



## Report to the University of Wollongong Council, 18<sup>th</sup> April 2008

The Wollongong Undergraduate Student's Association (WUSA) provides representation, advocacy and welfare services. What WUSA provides not only enhances the well being of undergraduates, but it also helps to create a vibrant campus community and UOW student experience. WUSA is integral to the objectives of Goal 4 of the University of Wollongong Strategic Plan 2008-2010.

- **Representation:** WUSA is considered the peak undergraduate representative body. WUSA would like to highlight the importance of Recommendation 1 of the Review of UOW Student Associations in maintaining and facilitating the Student Associations as of August 2007.
- **Advocacy:** WUSA provides an independent advocacy officer. This position advocates on behalf of students and their academic grievances and other grievances that might impact students. This position is currently vacant in the process of being reassigned thanks to Recommendation 4 of the Review of UOW Students Associations; however WUSA is concerned at the length of time the process is taking and the impact this is having on students who wish to use the service.
- **Welfare Services:** WUSA continues to provide free BBQs and emergency loans, as well as free access for all students to its advocacy officer, support for clubs and societies, support for representation on queer's and women's issues as well as environmental, educational and international issues that affect students. WUSA is concerned that the administrative costs the association is forced to incur effectively takes-away from the association's capacity to support these welfare services the association provides to students.
- **Tertangala:** The Tertangala celebrated its 45<sup>th</sup> Birthday in 2007. It continues to be the driving force in fostering student creativity at UOW. WUSA is looking at measures to encourage students to participate in the Tertangala such as academically accredited internship programs. WUSA will also be applying for grants to financially support the Tertangala.
- **Second Hand Bookstore:** The WUSA BookBank is currently being reestablished at a physical location within the WUSA space. The previous online structure reduced business considerably. The BookBank is seen as an important venture that can add to the association's dwindling finances.

The next half of this report will surmise the measures WUSA has taken concerning the Review of UOW Student Associations passed by University Council in August 2007. Obviously, there are some recommendations that apply to other sectors within the University and fall outside the responsibility of the Student Associations and so WUSA will comment on these aspects also.

- **Recommendation 1 – Representation Model:** WUSA notes that the University retains the student associations WUSA and WUPA, as of August 2007.
- **Recommendation 2 – Elections:**
  - (a, b) WUSA already falls into a common election period with University Council, Academic Senate and to some extent UniCentre. WUSA's elections are conducted electronically.
  - (c) All undergraduates, bar honours students who's programs are built into their undergraduate degrees, are eligible to vote in WUSA elections.
- **Recommendation 3 – Awareness and Participation:**
  - (a) WUSA has its own webpage. WUSA is unaware of the progress on the student representation webpage being established by the University.
  - (b) WUSA has engaged with Illawarra Committee for International Students ICIS and has several council members who are a part of ICIS.
  - (c, d) WUSA has not been informed of when any formal student representation forum will take place.
- **Recommendation 4 – Advocacy:** Refer to the previous point entitled advocacy.
- **Recommendation 5 – Space:**
  - (a, b) WUSA and WUPA have been vigorously exploring the option of co-location and there is an in-principle and positive agreement between WUSA and WUPA in this measure. WUSA is disappointed with UniCentre's attempts to relocate the Association at the end of 2009 and feels there should be proper discussion between all parties involved.
- **Recommendation 6 – Funding and Financial Responsibility:**
  - (a) A WUSA Funding Proposal for 2008 that went before UOW Administration was rejected. The reasons for this was not made clear, however WUSA was advised that funding would only be considered on a project-by-project basis. Having to reapply for funding in this measure would cost the Association significant time and expenditure and fails to make clear whether the University would retain WUSA in its current form.
  - (b) Budgets and quarterly income expenditure is published on the WUSA website.
- **Recommendation 7 – Governance / Reporting:**
  - (a, b) This report complies with point (a) and will be carried out through point (b) accordingly.
  - (c) The WUSA President emailed the Academic Registrar's Division and asked for assistance in the training of its office bearers during February 2008. So far no response has been given.