ACSPA group. Furthermore, the remaining major white collar trade union body, the Council of Australian Government Employee Organizations (CAGEO), covering nearly a quarter of a million employees of the federal government will likewise merge with the ACTU at the 1981 Congress. Other white collar and professional associations have affiliated or are in the process of affiliation. In the education sector the Australian Teachers Federation affiliated in 1979 and the Federation of College Academics, which represents academic staff employed in Colleges of Advanced Education, has recently lodged an application to affiliate[3]. This means that university academic staff are the only group of employees in the education sector not represented in the ACTU.

These changes in the membership structure of the ACTU represent a move away from a predominantly blue collar membership to a more diversified structure composed of blue collar and white collar membership. A proposal to enlarge the ACTU Executive to reflect this change in composition of membership is currently under consideration and will be debated at the 1981 Congress[4].

The Case for Affiliation

It has been pointed out in the preceding discussion that current proposals for FAUSA to affiliate with the ACTU have been the result of changes both in the attitudes of academic staff associations towards unionisation and the membership structure of the ACTU. For member associations of FAUSA to be convinced that affiliation is a positive step, sound arguments need to be advanced in favour of such a move. Such arguments have not hitherto been presented in any detail except for a few paragraphs in the FAUSA Newsletter.[5]

For FAUSA to take steps to affiliate it will be necessary for a majority of member associations to support such a move. The issues involved have not, at this stage, been widely canvassed among academic staff. At the 1980 Annual General Meeting of FAUSA some delegates reported that the issue had been voted on by little more than a handful of members. Although no reliable information has been gathered on the support for affiliation among academic staff, such support in other unions not affiliated with the ACTU is quite high. Rawson[6] found 41% of unionists whose union was not currently affiliated thought that it should be, with a further 12% undecided. He found also that one explanation of opposition to ACTU affiliation was that the ACTU was seen as being associated with the ALP. This misconception is also probably quite common among academic staff. There are no formal ties between the two bodies although many unions are affiliated to both and the fact that R. J. Hawke was president of both until recently may have contributed to the belief that the two bodies were closely associated.

Another common misconception concerning the consequences of affiliation is that the ACTU will interfere in the internal operations of FAUSA or that FAUSA may be forced to identify with views to which it is opposed.[7] Such an outcome is highly unlikely. It has not been the practice of the ACTU to involve itself in the internal affairs of individual unions since, if it did so, it would run the risk of losing that union and possibly others as affiliates. Any union has the option, at any stage, of withdrawing from the ACTU if it is not satisfied with its performance. Also, decisions reached by the ACTU tend to be identified with that body rather than with particular affiliated unions. Furthermore, ACTU decisions are not binding on individual unions. Thus FAUSA, if it were to affiliate, would in no way be obliged to support policy with which it is in disagreement.

As Martin[8] correctly points out there are little or no material benefits to be gained by individual unions as a consequence of affiliation. Activities of the ACTU tend to benefit the union movement as a whole regardless of whether or not particular unions are affiliated. Martin goes on to say that unions which are not affiliated "have for years enjoyed the fruits of the ACTU's arbitration functions without having to help meet the financial liabilities which the ACTU incurs in discharging it".[9] It could be argued that FAUSA has some moral obligation to affiliate and contribute its share to the benefits which accrue to members as a result of national wage decisions and other matters of general importance such as annual leave, long-service leave etc. This, after all, is the same argument used by FAUSA to persuade academic staff who are not members of their appropriate staff association to join. Martin[10] points out that the "charge that non-unionists are dishonourable, because they 'ride on the backs' of their unionist colleagues, is easily transferred to unaffiliated unions."

The ACTU has a range of facilities and resources to which affiliated unions have access. While FAUSA could perhaps gain some benefit from such facilities and services, this could not be seen as a major reason in favour of affiliation. The benefits here must necessarily be limited by the fact that academic salaries are determined by the Federal Government on recommendation from the Academic Salaries Tribunal, an independent tribunal. They do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Act. It is unlikely that FAUSA would enlist the assistance of the ACTU in preparing submissions to the Academic Salaries Tribunal as on recent indications[11] it is in no need of outside assistance in this respect.

It is the role of the ACTU as a powerful body with the capacity to influence government policy which provides compelling reasons for FAUSA to affiliate. The ACTU represents some 2.5 million workers in some 150 unions. It is an extremely powerful and influential organization and as such can bring considerable pressure to bear on governments, both state and federal. FAUSA is now the only organization representing the education sector which is not currently affiliated. Consequently FAUSA is denied the opportunity to influence ACTU policy on education and related matters. Such policy which might be established in these areas will be determined without input from the university sector. This may well lead to the long-term disadvantage of university staff.

It could be maintained that FAUSA has little in common with other unions in the education sector and consequently would prefer to attempt to influence government policy directly rather than through the ACTU. This, however, has not been the experience in New South Wales. UASA is affiliated with the NSW Labor Council and belongs to the education group along with other unions in the education sector. Through such representation UASA has been able to gain the support of the education group on several matters which have subsequently been endorsed by the Council and has a close working relationship with these unions. Whilst there may be some areas of disagreement between FAUSA and other unions in the education sector these differences should not be stressed at the expense of the substantial common ground between them.

It is argued, then, that it is in the long-term interest of FAUSA to affiliate with the ACTU and to gain representation on the various relevant policy-making committees. Experience in New South Wales suggests that the input from FAUSA would play a significant role in shaping ACTU policy contrary to assertions otherwise.[12] Indeed, can FAUSA afford not to contribute directly to policy which may well make an impact on future government decision making in relation to education?

The cost of affiliation is small and would make little impact on the FAUSA budget. There should also be no shortage of potential delegates with knowledge of the operations of the ACTU.

It remains now for representatives from member associations to put the relevant arguments relating to affiliation with the ACTU before their members. This does not appear to have been done adequately in many associations. If members are fully informed of the relevant considerations they are much better equipped to reach a decision on rational rather than emotional grounds. It has been the intention of this paper to provide a rational basis for consideration of this issue.

NOTES

1. At the 1980 FAUSA Annual General Meeting only three member associations reported that their membership had supported affiliation. Several others reported that opinion had been divided rather evenly and two had yet to put the matter to their members.
2. See Hagan, J. *The ACTU: A Short History* Sydney: A. H. and A. W. Reed Pty Ltd., 1977.
3. ACTU Bulletin. Vol 2, No. 3(C.). September/November 1980.
4. ibid. p. 6.
5. FAUSA Newsletter 79/1 pp. 5–6.
6. Rawson, D. W. *Unions and Unionists in Australia* Sydney: George Allen and Unwin, 1978, p. 77.
7. FAUSA Newsletter 79/1 p. 5.
8. Martin, R. M. *Trade Unions in Australia* Second Edition. Penguin, 1980, pp. 133–134.
9. ibid. p. 134.
10. ibid. p. 135.
11. See the submission by FAUSA to the Academic Salaries Tribunal, August 1980.
12. See the argument in FAUSA Newsletter, op. cit., which asserts that FAUSA's voice would hardly be heard even within an education block.

ACADEMICS' REAL SALARIES IN AUSTRALIA AND THE UNITED KINGDOM: A NEW COMPARISON

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Introduction

In 1976 we made use of the opportunity provided by a year's visit by one of us (K.N.) to an Australian university to make a comparison of the real value of university teachers' salaries in Australia and the United Kingdom. The results, published in this journal,[1] indicated that on the basis of June 1976 data, the average Australian academic was about 40% bet-

ter off in real terms than his British counterpart, and that the disparity was larger at the lecturer level than at professorial level.

A return visit to Australia by Keith Norris provided an opportunity for us to make a new comparison using data for October 1980. The intervening years had witnessed significant changes in both countries, both in the university sectors and in the economies as a whole. It thus seemed desirable to repeat our calculations using more recent data.

Before giving the revised results we briefly outline the methods and the limitations of a study of the kind we are attempting. In essence our procedure involves deducting income tax from academic salaries in each country, converting them to a single currency at the prevailing exchange rate and then correcting for differences in the price level between the two countries. Since the salary and career structures of academics are different in Australia and in the United Kingdom, the direct comparisons of real academic salaries which we can legitimately make are rather limited in number. We have been able, however, to express the after tax salaries of different grades of United Kingdom academics in terms of their purchasing power in Australia, and these are listed together with the after tax salaries of the various academic grades in Australia.

Our calculations of after tax salaries in the two countries are obviously sensitive to the assumptions we make about the marital status and other circumstances of the individuals under comparison. Where possible we have tested alternative assumptions and with one exception (noted below) relative positions are largely unaffected.

The correction for price differences presents more serious problems. This correction is necessary because price levels in the two countries, converted at the prevailing exchange rates, are not identical. Now if the price differences were the same for every product (if, say, all consumption goods in Australia were 30% more expensive than in the United Kingdom, at the prevailing exchange rate), the difficulty would simply be overcome (we would simply raise all post-tax United Kingdom salaries by 30%, to compensate for the lower prices in Britain). However relative prices in the two countries are different as well. In these circumstances we can only calculate the price difference between them relative to a particular bundle of commodities, which will normally correspond to the expenditure pattern actually observed in one country or the other. In our case we have taken the average expenditure pattern in Australia (which may be different from the expenditure pattern of the average Australian academic) and calculated the price difference between purchasing that bundle of commodities in Australia and the United Kingdom by comparing the prices of those commodities in London and Melbourne. Had we taken the United Kingdom expenditure pattern as our basis, we would have reached a different answer, though we do not believe the difference would be significant.

A more serious source of inaccuracy arises from the possibility that in our price comparisons we may not always have compared like with like, or found 'typical' prices. On this issue we can say only that though errors of this kind may occur, there is no reason why they should systematically bias the results in one direction or the other.

We do not believe, then, that the sources of error listed above are likely to affect the outcome by a substantial margin. In particular we believe that the change between 1976 and 1980 in the relative positions of academics in Australia and the United Kingdom is in the direction and of the magnitude shown at the end of the present article.

The Calculations

Table 1 shows university salary scales prevailing in Australia and in the United Kingdom in October 1980, together with the proportion of staff in each grade.[2] United Kingdom salaries have been converted to Australian dollars at the exchange rate £1 = $2.05. Assuming that staff in each grade are paid on average at the mid-point of the scale, the average nominal salary for academics in Australia is 120% of the United Kingdom level.

Table 1
University Academic Salaries: October 1980
All salaries in Australian dollars

Australia

Grade	% of staff on grade (1979)	Scale ($)	Points on scale
Lecturer	35.6	17,739–23,304	8
Senior Lecturer	37.8	23,801–27,740	6
Reader/Associate Professor	13.8	31,369	1
Professor	12.8	37,151	1

United Kingdom

Grade	% of staff on grade (1979)	Scale (%)	Points on scale
Lecturer	61.1	11,286–23,729	17
Senior Lecturer/Reader	26.0	22,888–28,659	8
Professor	12.9		
Minimum		29,264	—
Average		34,368	—

Table 2 shows the effective tax rates (including in the United Kingdom social security contributions) for academics at the mid-point of the scale in each grade. Rates are shown both for a single person, and for a married person.[3] In the United Kingdom case the figure in brackets show the effective tax rate of a household of the kind specified with an average-sized house mortgage of $16,400 (the difference arises because interest payments on mortgages in the U.K. are exempt from taxation). It will be apparent that effective tax rates are quite seriously affected by this tax relief and some of our further calculations are made in two variants, one including, the other excluding the effect on taxation of mortgage interest payments.

Table 2
Effective Tax Rates: October 1980

	Mid-points of Salary Scales			
	Single person		Married person	
	Australia	U.K. (with mortgage)	Australia	U.K. (with mortgage)
Lecturer	29.5%	29.7% (25.5%)	28.1%	27.0% (22.8%)
Senior Lecturer (Australia)	33.1%		32.0%	
Senior Lecturer/Reader (U.K.)		30.0% (26.7%)		28.0% (25.2%)
Reader/Associate Professor (Australia)	35.6%		34.7%	
Professor	38.8%	33.0% (29.8%)	37.8%	30.9% (27.7%)
"Average Academic"	33.1%	29.8% (26.4%)	32.2%	27.7% (24.3%)

Table 3 shows the relative prices in Australia and the United Kingdom for five major commodity groups, together with the weights of (or proportions of expenditure on) each group. The 1976 figures are also shown to illustrate changes in relative prices over the past four years. Each of the five price relatives is constructed by taking a weighted average of the relative prices in Australia and the United Kingdom of a number of separate commodities. Our earlier article contains an account of the degree of confidence which we think should be placed in the average figure derived for each commodity group. It is, however, worth drawing attention to a potential source of error in the housing group. The main component here we take to be the cost of houses, and we have compared average house prices in Sydney[4] with those in the South-East of England. However the appropriate comparison is not between the price of houses (a capital asset) but between the costs of housing services; in the case of owner-occupation, mortgage interest payments are an important constituent of the costs of housing services, which our comparison ignores. Mortgage interest rates are now at record levels in the United Kingdom; so that ignoring them in 1980 introduces a more serious source of error than was the case in 1976.

If this error tends to exaggerate the real salaries of the United Kingdom academics, then the exclusion from our calculations of medical costs operates in the other direction. Whereas in 1976 a form of state administered free health service existed in both countries, this is no longer the case in Australia. We have not been able to devise a satisfactory way of incorporating medical costs and our study suffers from this omission.

Tables 4 and 5 summarise our results. Table 4 expresses the after tax salaries of academics in both countries in dollars and in terms of Australian prices. Table 5 conveys similar information in the form of ratios of salaries in the two countries. In this case we limit ourselves to the two points in the academic career structure (one at the bottom, one at the top) where comparisons seem appropriate, and to a comparison of average academic salaries in the two countries.

Table 3
Australian Prices as a percentage of U.K. Prices

Commodity Group	Weight	Price Relative (1980)	Price Relative (1976)
Food	283	89	118
Clothing	121	82	157
Housing	144	113	156
Housing supplies	113	118	204
Miscellaneous	339	102	181
All items of Consumer Expenditure	1000	99	159

Table 4
After Tax Salaries measured in Australian dollars of Equivalent Purchasing Power

	Mid-points of salary scale			
	Single person		Married person	
	Australia	U.K.	Australia	U.K.
Lecturer	14475	12078	14756	12546
Senior Lecturer (Australia)	17253		17534	
Senior Lecturer/Reader (U.K.)		17860		18363
Associate Professor/Reader (Australia)	20216		20497	
Professor	22726	22796	23090	23490
Average Academic	17491	15103	17725	15573

Table 5
Ratios of Australian to British academic salaries for three types of single academics

Type of academic	Before tax salaries 1980	After tax salaries 1980	After tax real salaries 1980	After tax real salaries 1976
A. Lecturer at bottom of scale	1.57	1.63	1.64	1.75
B. Professor	1.08	0.99	1.00	1.19
C. 'Average' academic	1.20	1.15	1.16	1.40

The results for October 1980 indicate that while Australian academics at the bottom of the lecturer scale enjoy a real salary 64% higher than that of their United Kingdom counterparts, professors have the same real salary in both countries. On average Australian academics are about 16% better off than their United Kingdom colleagues. If we assume in addition that the United Kingdom academics in the comparison have an average mortgage of $16,400, then as a result of tax relief on interest payments their relative position at all levels improves by about 5%.

Table 5 also illustrates the very significant changes which occurred between 1976 and 1980 in the comparative real salaries of academics in the two countries. United Kingdom academics have improved their position by approximately 17% in relative terms. Moreover, this improvement in relative terms seems to have taken place fairly consistently at all levels in academic life except at the very bottom, where the proportionate change is smaller.

NOTES

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1. Keith Norris and Martin Cave: 'A comparison of real salaries of university academics in Australia and the United Kingdom', *Vestes*, Vol. 20, No. 2 (1977), pp. 52–57.
2. Salaries operating in the United Kingdom in October 1980 were 'under review', i.e. subject to subsequent back-dated adjustment. We have not taken this into account. An increase in Australian academic salaries was also announced in November 1980.
3. Our analysis ignores child benefits payable in both countries, since they are at comparable levels.
4. In our previous study all Australian price data were collected in Sydney. In this case prices were found in Melbourne, but to maintain comparability we use Sydney house prices.

MEMBERSHIP OF POLICY-DETERMINING COMMITTEES IN THE UNIVERSITY AND MEDICAL SCHOOL

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Socio-political pressures have widened representation on university policy-making committees, and insidious erosion of traditions of scholarship is apparent. Criteria for deciding who should determine policy in universities and medical schools should be reviewed, and the nature and function of these institutions re-established as educational centres where reason should be "one's only judge of values and one's only guide to action"[1]. Hence membership of academic committees should be determined by rational deliberation, for the best committee has the best chance of making the wisest decisions.

Nature and Function of the University

Logic and reasoned debate in the search for truth characterised the educational milieu of early universities. Verification of hypotheses (i.e. research) gradually assumed a vital role. Today it is generally agreed that the university's function is research and education. Emphasis now falls on undergraduate teaching, an often didactic process concerned with transmission of knowledge. In medical schools a major hospital service commitment has emerged in clinical and paraclinical departments[2]. Training students to be doctors is often considered the primary objective with medical education infiltrated by the spirit of the trade school. This concerns those who value the university's traditional role for training and didactic instruction inhibit intellectual development[3]. Tertiary education should induce students to think logically, critically and precisely and to desire, recognise and pursue the first-rate. Human biology and medical science are the medium in which medical education takes place. This goal serves the community's interests and provides a better foundation for future careers[4]. The search for truth is basic to the concept, and advancement of knowledge rather than its communication is the primary business of the university, the former being essential, the latter incidental. However, universities often pay lip service to research regarding it as a reward for service and teaching, the overwhelming demands of which can virtually preclude worthwhile research. If faculty members are to be other than purveyors of second-hand information then research must receive more sustained support. It has an educational effect on the investigator and provides that scientific spirit of enquiry essential for the intellectual development of staff and students[5]. Medical education should be an objective study of medical science with principles of dispassionate reason employed as the means by which the study is presented and the philosophy of the university effected[4]. By research and the appraisal of evidence and ideas, the education of students is best achieved, for it is not the inculcation of knowledge but the acquisition of an attitude of critical, logical thought and reasoning in the process of absorbing and using knowledge, that is education. Such intellectual development enables students to "excel in practical judgement and knowledge of life"[6].

Once regarded as institutions for the intellectual elite, current socio-political pressures would have universities as public service institutions totally practical and utilitarian, with medical schools existing solely for training doctors to provide medical care. The public, students, and many of the staff, not understanding the university's educational role, misguidedly adhere to the vocational training concept. Staff concede the need for intellectual development but a lack of commitment to the philosophy is apparent.

Membership of Policy-Determining Committees

Committee members must be carefully selected. Inappropriate decisions by ill-constituted committees adversely affect institutions for generations, with the ill-effects not always immediately perceived.

Student Membership

Student membership of academic committees is customarily and widely defended. It defuses student pressure, but such political expediency is betrayal of academic integrity on a fundamental issue[7]. Students should play no role in university decision-making being "by definition in the context of academic affairs at the level of higher education, unqualified[8]. They come for education, not to direct the staff. Acquiescence to student representation brings continued pressure for greater representation. Overseas, students have demanded 33% representation on academic committees[9-11]. The National Union of Students in Britain in 1972 called for equal representation of Trade Unions and local community interests[11], and advocated equal staff-student representation in determining departmental matters[12]. Others contend the medical faculty should consist of doctors, students, nurses and technicians with equal voting power[10]. Such representation would destroy university integrity.

The case against student representation has been argued cogently elsewhere[7]. Undergraduate students are not prerequisite to a university. The academic staff is the only indispensable group. Though, historically, students were constituent members of some ancient universities, it does not follow that they should be involved in academic policy decisions. As members of a family young children have no authority in decisions regarding their education or up-bringing. Their expressed opinions may be considered and further maturation, experience and achievement may bring respect for their judgement and input into decisions. Each member of the academic community has a certain status and role, and it is impossible to regard all as equally competent to judge. It is logistically impossible for everyone, or every interest group to participate in all decision-making, responsibility for which must be rationally delegated to those most able to reach the wisest decision.

The opinions of 300 medical students on medical education, published by Older and Cloud-Sinton[13], would undoubtedly lower university and professional standards if instituted. Usurpation of staff authority on academic matters should be rebuffed, for students do not carry the responsibility, and authority without responsibility is incongruous. Students characteristically oppose the *status quo* and the dangerous cliche that student and teacher learn from each other, downgrades the teacher's role and reveals student conceit[14]. If partners they be, they are unequal in ability, achievement and qualifications, and in suitability to determine policy. Student membership is irrational and discriminatory against academic staff. The student voluntarily comes as a student and must, therefore, be prepared to be a student with all that the role entails until he earns otherwise by personal achievement.

There is pressure for the university to provide neighbourhood clinics and wide social, educational, cultural and advisory services[10]. Most students at some time express concern about inadequacies of community health care, incorrectly implying it is the staff's responsibility. Hospital services already threaten the future of some academic disciplines, and additional duties would endanger recruitment. The university is for research and academic education — not for the provision of community services. Yet the community is served best when students are truly educated, and when the university pursues its goal to the highest possible level of achievement. "Universities can only preserve their identity if they steer by the compass of the academic; without it, their increasing involvement with society makes them helpless pursuers of incoherent desirabilities"[15].