require integrated planning, with an emphasis on building on existing strengths, clearly articulating Camden’s future research and education focus, and creatively building synergistic relationships for research, teaching and resourcing.

The day was beneficial and identified many issues facing the various stakeholders. A steering committee, including Professor Hesketh and senior University staff has been formed to oversee the development of a whole-of-campus plan.

2004 teaching and learning update

Associate Professor Jennie Hodgson (left) is the 2004 Chair of the Teaching and Learning Committee, replacing Associate Professor Rosanne Taylor, who has joined the Faculty Executive Committee as Associate Dean for Teaching and Learning.

A member of the Faculty for 12 years, Jennie has a background in developing successful courses in Microbiology and Animal Disease with Dr Jacqui Norris. She will now oversee the quality of the undergraduate curriculum and the student experience, building on the outstanding results from the 2003 ‘Student Course Experience Questionnaire’, which placed the Faculty of Veterinary Science among the leaders in the University.

Supporting her role is the Faculty’s Thyne Reid Teaching Innovations Unit. The unit supports Faculty teaching staff through the development of online courses and by encouraging inquiry-based learning. Heading the unit are new managers Drs Mark Krockenberger and Jacqui Norris.

Jennie will also head the American Veterinary Medical Association Management team coordinating the Faculty’s bid for accreditation. Following the success of the April 2003 AVMA evaluation the committee is now working towards the accreditation team’s final site visit in April 2005.

pathology laboratory launch

The Faculty will officially launch the new B Richards Veterinary Pathology Laboratory next week.

This new state-of-the-art facility in the Gunn Building provides a platform for the University’s veterinary pathology teaching and an investment in its future.
from the dean’s desk

Professor Chis Maxwell, Associate Dean for Staff and Students, and I were invited to the official launch of the new Veterinary School at the Wagga Wagga Campus, Charles Sturt University on 24 February. The day was a great success for Professor Jim Pratley, Dean of the Faculty of Science and Agriculture at Wagga. There is strong support for this initiative from Federal and State Governments, from the regional veterinary profession and from the local community. Perhaps more importantly, Charles Sturt University is totally committed to the initiative with the provision of considerable financial support for infrastructure development and the employment of staff. We anticipate the Veterinary School will become a ‘jewel in the crown’ for Charles Sturt.

There is no doubt there will be significant challenges ahead for this fledgling Veterinary School. Before leaving, Chis and I agreed to open a dialogue with Jim Pratley. We will be listening closely and exploring ways in which the two veterinary schools could complement one another.

Professor Paul Canfield, Acting Dean

feedback

The Faculty has received a lovely note of thanks from a delighted dog owner, Carina Johnson. Two Year 5 students on placement in Armidale, Louise Gibbs and Angela Busst, helped Boston - her 48kg malamute - receive urgent treatment from tiger snake envenomation. Carina was keen to thank the students and to also acknowledge the contribution of all the Faculty of Veterinary Science staff for instilling Louise and Angela’s ‘professionalism, knowledge and capability’.

VPHMgt February residential courses

Last month the Veterinary Public Health Management Postgraduate Program (VPHMgt) began its new semester with a series of residential sessions to introduce and reunit students. In an online distance course these residential sessions are highly valued opportunities for staff and students to meet face-to-face.

Facilitated by Ms Wendy Grusin (back, fifth from left) from the Australian Graduate School of Management at the University of NSW, new students in Leadership 1 and 2 began their first units of study and a guide to using online classrooms, VEIN and the library. Leadership 3 students were able to continue their studies and meet some new facilitators for the coming year.

A dinner was held to introduce newly enrolled students to the wider university community and the program’s sponsors.

Now in its second year, VPHMgt is proving to be a very successful course with an increased intake of students studying from overseas.

new staff

The following staff have recently joined the Faculty:

- **Dr Christine Baxter**
  Virbac Resident in Dermatology

- **Krishanti Gunaratnam**
  Technical Officer, Veterinary Anatomy & Pathology

- **Dr Lucy Shum**
  Veterinary Registrar, UVCC

- **Keith Tribe**
  Technical Officer, Animal Reproduction Unit Camden

We want your feedback and contributions. Contact the newsletter team on email vsf@vetsci.usyd.edu.au, phone Jennie Churchill, Director of the VSF on 9351 8024, or Zara Gosson, VSF Project Coordinator, on 9351 8026.