



**Independent MBA Business School**

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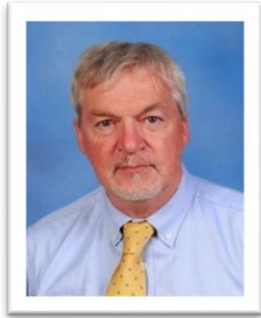
## **UBSS Grade Review Committee (GRC) Membership**

**The current membership of the Grade review Committee is 4 members as at July 2024 –**

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| <b>Associate Professor Tom O'Connor</b>   | <b>Chair – Acting Executive Dean</b>    |
| <b>Associate Professor Richard Xi</b>     | <b>Secretary - Associate Professor</b>  |
| <b>Associate Professor Wayne Smithson</b> | <b>Program Director - Undergraduate</b> |
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**A profile on each member is provided -**

## **CHAIR**



### **Associate Professor Tom O'Connor – *PhD***

Dr. Tom O'Connor has an extensive academic background, including a Bachelor of Arts, a Diploma of Education, multiple graduate diplomas, three master's degrees, and a Doctorate in Postmodern Theory. He began his career teaching English, Drama, and Media Studies in secondary schools across Australia, the UK, Ireland, and the US. In Australia, he served as English Coordinator at CRC St Albans and held leadership positions at CRC Sydenham and Caroline Chisholm Catholic College, where he played a key role in the school's amalgamation and development of the first VCE English curriculum.

Transitioning to higher education, Dr. O'Connor lectured at Griffith University and Central Queensland University, developed business curricula for the Saudi VET sector, and served as Head of Business at Ras Al Khaimah Women's College in the UAE. He also led the Victoria International School Sharjah project, bringing Australian pedagogy to the UAE.

Returning to Australia, he became Curriculum Director and Acting Principal at Thomas Carr College, initiating partnerships to deliver the VCE in China. At Firkbank Grammar School, he expanded offshore VCE programs to ten schools, making it the largest provider of VCE offshore.

Dr. O'Connor has a passion for musical theatre, writing and directing productions performed internationally, including in Melbourne, California, the Middle East, and Northern Ireland. He is currently a Fellow of the UBSS Centre for Scholarship and Research, a consulting Principal at Shanghai Normal University Tianhua High School, and holds roles as Associate Director of Postgraduate Studies and Director of Special Projects at UBSS Melbourne.

## **SECRETARY**



**Associate Professor Richard Xi** - *Cert Bus (UNSW), Cert Ec and Bus (Fudan), Dip Acc (SIT), Dip Interp (NSIT), B. Htl Mgt (SIT), Grad Cert Tourism Management (SIT), Grad Cert China Stud (USyd), Grad Cert Bus Admin (UBSS), MA Asian Studies (UNSW)*

Richard Xi is the **Deputy Program Director** Postgraduate Program at UBSS.

Before Richard relocated to Australia, his professional career commenced at the Shanghai Municipal Bureau of Tourism where he gained several years of experience in hotel management, project management as well as staff development and training.

In 1998 he returned to China and was appointed a Senior Business Development Adviser by a Sino-Holland joint venture in Shanghai to provide advice to the JV's business development strategy.

Before he joined UBSS, Richard worked at Western Sydney University (WSU) and in charge of student activities and events at WSU the College Westmead Campus. He was the chief presenter in the Colombo Plan seminar 'China's past, present and future' organized by WSU Law School and a chief presenter in WSU the College's 'Cultural and Language Exchange Program (CLEP)'. Prior to WSU, he worked at UNSW Global (University of New South Wales) as a business development coordinator, marketing officer, China project manager in coordinating UNSW Global/UNSW's international business plan and project with China.

He was a cultural adviser and editor to Alan Manly's book 'The Unlikely Entrepreneur' (Chinese version), and a cultural adviser to the book 'Doing Business in China' (published by UNSW press).

Richard is Secretary of the Grade Review committee and the Course Advisory committee.

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### **Associate Professor Wayne Smithson**

Wayne has held a number of senior finance positions including Finance Director for a number of national companies over a commercial career extending beyond 40 years. Most notable senior positions that include National Finance Director for Ernst & Young and Finance Director for the Bank of New Zealand in

Australia. While his primary industry focus was in the financial services and insurance sectors, Wayne has experience across many industries including manufacturing, services and logistics.

Wayne has also had significant international experience in the Asia- Pacific region - where as Regional Finance Director for the region for a Swiss based professional services organisation - he was involved in a number of key business acquisitions. Most recently, he has owned and operated a successful Tax and Accounting practice.

As well as holding a Master of Business Administration and an undergraduate degree from Macquarie University in accounting, Wayne is a qualified CPA and is a graduate member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors and a Fellow of the Australian institute of Management.

In addition to 40 years of commercial experience, Wayne has had an extensive career in teaching at Higher Education level. Wayne began to focus on a teaching in 2008 accepting a sessional lecturer position at Sydney University in 2008. In 2010 Wayne turned his attention to Higher Education Teaching as his focus profession and has taught at a number of universities and Colleges including Western Sydney University, Charles Sturt University, Federation University and Charles Darwin University. Wayne has taught at both graduate and undergraduate levels across both Business and Accounting Disciplines, successfully combining a dynamic of theoretical and practical application drawing on his extensive years of commercial experience in particular at Board and Director Level.

Wayne is currently the **Program Director** for the Undergraduate programs at UBSS Sydney campus, an Associate Professor, a member of the Academic Senate and Chair of the Academic Integrity Committee at UBSS.

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