ASSOCIATION OF PACIFIC RIM UNIVERSITIES
4TH SENIOR STAFF MEETING
AT THE NATIONAL TAIWAN UNIVERSITY
11-13 MARCH 2007

REPORT BY

FRANK P LARKINS, DEPUTY VICE CHANCELLOR (INTERNATIONAL)

Background

The Association of Pacific Rim Universities (APRU) represents some 37 universities from 16 economies with collective student enrolments of more than 1 million. The Association was established 10 years ago. The University of Melbourne is the most recent member, joining in 2006.

APRU exists to promote cooperation in teaching, research and knowledge transfer between research-led universities on the Pacific Rim. APRU maintains a full-time secretariat at the National University of Singapore under the direction of Professor Lawrence Loh. A subsidiary known as APRU World Institute (AWI) organises invitation-only workshops and is led by Professor Richard Dröbnick at the University of Southern California. The current chair of APRU is Professor Gavin Brown, University of Sydney. Further information is available from the website www.apru.org

Meeting Agenda

A copy of the agenda for the Senior Staff Meeting and the accompanying APRU Forum entitled 'Benchmarking Asia Pacific Universities in a Global Era: Competition and Collaboration' is attached. (Attachment A). I presented a paper at the forum entitled 'Transforming Melbourne's Curricula to meet 21st Century Higher Education Challenges.' A copy is available on request.

Report of Past and Future APRU Activities

The main focus of the business meeting was a discussion of the activities undertaken by APRU over the past 12 months and of those planned for the next one to two years. A detailed report was prepared by the APRU Secretariat and circulated in advance of the meeting (Attachment B). Some 27 of the 37 member universities were represented at the meeting by 40 delegates.

- Recent and Future Activities – Research Centric

  - Earthquake Hazards Research Symposia
    A very successful symposium involving 90 participants was held in San Francisco on 21-22 April, 2006 organised by Osaka University and the University of California, Berkeley.
The next symposium in the series on Earthquakes and Tsunamis will be held on 21-22 June, 2007 in Indonesia. The University of Indonesia and the University of Tokyo will organise the meeting.

- **Brain and Mind Research in the Asia Pacific Symposia Series**

  A very productive meeting involving some 60 researchers was held at the University of Sydney from 13-16 August, 2006. A timetable for the next 6 biennial meetings to 2018 has been established. The next meeting in the series will be at NUS in 2008. A secretariat has been established in Sydney to coordinate APRU collaborative activities in the neurosciences. Contact Professor Max Bennett, Sydney.

- **Asia-Pacific Real Estate Markets Symposia**

  The second symposia in this series will be held at NUS from 16-18 July, 2007 organised by the Hong Kong, Tsinghua and Southern California Universities. The Faculty of Economics and Commerce has been advised.

- **Study on the Asia Pacific Education Market**

  The Pacific Economic Cooperation Council (PECC) and APRU are combining to conduct a study of the tertiary education supply chain in both education importing and exporting countries. The outcome of the study is expected to be recommendations for education policy and business strategy initiatives. The APRU coordinator is Jim Ellis (University of Southern California) and the PECC coordinator is Chris Findlay (University of Adelaide). Researchers from Melbourne will be involved in this study.

- **APRU World Institute - Workshops**

  This body has been formed as a subsidiary of APRU to foster cooperation in education, research and enterprise with non-APRU members. The Vice Chancellor of Melbourne is a member of the Board. Three workshops are planned for 2007.

  - **Climate Change : Challenges and Strategies for Sustainable Cities**, April 4-6, 2007, Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UC, San Diego.

  - **The Role of Universities in Addressing Emerging Public Health Threats in the Asia Pacific Region**, May 24-26, 2007, Peking University.

  - **Public Aspects of Economic Integration among Pacific Rim Economies**, November 1-2 or 8-9, 2007, Kyoto University.

  The relationship between the activities of AWI and core activities of APRU was the subject of a very lengthy discussion without resolution.
- Recent and Future Activities – Student Centric

- Doctoral Student Conference
  The 7th Doctoral Student Conference was hosted by NUS from 17-21 July, 2006. The next conference in the series will be held at Keio University from 31 July to 3 August, 2007. Some 100 students from about 30 Pacific Rim Universities are expected to attend. The theme of the meeting will be (The Emerging Future of the Pacific Rim: Alliances, Collaboration and Networking). Faculties have been advised of this activity through the International Relations Office.

- Undergraduate Summer Program
  The first program was organised at Fudan University from 26 July to 4 August, 2006. Some 58 undergraduates from 27 APRU members participated. Fudan University intends to continue this initiative on an annual basis. The second meeting will be from 16-29 July, 2007 with the theme being (A Changing China: Economic and Political Reforms in Recent Years). Each APRU member is invited to send up to 2 students. The deadline for nominations is 18 May with the full in-country cost being US$150 for the two week experience. The timing of this program is difficult for undergraduates at Melbourne.

- Undergraduate Enrichment Program
  It was proposed to hold a (Winter Program) in December-January to complement the very successful (Summer Program) being held in Fudan to provide more undergraduates with the opportunity for a networking experience. Bids have been sought to host the event. This initiative would rotate between universities. Melbourne has indicated that it would consider hosting the program in 2008-9 if invited to participate.

- Recent and Future Activities – Technology Centric

- Chief Information Officers Meeting
  A meeting of APRU Chief Information Officers will be held at the University of Southern California from 21-23 March, 2007. Key themes for the meeting are Building Collaborative Teaching and Learning Environments, Grid Computing, Internet2 Applications and Services, Interactive Teaching, Governance and Security. Melbourne will be represented at the meeting along with about 20 other APRU members.

- Distance Learning and the Internet Conference
  The 7th Distance Learning and the Internet Conference was held at the University of Tokyo from 8-10 November, 2006. The 8th Conference in the series will be held at Chulalongkorn University, Thailand from 12-15 December, 2007. The primary aim of the meeting will be to exchange information on developing teaching and research applications that utilize advanced internet technologies such as distance learning, virtual conferences and telemedicine. Melbourne staff will be advised when more details are available.
Presidents Meetings

The 10th APRU Presidents meeting was held at the University of Sydney from 22-24 June, 2006. The next meeting to celebrate 10 years of APRU operations will be held at Zhejiang University, Hangzhou from 28 to 30 May, 2007. The theme of the associated forum will be ‘Higher Education and Emerging Economies: Developments in the Asia Pacific and International Cooperation in China.’ The Vice Chancellor and the Deputy Vice Chancellor (International) will attend the Presidents meeting.

Summary

APRU is a very active network involved in a wide range of collaborative teaching and research initiatives. The participation in activities by members is very high and the willingness to cooperate impressive. In general, the participating universities are among the leading research-led universities in their respective countries. Selective engagement in programs should be encouraged because participation can be very beneficial to Melbourne’s agenda to be a leader among major international university.

Frank P Larkins
Deputy Vice Chancellor (International)
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