

SOUND

THE OFFICIAL BROADSHEET OF MONASH UNIVERSITY

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The Vice-Chancellor writes about.....

EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

On September 29 I had a conversation with a group of clinical medical students who were concerned about a number of aspects of their course and who seemed to be particularly worried by the system of "continuous assessment" which has been used by their Faculty for a number of years.

On October 4 there was a teach-in on this subject when an audience of a couple of hundred or so discussed the various aspects of assessment presented in four papers by members of the University.

Then, on October 16, I was visited by a group with a petition, signed by 68 students, asking for discussions to be held in each class so that the views of students who had had the experience of a full year under the present arrangements could be heard by the lecturers in charge.

As the deans were scheduled to have a meeting on the following day I undertook to put this proposition to them and it was added to the agenda forthwith; the petition was duplicated and circulated in time for the meeting. A lunch-time general meeting of students, perhaps unaware that the deans were to discuss the matter that afternoon, sent another delegation to see me and I spent a little time with them trying to discover whether their point of view was the same as that of the previous group: I think it was.

The deans agreed that the requested discussions should take place in faculties and departments and arrangements will be made as soon as possible. At the same time it will be realised that there are considerable difficulties in the way of making changes to the arrangements for this year's examinations even if students and staff are in agreement about them.

Perhaps I should finish by saying that there is no subject which concerns staff more than the proper method of examining and assessing students and an immense amount of time and thought is spent on it. Everyone is aware that it is extremely important for students and is therefore, understandably, a source of worry to them especially at this time of the academic year.

Students can therefore be assured that the staff is very anxious indeed to see that examinations and assessments are conducted fairly and in a manner that helps the education process.

J.A.L. Matheson
Vice-Chancellor

NEW STAFF ASSOCIATION EXECUTIVE

The executive committee of the Staff Association of Monash University for 1972-73 is as follows:

President:	Dr. I. R. Wilson (Chemistry)
Vice-President:	Professor B. West (Chemistry)
Secretary:	Dr. I. McCance (Physiology)
Treasurer:	Mr. M. Butler (Admin. Data Processing)
Members of Committee:	Mr. S. Bastomsky (Classical Studies), Miss J. M. Jones (Anthropology & Sociology), Dr. P. Riach (Economics), Professor R. Taft (Education), Mrs. I. M. White (Anthropology & Sociology), Mr. G. S. Wilson (Biochemistry), Associate Professor G. M. Kellerman (Biochemistry).
Co-opted Members:	Professor J. D. Legge (History & S. E. Asian Studies), Dr. P. Le P. Darvall (Civil Engineering).

NATIVE PLANT SALE

A constitution for the newly-formed Monash Plant Society (SOUND No. 91) was adopted and office-bearers elected at a meeting last week. Membership for the remainder of this year is free.

On Friday, October 20, the society plans to conduct a sale of low-cost native plants from a stall outside the Union. It is expected that between 400 and 600 plants will be offered.

Details of the society may be obtained from Peter Hohaus (2928), Brian Fox (2109) or David Boulton (3509).

NO NEED YET FOR MEDICAL SCHOOL, SAYS REPORT

A report recently compiled by the Monash Faculty of Medicine shows that the present annual output of graduates should satisfy the Australian demand for doctors over the next 10 to 15 years, without the need to establish a new medical school.

It quotes figures showing that the ratio of doctors to population had improved from 1:979 in 1954 to 1:815 in 1970 and is expected to reach 1:652 by 1986.

The report was adopted by the University Council at its meeting on October 9 and now becomes the University's submission to the AUC's Committee on Medical Schools.

The Committee, under the chairmanship of Professor P. Karmel, was formed at the request of the Federal Government to "...inquire into and make recommendations to the Australian Universities Commission on the need for new and expanded medical schools in the light of likely trends in the delivery of health care in Australia over the next 20 years."

The Monash report says that if the committee finds there is a need for an increase in medical graduates, this could be met by increasing the intake into existing medical schools by some 150 to 200 students a year before a new medical school is established.

It adds: "As part of this possible expansion, Monash Medical School could plan to increase its intake from the present 160 to 200 per annum."

However, the report points out: "An increase of intake in the Monash Medical School would be possible.....only if adequate and timely increases in capital and recurrent funds were provided for all university facilities and departments, including the Biomedical Library, both on the campus and downtown.

"An enlargement of existing overtaxed clinical resources, hospital and community, is mandatory for any increased intake in the Monash Medical School. The full development of teaching hospital facilities, including the Monash Medical Centre*, would be necessary before an increase in the intake could be agreed to by the Faculty."

(*The Monash Medical Centre, in this context, refers to the proposed campus hospital and associated health services.)

FREE CONCERT ON SUNDAY

The Astra Chamber Music Society Choir and Orchestra will give a free concert in Robert Blackwood Hall at 2.30 p.m. on Sunday, October 22.

It will be the fourth in the current series of Sunday afternoon concerts, which are supported by a grant of \$2000 recently given to the University by the Australian Council for the Arts.

The conductor for Sunday's performance will be George Logie Smith and the soloist Hugh Deakin, baritone. The programme consists of the Messe de Requiem Op. 48, by Faure, and the Requiem in C Minor for choir and orchestra, by Cherubini.

HOW MANY STUDENTS?

What's the desirable maximum student population for a university? The possible answers are as inexact as that which Abraham Lincoln is said to have given when asked how tall should a man be? His reply: "Long enough to connect his head and his feet."

Dean E. McHenry, Chancellor of the University of California, Santa Cruz, recently summarised available literature on the question. Some of the points he made in a report to the campus were:

An All-University Faculty Conference (of which he was chairman) in 1957 viewed "with alarm the huge enrolments looming for Berkeley and UCLA" and strongly recommended four new campuses. "We felt that growth of any campus beyond 25,000 would involve diminishing returns."

"In 1959-60, as University representative on the Master Plan Survey Team, I looked even closer at the problem. We concluded that the optimum University campus would have 12,500 students. The minimum was set at 5000 and the maximum at 27,500....."

"When I was appointed Chancellor at Santa Cruz, I was directed, in effect, to prepare a plan for a campus that could grow to 27,500 by the year 2000. Although many of us hoped growth could stop at an optimum of 12,500, we also laid out a physical plan that could, if necessary, accommodate the maximum."

"Dr. Clark Kerr told me two years ago that the greatest mistake we made in the Master Plan was the 27,500 maximum. The lower limit was set mainly by cost consideration, the upper by a more complicated and subjective analysis. *The largest institutions tend to impersonality, departmental exclusiveness, more disruption, administrative difficulties, and eroded intellectual environment.*"

Sir Gordon Sutherland, of Cambridge University, visited Santa Cruz twice earlier this year. His view was there was no optimum size for a university, but he identified a range of 5000 to 15,000, based on economies of scale - or, for a rich, well-endowed university, 5000-10,000. He said: "A state or public university for economic reasons will have to maintain a lower staff/student ratio and so will usually be forced into the range 10,000-15,000."

And how do Australian universities measure up? Here, from the Fifth Report of the AUC, are the 1972 enrolments for all Australian universities. The figures in brackets represent the projected 1975 enrolments:

Sydney	17,112	(17,490)	Queensland	17,277	(18,440)
New South Wales	16,084	(17,465)	James Cook	1,462	(2,085)
New England	6,177	(7,235)	Griffith	-	(510)
Newcastle	3,829	(4,735)	Adelaide	8,404	(9,385)
Macquarie	5,781	(8,365)	Flinders	2,489	(3,595)
Wollongong	1,510	(1,945)	Western Australia	8,665	(10,150)
Melbourne	14,984	(15,100)	Murdoch	-	(525)
Monash	11,769	(13,160)	Tasmania	3,390	(4,030)
La Trobe	4,039	(7,290)	Australian National	5,104	(6,200)