

SCAtharsis General meeting - 23/4/04

Present: Gary, Francesca, Ben, Julian, Angelo, Christy, Bruno, Alyson, Gabrielle, Irene, Rose

Meeting opened: 4.45pm

Chair: Julian

Agenda:

1. AGM and Cocktail Party – pros and cons: Julian

We discussed whether in future SCAtharsis should use a "first round on us" model and BYO thereafter re. drinks at social functions.

Gary: (following informal discussion with Merryn Shaw) SCAtharsis appears very successful compared to other postgrad groups re. attracting good attendance at functions; that SCAtharsis' largess (e.g., cocktails & other) may have contributed significantly to its success.

Bruno: our success not alcohol dependent (pun intended?); rather, SCAtharsis' reputation as a successful postgrad group is more about participation.

Rose: could money saved by opting the hybrid-BYO model go toward paper for printing/photocopying?

Julian & Bruno: UMPA would not fund this anyway (paper)

2. Ongoing meetings/social events: Julian

What model do we want for on-going meetings and social events?

Julian: ongoing participation is what makes things work

Angelo: monthly meetings, e.g., last Friday of each month then drinks etc. afterwards (self-funded)

Julian: is monthly too often?

Rose: try this model in Sem 1 and see if it works?

Angelo: on reflection if we consider what's already in the calendar there are already events approximately each month and this already achieves the social/communal aims of the group

Angelo: include a questionnaire in the SCAtharsis Postgrad Seminar Day (May 14th) programme re. options for ongoing activities: e.g., 1. Monthly meetings; 2. Meet immediately after the Dept's seminar series; 3....

Motion: To include a questionnaire in the SCAtharsis Postgrad Seminar Day (May 14th) programme re. options

Moved: Bruno

Seconded: Christy

Motion passed

3. Re-affiliation submission: Julian

Julian: no news is good news; that Rose, Gary & Julian went over the reaffiliation documentation fairly carefully; that there are around 85 other postgrad groups that UMPA are probably currently assessing which may explain why we have had no official word yet.

4. Research Higher Degree Committee, School of Creative Arts: Julian

The RHD Committee meets only once per Semester which puts constraints on what can be achieved and when (see last point **Item 5.** below);

Alyson will write a letter to Angela O'Brien to seek clarification on the Dept's policy re. payment of sessionals in relation to Faculty policy (and interpretations thereof)

- Space – SCAtharsis room, adequate study space

Julian reported on RHD Committee at SCA, vis. Its concern about how the postgrad room (Rm 303a) is currently being used: this is a logistical issue regarding space for the current (and growing) postgrad population, security, and adequate study conditions;

Various proposals put forward by the SCA RHD Committee regarding security (re. access to the room using keys)

Option 1: that the space be restricted to RHDs only

Julian responded to this option that it would be unconstitutional, since all postgrads should have equal access to postgrad facilities;

Option 2: that the room be opened first thing in the morning and locked again at close of building

Unanimous negative response to this option! This would make it impossible to secure personal belongings and equipment in the room (such as software manuals)

Option 3: that a multi-user (tiered) system be implemented that includes restrictions to specific facilities (e.g., only media postgrads to use the G5)

Gabrielle: we set up our own system?

Alyson: that the whole access thing has been piecemeal and idiosyncratic with regard to how postgrads find out about what we have access to

Julian: what information do we want to collate: e.g., PINs for use of photocopier....?

Julian: on the space issue, we could go with Option 3 and adopt an open access policy for room 303a:

.... have several 'hot desks' with internet access & etc.

.... maintain a social & refreshments space

..... put the G5 in its own space with restricted access

..... put the printer & photocopier in their own space

Motion: That SCAtarsis adopt Option 3. above, re. geographical division of study from social spaces, and, that specific facilities currently in room 303a be organised within the SCA in line with this division

Moved: Julian

Seconded: Rose

Motion passed

- RHD 2004 incentives: Julian

A recent development is that for every new (i.e., additional) postgrad student the Dept enrolls, it receives \$1,000. SCA is considered a "small" school, hence it will receive \$1,200; this is about 'load', i.e., in crease in total number of postgraduates in the School.

This money is available and has not yet been allocated; therefore we postgrads should know about and have input into how that money is to be spent.

There is some argument for using the funds for recruitment purposes (e.g., promotional fliers etc.). However, aside from promotional material, this money could be well spent to address study space adequacy for current and future postgrads.

Christy: there has been discussion about the Dept's offer of some partitions to address the division of study from social space in the postgrad room. If we can get these at no cost, then they may prove useful. However, if they have to be purchased (around \$500 for two?) then further discussion is needed.

Francesca: carrel-type desks (as used in library) might be more appropriate.

5. Faculty of Arts, Research Students Reference Group: Julian

- Creating a network in the School

the group meets to discuss what links can be made between postgrad groups and faculty (this is the student rather than academic wing of the Arts Faculty);

the good news is that we are remarkably successful considering our size (compared to Politics and to History, and we are about 50 RHDs);

success seems to depend not on size but on context of how we meet and dynamics of the group;

- Casual staff payment (lectures)

in theory, sessionals should be paid to attend lectures if attendance is compulsory. However, there is no consistency across the Faculty; anecdotal evidence bears this out;

Faculty policy is that if it's your first time teaching a particular subject, then you are paid to attend lectures, but not subsequent years for the same lecture content;

We discussed whether SCAtharsis should put forward a submission to air our concerns: this point refers back to Item 4. Above.

6. Calendar: Christy

The SCAtharsis website now has a calendar, so please check it to see what's on (www.sca.unimelb.edu.au/scatharsis - click on 'Calendar' panel under the SCAtharsis banner top left).

7. ACMI tour – Christy

Response has been mixed re. suitable times/dates

Please note:

- date is now fixed for **Thursday May 6th at 2.30pm**
- payment: was \$10 but now \$5 - groups need to pay a minimum of \$50 for the tour (hence there was no point only three of us going last week)
- no fixed number;
- content of tour: not the whole facility but mainly the Transfiguration exhibition (which ends May 7th), the Screen education Room, and any other parts we want
- as the date gets closer, a reminder will be sent out

8. Seminars – SCA seminar series: Julian

Julian met with Alison Richards and Denise Varney and represented SCAtharsis re. our involvement with the Dept's seminar series (not to be confused with our postgrad-run Seminar Day), etc. Some clarification did come out of this meeting, e.g:

- how the Dept sees the Seminars, re. the shift among academic staff toward understanding the series as a predominantly staff seminar series;

- there is currently one space per semester for one RHD postgrad to present: the stipulation is the thesis must be near completion and to academic standard;
- this shift is largely the result of increasing pressure on academic staff to present;
- therefore the monthly seminars now run according to this model which Alison Richards convenes;
- there was a School meeting last year in which it was noted that there were too many postgrads to present along with staff, which gave rise to the idea to split the seminars; e.g., that postgrads run their own on a monthly basis.

However, there was no consultation with postgrads at this initial stage - the information from the meeting then went on to Alison Richards. The confusion of late last year - involving two incompatible and separate perceptions of what was wanted by postgrads - has been resolved.

This is the current model:

- Our own seminars (that is, postgrad Seminar Days throughout the year) will have a Keynote Speaker: therefore, these two seminar presentations will be in addition to the Dept's seminar series (that's four opportunities altogether per year for near-completion RHDs)
 - Julian stated that all postgrads and all staff be expected to attend;
 - that our postgrad seminars be promoted at the Dept's seminar series;
 - that staff be lobbied (via us lobbying our supervisors) to promote and attend postgrad presentations;
 - Julian also reported that Alison Richards and Denise Varney want us to consider running monthly seminars as well;
 - Julian also raised the issue of mentoring - that the academic staff should be trying to get postgrads into the academic mix

9. First seminar: Angelo

The postgrad Seminar Day - Contexts - will be held in the Multifunction Room (above the glassed-in café in the 1888 building, accessible via lifts between rear of café & SGS)

Date now fixed for May 14th;

- *** **help will be needed organising on the day** *** e.g., preparing the room and catering: Gabrielle so far will be helping on the day ...
- because it gets to be a long day, there will be strict time-keeping;

- there will be a 4.30 finish, then we will move on to the staff room for drinks, etc.
- if people have papers prepared we can just post them onto the web - so presenters please keep this in mind when writing up your paper so that transcripts can be posted quickly after the event (an alternative fully refereed papers at this stage).

10. The Salon: Gary

Julian: the School is very interested in pushing its identity as a research theory:practice school; therefore there may be some funds available for us to use for these Creative Salons;

Gary: we are open to ideas at this stage - possibly September;

- We are currently looking at spaces alternative to the normal academic spaces: why alternative? - because for creative work/media there is a shift in 'head space'; e.g., a shift away from dry academic delivery... "I have a David Lynch ambience in mind.."
- Because some of us are creative & thesis, we are looking for 'out of context' space that is not generic;
- Not yet confirmed, but Cell Biology Dissection Room is an option ("Art under the Scalpel");
- Other spaces around the uni were the Moot Court ("Putting Art on Trial")
- One idea is to go for a 'thematic' mode: e.g., site-specific presentations;
- However, the CBD Room is small - around 30 or less;
- The Salon could be an all-day presentation, or, alternatively go over two days;
- Vis. The smallness of the Cell Biology Dissection Room (there are such rooms) we will use an RSVP system; ultimately there are options in how the two rooms and session times can be exploited;
- The Salon could start later afternoon and go into the evening...
- Further discussion is needed re. whether to use the Dissection Room(s) - there are security issues re access in the evening;
- Alyson: we could charge a small fee to cover building maintenance after-hours costs.

Meeting Closed: 7.15pm