

21 February 2016

Professor Dawn Freshwater
Senior Deputy Vice Chancellor

Dear Dawn

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the proposed naming of the Colleges. My comments and the discussion that follows relates to the proposed naming of a College of Social Science.

In summary, I have come to the conclusion that because of

- the history of Arts as a foundation faculty of the University
- the overwhelming use of Arts in their nomenclature amongst 131 universities in Australia and overseas
- the immense value of the Arts brand to students and alumni
- the origin of disciplines and professions likely to be considering joining the new college

the proposed College must include 'Arts' in the title.

The following discussion provides evidence for this argument. Detailed appendices are not included for reasons of space, but are available if required.

1. Proposed New Structure

The proposed new UWA structure collapses 9 faculties into 4 colleges. I have no objection to the number of colleges, or to the renaming of faculties as colleges, but do have a major objection to a College of Social Science replacing the Faculty of Arts.

There are a number of reasons why I believe that the obliteration of 'Arts' is inappropriate and would damage the reputation of the university. These relate to nomenclature, branding and external interface locally, nationally and internationally

2. History

The Faculty of Arts was one of three original faculties when UWA was established.¹ It is noteworthy that the University of Melbourne makes a virtue of such longevity on its

¹ UWA Annual Report, 1913

website with their Faculty of Arts home page beginning 'Welcome to the Faculty of Arts; the original and oldest faculty at the University of Melbourne.'²

UWA's Faculty of Arts has been impacted by three major structural changes within the university in the past 25 years (1991, 1994, 2002). After nearly eighty years as a separate entity, it became part of the Division of Arts and Architecture in 1991 when the university was restructured into five divisions as part of the process of devolution. This lasted only four years: in 1994 another organizational restructure saw it revert to the Faculty of Arts. A further restructure of the university into nine faculties in 2002, resulted in the creation of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences. It reverted to the original name of Faculty of Arts in 2012.³

3. Branding

The Faculty of Arts is a distinctive brand that its alumni have responded to positively for over one hundred years. They do not think of themselves as Social Science or Humanities graduates, but rather as Arts graduates. Their degree is a Bachelor of Arts. Today they still call themselves Arts students. The Arts, having been used in universities since the middle ages, provides a sense of longevity, depth and span.

The collective term 'Humanities', like Arts, has existed since the middle ages. But it has a much shorter history in Australia. The Australian Humanities Research School, a subsidiary of the Australian National Research Council, and forerunner of the Academy of Humanities (1969) was not founded until 1955.⁴

The collective terms 'Social Science' or 'Social Sciences' are of more recent derivation. They were used very sporadically in the nineteenth century, only coming into common usage in universities in the mid twentieth century as a result of a desire to compete with the emphasis (and funding) provided for science during post war reconstruction. To promote the social sciences, the Australian Social Science Research Council, later incorporated as the Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia (1971), was established in 1942.⁵

While the Academies reflect excellence in scholarship, the boundaries between each academy are not clear and there are many examples of members belonging to both academies. This is especially apparent in my own discipline of History. Australia's foremost historians have presided over both groups (eg ASSA – Stuart Macintyre, Paul

² <http://arts.unimelb.edu.au/>

³ UWA Senate Annual Reports. See Appendix D.

⁴ Graeme Davison, 'Phoenix Rising: the Academy and the Humanities in 1969', *Humanities Australia*, 2010

⁵ Stuart Macintyre, *The Poor Relation: a history of Social Sciences in Australia*, Melbourne University Publishing, 2010

Bourke, AGL Shaw; AAH – Deryck Schreuder and Iain McCalman. Sir Keith Hancock was president of both).⁶

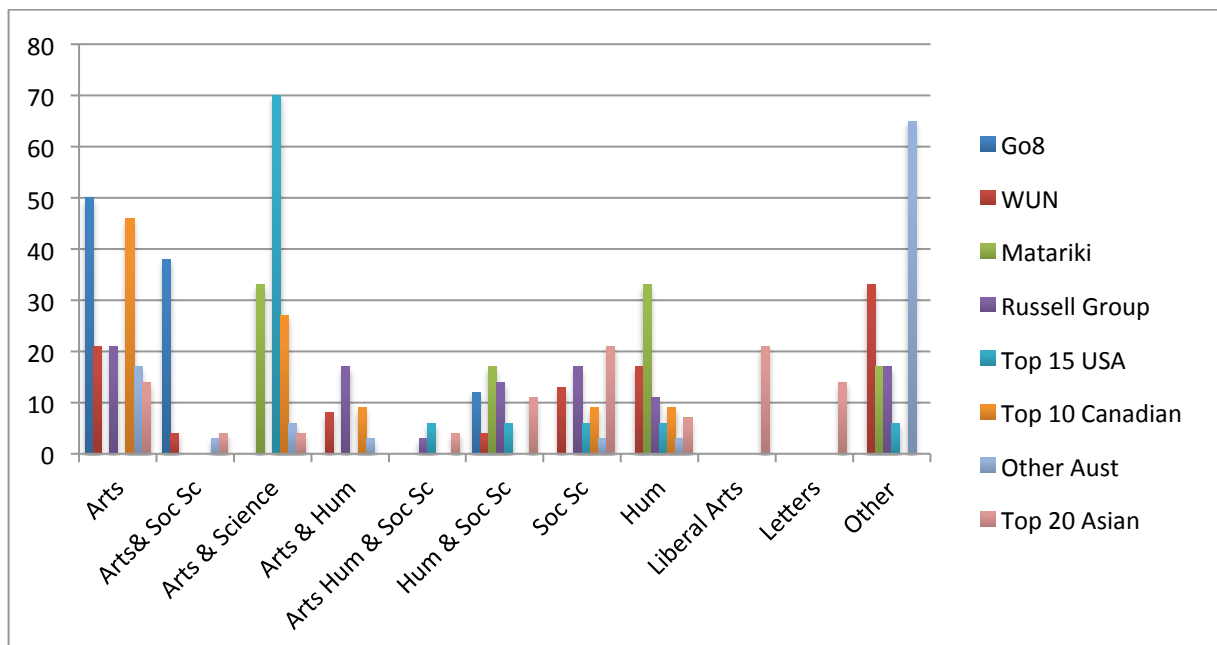
Neither of the terms Humanities or Social Science/s have much bearing on the way students or graduates think of themselves and this was the main reason why the Faculty Board accepted the proposal to change the cumbersome title, Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, to the Faculty of Arts in 2012.

4. Nomenclature in other Universities

Arts is central to the nomenclature of 93 (71%) of the 131 universities in Australia, the UK, North America and Asia that I have reviewed.⁷ These 131 universities include the Go8, WUN, Matariki Group, Russell Group, Top (QS) 15 US (including all Ivy League), Top (QS) 10 Canada, Top 20 (QS) Asia (inc 3 C9 and all 3 SKY), and all other Australian universities.

Social Sciences is used, alone or with other names, by 57 (43%) of 131 universities reviewed, while Humanities is used, alone or with other names, by 43 (33%) of these universities.

Amongst the Go8 universities, 50% use the nomenclature Faculty of Arts, around 38% Arts & Social Sciences, and 12% Humanities and Social Sciences. The trend is less clear in the other 30 Australian universities; 16% use Arts and 67% use a combination of other titles, although of the latter percentage the majority use Arts within other titles.



⁶ <http://www.assa.edu.au/about/history/presidents>,
<http://www.humanities.org.au/About/History/Establishment.aspx>

⁷ For full details see Appendices A and B.

Nomenclature of Arts-related Faculties, Colleges, Schools in 131 universities by percentage

The above chart indicates relevant nomenclature used in key overseas universities, as well as Australian universities, by percentage. Of the universities in the Worldwide Universities Network, 24% use Faculty of Arts, 16% use Humanities alone and 12% use Social Sciences alone. Within the Matariki Group, 25% use Arts & Science and 25% use Humanities alone. Amongst Russell Group universities in the UK, 18% use Arts, 15% use Arts & Humanities, 15% use Humanities & Social Sciences, and 15% use Social Sciences alone. Within the top fifteen United States universities, 67% use Arts and Sciences. In the top ten Canadian universities, 42% use Arts and 25% use Arts & Sciences. Of the top 20 Asian universities, 24% Liberal Arts and 24% use Social Sciences, 15% use Arts. Another 13% use Letters. Only 9% use Humanities, but this may be subsumed in the titles Liberal Arts and/or Letters.

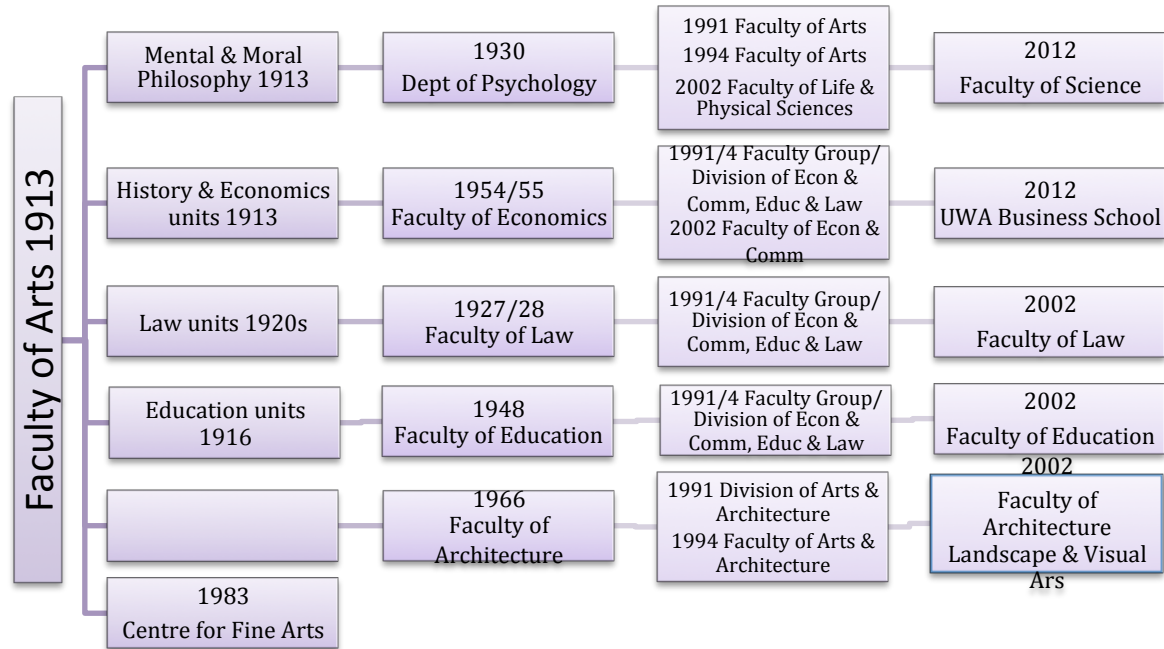
There are of course caveats to this analysis. It is a sample of 131 universities, using Australian universities as well as leading universities in the UK and North America and Asia. No attempt has been made to analyse nomenclature in European universities, apart from those in the WUN and Matariki groups. It should also be pointed out that nomenclature is always dependent on a number of local factors; for example, historical precedents, enrolments, staffing, and funding issues as well as local university politics.

This analysis, however, does suggest that UWA would be out of step with the vast majority of universities, against which it compares and measures itself, if it were to drop Arts from the nomenclature of its colleges.

5. Composition of the College

Although we have not yet been asked to comment on the potential composition of the proposed College, this will clearly have an impact on its nomenclature. In the proposed four-college structure, Education, Law, Business, Architecture, Landscape and Visual Arts, do not have a natural home in the other proposed colleges and may be considering joining a proposed College of Social Science.

All of these disciplines and professions emerged from the Faculty of Arts, as is shown below. Law was created from the Faculty of Arts in 1927/28, Psychology 1930, Education 1948, Economics 1954/55 (later spawning Commerce and the Business School), Fine Arts 1983 (joining FALVA in 2002), while Architecture was part of the Division (later Faculty) of Arts and Architecture between 1991 and 2001. Hence, from an historical perspective, a title that includes Arts should be acceptable to these groups.



Graphic showing disciplines and professions originally part of the Faculty of Arts

The minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting of Academic Board on 17 February (which I was unable to attend) show that College of Social Sciences, College of the Liberal Arts, College of Liberal and Applied Arts, or College of the Human Sciences were suggested as alternatives to College of Social Science. There is no indication of the level of support for these suggestions or whether they were discussed.

So why a *College of Social Science*? Of the 131 universities that I have reviewed, none use the nomenclature Social Science alone (as faculty, college or division). There seems no compelling reason why this name has been proposed. Social Sciences (plural), however, is used by a total 12% of universities reviewed. In my view, a title such as College of Social Science or College of Social Sciences, bearing in mind the emergence of the term in universities in the 1950s, 60s and 70s, conjures up the image of a vocationally-orientated polytechnic.

Where does this leave Humanities? A *College of Humanities*? If precedence matters, this is more unusual than College of Social Sciences, being used by only 9% of universities reviewed. Furthermore it is unlikely to be acceptable to those disciplines and professions considering joining the proposed College.

Arts & Humanities is also rare, but less so. Overall it is used by 7% of 131 universities reviewed.

A *College of Arts & Social Sciences* has also been mooted. Apart from the Go8, in which 3 universities use this combination, it is very rare (6%) amongst the other universities

reviewed.

A College of Arts, Humanities & Social Sciences? This is extremely rare (2%). No other Go8 has adopted this title. The Russell Group, the top fifteen US universities and the top 20 Asian universities have each used it once only. Further, the Vice Chancellor is reported as stating that two content descriptors are acceptable in a college name, but not three.

Another option is *Arts & Science*. This is used almost exclusively by North American universities in the 131 universities reviewed. Ten of the top 15 US universities, 3 (Queens, Montreal and Toronto) and of the top 10 Canadian universities and 1 (Tokyo) of the top 20 Asian universities use this nomenclature. It is not used by any Go8, any other Australian university, any member of WUN or the Russell Group. Hence while the term Arts & Science has some merit in terms of UWA's reputation and recognition amongst North American universities, it does not have currency in the UK or Australia.

College of Liberal Arts or *College of Liberal and Applied Arts*, have also been suggested recently. The QS Top Universities Ranking website advises that Liberal Arts is accepted as covering the following fields; Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences and Formal Sciences.⁸ Although originally a US term (hundreds of dedicated Liberal Arts Colleges exist in the US), Liberal Arts has been adopted by some of our neighbouring Asian universities, where 8 of the top 20 use the nomenclature Liberal Arts. No North American, Canadian, or Australian universities reviewed use the term, although the University of Sydney has introduced a Bachelor of Liberal Arts and Science. Four Asian universities reviewed also use the nomenclature, Letters.

Conclusion

Based on UWA's history, precedent, the value of its brand built up over more than a century, and recognition by universities around the world, it is essential that Arts be included in the name of the new college. The proposed College of Social Science is not appropriate and should be rejected. Strong consideration should be given to naming the proposed college – College of Arts. If this not acceptable to the majority of likely constituents, the nomenclature decided on must include Arts. The value of Arts to UWA, its students and alumni, is inestimable.



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⁸ <http://www.topuniversities.com/blog/what-liberal-arts-education>