

Criminal Justice Research Consortium (CJRC) Workshop 1, 11 May 2006 - Summary

Clayfield Room Caulfield Campus

Introduction to the Workshop

Donna Cohen introduced the workshop and indicated how the CJRC fits into the picture of research initiatives in the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences.

Introduction to the CJRC

Leon Piterman, Arie Freiberg and Chris Trotter explained the conception of the CJRC. They described a series of discussions starting from the idea of creating a multidisciplinary approach to research problems in the area of criminal justice and rehabilitation to the promotion of the consortium via a flyer and finally the recruitment of the Research Program Development Unit (RPDU) to assist in further development of the project. Both Arie and Leon emphasised their own and their faculty's support of the CJRC. Chris Trotter described the model for supervising students within the CJRC, whereby research students are supervised by a multidisciplinary panel, increasing their experience across several disciplines within the field of criminal justice and rehabilitation research. Currently three students are enrolled in a PhD under the auspices of the CJRC. Chris Trotter also explained a recent grant success to review prison transition programmes that would not have occurred had he and his collaborators not highlighted the CJRC and its multidisciplinary nature. Chris encouraged all involved in the consortium to use the multidisciplinary nature of the consortium to attract both students and grants.

Speed-dating

Each workshop participant was allotted up to four minutes (strictly enforced) to speak about their research or a topic of research that interested them. This information has been collated into one document (*CJRC Workshop speaker notes.pdf*) and is available on the CJRC website.

From the speed-dating several themes were evident:

Major Theme	Minor Theme	Details
Criminal justice process	Policing	Policies and practices
		Interviews and confessions
		Civilian oversight
	Operation of the courts	Sentencing
		Effects of marginalisation
		Corporate judgements
	Processes within the prison system	Prison transition
Pro-social modelling		
Discipline		
Post-prison	Criminal record checks	
Women in the criminal justice system	Mental health	
	Impact on families	
	Welfare issues post-imprisonment	
Mental health issues	Stalkers/threateners	
	Violence/aggression risks	

	Criminal behaviour to gain access to services	
Corporate crime	Corruption	
	Accountability	
Linguistics	Threatening language	
	Interviewing and confessions	
	Information processing in court/prison	
	Likelihood to lead to criminal behaviour	

Discussions with the Criminology Research Council

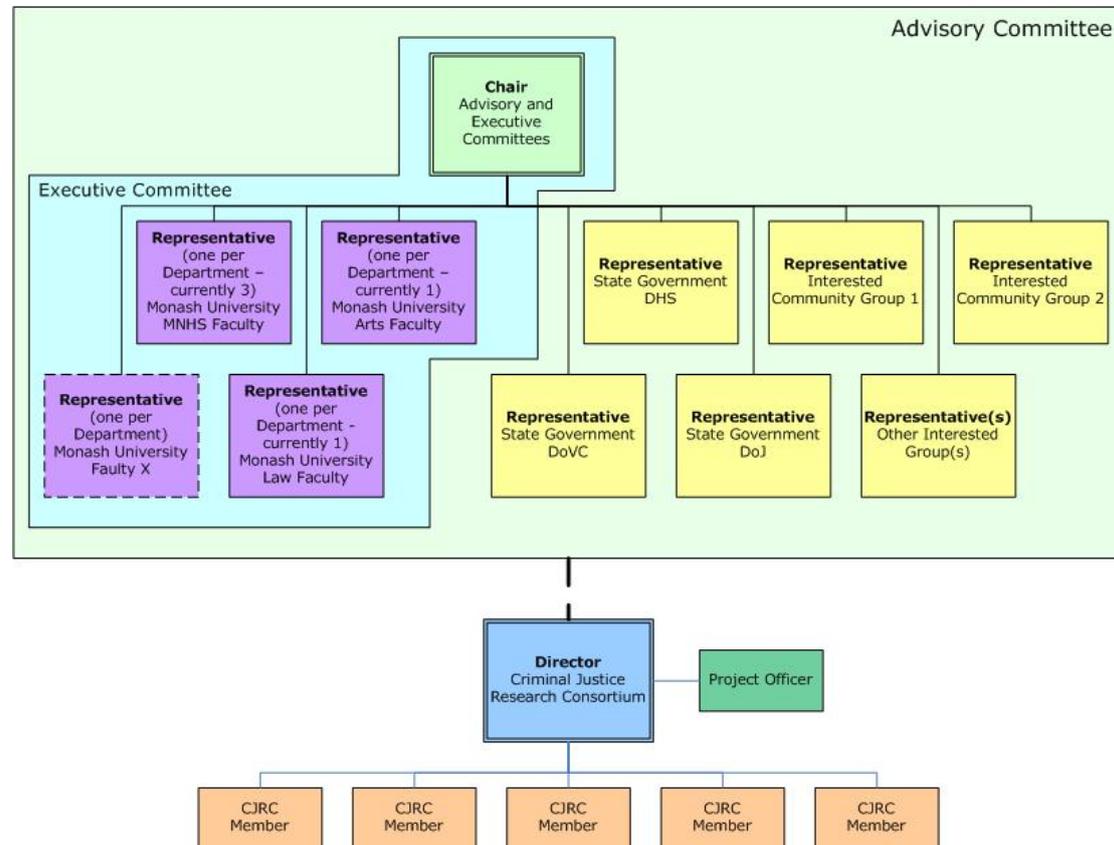
Bernadette McSherry spoke on her recent dealings with the Criminology Research Council (CRC). Bernadette reported that:

- She brought the CJRC to the attention of the CRC.
- The CRC consists of nine departmental advisors from various state and federal government departments (associated with criminology research) and one academic.
- Every two years the CRC convenes a meeting of academics in the area of criminology research to discuss issues relating to both criminology research as well as processes the CRC controls (such as grant distribution).
- Not all academics spoke during the meeting, nor were they encouraged to.
- In general the CRC is concerned about the poor quality of applications being submitted to the council.
- Applications from Go8 universities (which includes Monash University) are better than most, however research methodology could be improved.
- The CRC explained grants requesting more than two years of funding need to be approved by the government before they can be awarded, therefore it is hard for the CRC to award grants for more than two years.
- The academics suggested the CRC should increase its pool of funds and/or increase the money available for interdisciplinary research to better direct research in the area (as currently the CRC is too focused on empirical research and individuals).
- The CRC was also asked to increase its support of early career researchers and provide more fellowships.
- The CRC priorities for 2006 were articulated as:
 - Indigenous issues
 - Early interventions
 - Juries
 - High risk clients
 - Nexus between prisons and mental health
 - Programme design
 - Domestic violence
- The next funding round closes 11 August (applications are due at the Monash University Research Office by 1 August).

CJRC Structure

The management structure depicted in Figure 1 was proposed.

Figure 1: Proposed CJRC management structure



All agreed this was a suitable structure for the CJRC.

CJRC Function

Possible functions were suggested for the CJRC which included:

- Grant/funding opportunity notification
- Engaging external organisations
- Introduction to other researchers
- Connection with other research initiatives
- Workshops, think tanks, brain-storming ideas
- Funnelling potential research students into collaborative projects
- Initiation and coordination of large collaborative grant applications
- Promotion of Monash research to the broader community

Due to time constraints, the specificities of each point were not discussed, and a sense of what was the most important function of the CJRC was not obtained. This information will be gathered through a workshop feedback form (workshop feedback.pdf) available on the website.

CJRC Research Opportunities

As mentioned earlier, the speed-dating was successful and the research descriptions presented are available on the web. Prior to the workshop Donna and Richard created a network diagram indicating the current collaborative links in the CJRC. From the speed-dating it became obvious several more collaborations are

possible. Those previously identified links (blue) and the newly identified (potential) links (green) are indicated in Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Collaboration map for criminal justice research at Monash University

