learning (Smith 1990). As long ago as 1966, the following graphic illustration was used to emphasise the daunting task of trying to keep up in some disciplines:

> *If every chemistry article were reduced to a one paragraph summary, and anyone tried to read these summaries – even reading continuously for 24 hours a day, 365 days in the year – at the end of a year they could have read only one-tenth of the summaries for that year. In ten years they would be ninety years behind in their reading* (Prince 1966, p. 259)

University staff are not exempt from these pressures - in fact, to the contrary, it is expected that they will keep up-to-date and act as catalysts not only for students, but also for the industries or professions for which they are training. The importance of this role was stressed in the recent Higher Education Council publication *Developing lifelong learners through undergraduate education* (Candy, Crebert and O'Leary, 1994)

Staff development, then, has several roles to play. One is to assist staff in the process of keeping their curricula up-to date, and building in segments on current trends and issues. Secondly, staff development can sponsor conferences, symposia and workshops on various aspects of the future, and particularly on education for the future. Thirdly, staff development can increase the consciousness of teachers about the development of continuing lifelong learning (Candy and Crebert 1991b). And finally, staff developers can model this sort of professional orientation and commitment themselves.

Conclusion

As a result of the foregoing, the following can be identified as vital priorities for university staff development in the next few years;

- to provide an accessible and appropriate range of planned programs and activities to meet the needs of new and continuing members of academic staff, and probably of non-academic staff as well;
- to maintain flexibility in order to meet unexpected demands and to provide a responsive consultative orientation which supports academic staff in the discharge of their responsibilities and fulfilment of their professional potential;
- to act as a catalyst in raising awareness about significant trends and issues, in particular new methods of teaching, changed administrative structures and responsibilities, the needs and demands of industry and government, significant changes and opportunities in the Asia-Pacific region, and the need for continuing lifelong learning;
- to model excellence in teaching and research within the institutional context;
- to advocate and embody the best elements of a traditional university culture and ideals (such as the celebration of diversity, and informed critical debate) but without appearing reactionary or becoming marginal to the central concerns of the institution's mission; and
- to develop a sufficiently high profile so that teachers, administrators and policy makers routinely take account of the staff development implications of their actions, and seek the advice and help of staff developers as appropriate.

Universities are, by their nature, heterogeneous, and one needs to avoid simplistic prescriptions that suit one institution, faculty or discipline, but not another. The diversity of ways in which institutions in Australia have met the demand for staff development is a testimony to this fact (Candy 1988).

It has been said (and only partly in jest), that the modern university is bound together by just two things: the telephone system and a common concern about parking! It is my hope that in the next ten years universities in Australia will be bound together by a third force: an acknowledgment of the continuing need for, and enduring value of, staff development.

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The professionalisation of Australian academic administration

Gavin Moodie

South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre

This paper considers the pressures for and early development of professional academic administration in Australia. The thesis is that there has not been a steady or unambiguous professionalisation of Australian academic administration, nor indeed, a general shift in discretion from faculty to 'the centre'. This has left a number of issues unresolved for academic administration, which lacks a solid body of knowledge, a well-defined level of expertise and an explanatory theory which supports its current role.

The relative weakness of academic administration is considered desirable by many faculty, and is not a serious disadvantage in a stable, benign environment. However, in an unstable and threatening environment strong professional academic management may be more effective in preserving academic values than reverting to a fictional ideal of 'collegiality'.

Pressures for professional academic administration

The professionalisation of the academic administration of Australian universities originated in the first few decades of this century. It may be marked from 1920 by a resolution of the first meeting of the Australian Universities' Standing Advisory Committee, the forebear of the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, in favour of the appointment in each university of a full-time executive officer entitled the 'vice-chancellor' (Auchmuty 1970, p. 240). Professionalisation proceeded slowly if not haltingly. Vice-Chancellors were appointed to Sydney in 1925 and Western Australia in 1927, but it was not until Melbourne's appointment of a Vice-Chancellor in 1933 that a salaried Vice-Chancellor first chaired the advisory committee, in 1935 (Auchmuty 1970, p. 240). Power in universities was held by Chancellors, honorary officers.

Thirty years later in 1957 the Murray Committee apparently believed Vice-Chancellors to be ineffectual collectively as the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee (1957, p. 92) and powerless individually within their universities (1957, p. 95). Academic leadership or authority was held by the chair of the professorial board (Matheson 1965, p. 212), a position denied to Vice-Chancellors (Murray Committee 1957, p. 96). The Murray Committee's finding that universities needed to improve their government and administration was elaborated by Partridge (1962, pp. 91-2):

> *We should be more honest if we would admit that, in many university departments and faculties, administration is now a separate and important function and that there is often enough of it to provide full-time employment for one or more [persons]. We may be right in our suspicion of introducing professional administrators into our universities; we may be right in holding to the view that academic administration should be done by people who have been academics. But we are probably getting the worst of all possible worlds by producing a race of part-time teachers, part-time scholars, part-time administrators.*

Five years later much the same need was restated by McCaig (1967):

> *A sensitive administration calls for a greater professionalism. It is doubtful if there can be any longer a place for the failed academic or for those accustomed to playing the administrative tune by ear. There is more than a hint of truth in Sloman's suggestion that amateurism in university government, as in government at the wider level, needs to be balanced by expertise in administration.*

New forms of management were required, according to Serle (1963, p. 12), because 'what worked moderately well in a university of under 5,000 students is hopeless in a university of over 10,000 students'. In 1957 there were 36,265 students enrolled in Australian universities, 1,100 fewer than the number enrolled in 1994 at one university, Monash. The Universities of Sydney and Melbourne had approximately 8,000 students, Queensland, NSW and Adelaide had about 5,000 and WA, UNE and Tasmania had about 1,000 students (Murray Committee 1957, p. 23). In 1994 there were 9 universities with fewer than 10,000 enrolments, but there were 15 with 10,000 to 20,000 enrolments and 12 universities with more than 20,000 enrolments (DEET 1995, pp. 20-1).

The student body has also changed markedly. In 1957 14% of students had been admitted without having matriculated and 25% of university students were enrolled in sub-degree courses (Leslie 1963, p. 127). About 2% of students were studying higher degrees (Murray Committee 1957, p. 43), reflecting the recency of Australian universities' sustained commitment to research and their introduction of doctoral degrees (Partridge 1962, p. 73). In 1994, 11% of students were enrolled in higher degrees, 5% in research higher degrees and 6% in coursework higher degrees (DEET 1995, p. 17). There were no course quotas at the time of the Murray Committee - the first course to introduce a quota on admission was medicine at The University of Melbourne in 1960.

Yet universities' management has not changed as significantly over the last three decades as this growth in size and common opinion amongst academic staff suggests. This may be gathered from examining the different development of academic administration at three levels: the department, faculty, and university-wide academic administration.

Recent developments

The dominant academic organisational unit in 1960 was the department. Departments had relatively recently grown in size from one professor and one or two 'assistants' or 'junior lecturers' to a professor and some 20 to 30 lecturers and senior lecturers (Parker 1965, p. 18; Serle 1963, p. 12; Partridge 1962, p. 73). The professor was appointed head of department until retirement.

Opposition to appointed heads of departments mounted amongst the increasing numbers of 'sub-professorial' staff whose earlier aspirations for appointment to a chair were frustrated by the sharp reduction in the proportion of professors amongst total academic staff (Robbins Committee 1963, p. 669). Perhaps this frustration as much as abuses of office led to increasingly strident criticism of 'departmentalism', 'professor-kings', 'God-professors', and to claims that universities' internal government was 'hierarchical', 'authoritarian', 'undemocratic' and suffered from a 'lack of communication'.

The problems arose, according to their critics, because professors had 'great power over appointments, promotions, research funds, the career prospects and working conditions of their staff' (Truman 1963, p. 9). Reformers argued for multi-professorial departments on the

grounds that if universities cannot be democratised, at least their ruling oligarchies should be greatly widened (Serle 1963, p. 12).

Two, three and sometimes four chairs were slowly established in the largest departments from the 1960s (Partridge 1962, p. 92) but the signal reform was achieved a decade later in 1972 with the passing of the departmental statute at The University of Melbourne. Despite their prominence and importance in university organisation, departments were generally not formally constituted in university statutes or bylaws: they remained an extension of the professor. Melbourne's departmental statute established departments with standing and powers apart from their professor and provided for their heads to be elected by the tenured lecturing staff from amongst their academic staff of senior lecturer and above.

In 1964 the Martin Committee proposed (p. 89) that:

Each large department should have an efficient secretary to keep a watchful eye on routine matters including equipment and finance. In the case of technical departments, much responsibility can be vested in head technicians, or, perhaps, business managers, who would order supplies, etc.

This has now been achieved and the organisation of departments has improved accordingly. However, the contribution of general staff to the management of academic departments has been barely recognised (Burton 1987). Peter Botsman (1995, p. 14) observed recently that:

As a former academic, having now worked in the private sector for eight years, it seems patently clear to me how undervalued and under consulted departmental administrative staff are in universities. If for example, departmental secretaries were better resourced, better trained and more meaningfully involved in departmental staff meetings, they would make a great contribution not only to the servicing of students but also the efficiency of academic staff. Unfortunately, however, many senior academic staff seem to define "secretary" as a sort of 1950s style receptionist [cum] personal assistant/typist. The fact that these people take on most of the burden of day to day student advice and even counselling, seems not to occur to many academics.

Departments' full-time administrative staff remain predominantly junior appointments (Castleman *et al.* 1995, p. 67) and are not professionalised in the sense of forming a professional corps with an acknowledged specialisation or expertise and having a defined career structure.

In the mid 1960s all deans, with the occasional exceptions of deans of medicine, were part-time, appointed in rotation from the heads of the faculty's departments (Matheson 1965, p. 212). During the period that lecturers were arguing for rotating chairs of departments, Vice-Chancellors argued for the replacement of rotating deans with permanent full-time appointments (Rowe 1960; Matheson 1970, p. 20). This argument remains to be won in many universities.

Professorial boards were described by the Murray Committee as lacking in vigour and having lost hope (1957, p. 95). Partridge (1960, p. 56) refers to 'the overgrown, disorderly, loquacious professorial boards'. Academic boards and senates have hardly become professionalised since, and their professed role of academic decision-making has largely been filled by Deputy and Pro Vice-Chancellors. But this is not a particularly recent development: Deputy Vice-Chancellors were appointed in most universities in the early 1960s (Martin Committee 1964, p. 87).

The Martin Committee recommended the appointment, in addition to a Registrar, of 'a second senior permanent officer designated perhaps as the Bursar or Business Manager' (1964, p. 88). This has been well and truly implemented, it would seem, but such evidence as there is does not suggest a shift of professional administration to general staff. The proportion of general staff has fallen since the 1960s at the University of New South Wales at least, from the figures given by Baxter and Myers (Baxter and Myers 1966, p. 100).

There has been a slight fall in the proportion of general staff employed in higher education since 1988 (Martin 1995, p. 4). Most are employed at low levels. In 1993 less than 30% of general staff were appointed above Higher Education Officer (HEO) level 6, which is about lecturer level A and the level for which a degree is normally required; and less than 10% of general staff were employed at HEO level 7 or higher, which is about lecturer level B (Castlemanet *al.* 1995, p. 55). The high proportion of junior staff, the lack of a career structure and the general lack of formal, even work-based training, mean that general staff are long distant from forming a corps of professional administrators.

Issues

Since the Murray Committee reported in 1957 the appointed 'God-professor' has been replaced by an elected chair of department. The 'rotating dean' has been replaced by a full-time appointed dean in some but by no means all universities. There has been a concomitant transfer of power from the heads of departments to the heads of faculties, but the careers of academic staff are less subject to the individual judgements of heads of academic organisational units than they were 30 years ago.

The explosion of committees and committee processes in the 1970s has been wound back in most universities, but committees remain far more extensive and influential than they were in the mid 1960s when the Martin Committee recommended the establishment of standing and *ad hoc* committees of professorial boards (1964, p. 89). The net effect has been a reduction of the personal power of the heads of academic organisational units and a transfer of amateurism in academic administration from individuals as part-time office bearers to groups in the form of committees.

The authority of the Vice-Chancellor has generally increased within universities, certainly, but this is as much at the expense of the power of the Chancellor, an honorary office, as of the autonomy of faculty staff. This was evident from the power struggle at the University of Melbourne in the 1970s when R D ('Pansy') Wright, a distinguished Emeritus Professor of Physiology, eventually achieved his ambition of being elected Chancellor in 1980. Recent struggles at The University of Sydney are consistent with this interpretation (Illing 1995, p. 3), and are surprisingly similar to the contest at The University of Melbourne two decades earlier.

Academics have won considerable autonomy since the 1960s, and have preserved much of these gains even since the White Paper. This is valued by most faculty, and despite the frustration of reformers, is not a serious disadvantage in a stable, benign environment. However, the higher education environment is becoming increasingly unpredictable, largely through its increasing reliance on commercial sources of funding.

The reports of the views of the current Prime Minister on higher education, suggestions of large cuts in Commonwealth funding and the management review of higher education suggest a less supportive, even threatening environment. In such an environment strong professional academic management may be more effective in preserving academic values than reverting to an ideal of 'collegiality' which is largely fictional.

Commonly within universities 'the administration' refers variously to the central service units such as student administration and finance branch which are largely staffed by junior, predominantly female, general staff; and the offices of the Vice-Chancellor and the variously prefixed (deputy, pro, associate, etc) offices which are the most senior in the university and mostly reserved for academic, predominantly male staff. Those staff and their colleagues in the faculties normally identified as academic administrators - faculty registrars, faculty and departmental administrative officers, deans and heads of departments - have different backgrounds, different industrial conditions and different ethoses. They lack professional training in academic administration almost as much now as they did a quarter of a century ago (James Bailey 1995, p. 29; Wheeler 1970, p. 250).

Neither 'the administration' nor 'administrators' in universities refer to a body of practitioners which identifies and is identified as a group with common interests and special knowledge and expertise. Academic administration is therefore not a profession in the traditional sense (Larson 1977), nor, indeed, in their modern, bureaucratised form (Meisenhelder 1983). There may be elements which indicate, as Jones argues, that 'administrators of tertiary education in Australia certainly form a nascent, if not yet mature, profession' (1989, p. 61). But it is not yet clear that they will develop and transmit the coherent body of expertise that would identify them as a profession.

Finally, but most fundamentally, Australian academic administration lacks a theory, model or paradigm to explain and guide its behaviour. Most senior academic administrators still recall traditional limitations to administrative action, and because of their recent background as either discipline experts or subordinate members of general staff, largely keep within those limits. Occasionally industrial or legal action may restrict administrative discretion, but the general trend over the next decade is likely to be an increase in what is termed 'management prerogative' in university management. At the same time, the memory and relevance of traditional constraints will fade.

Academic administration needs a theory which legitimates its exercise of power for the benefit of the institution and its students and staff while not destroying and indeed promoting the scholarly values that make universities unique and valuable. Administration requires judgement in each case, of course (Chubb 1995), but in the medium term these judgements are best made within a general framework of reference. Such a framework cannot be derived from practices developed for different times. A new paradigm is required and the best will be one which is developed by full-time academic administrators and their critics together.

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