



Intellectual Implosion

Peter Karmel

During the last couple of months I have been out of action and in the hands of surgeons and nurses. Plenty of time for thinking. Two separate, but not entirely unrelated, thoughts have occupied me. First, the importance of having high level Schools of Medicine, of Nursing, and of the other health professions, staffed by recognised leaders of the profession in sufficient numbers to stimulate one another and with the capacity to establish a firm intellectual base to advance their disciplines. Moreover, this should apply to all professions that have an intellectual base and a potential for development through scholarship and research.

My second thought was stimulated by hearing radio snippets and reading news items. It seemed to me that the dogma of economic rationalism, the idea that the pursuit of private interests in a market environment is the best way of serving the public good, is slowly being moderated. The notion that public good and private interest need to be balanced and that policies should be judged on their expected consequences rather than on any ideological principles is slowly regaining ground.

Ironically, when I studied economics in the 1940s, the traditional neo-classical view that private interests were the best way of serving the public good was regarded as old hat and a discredited doctrine. It is almost 50 years since I became Professor of Economics at the University of Adelaide and during the 1950s, 1960s and most of the 1970s Australian economists were deeply concerned with the practicalities of public good issues, including economic growth, full employment and the distribution of income. Concern with inefficiencies in the private sector was

also a major question, but not an overwhelming one.

Recent trends in public policy have placed emphasis on market solutions and on the minimisation of government expenditure. These have affected higher education policy. I want to discuss this policy in the light of the two thoughts that have been revolving in my mind.

Since 1988 the number of formally recognised universities in Australia has doubled – there are now 39 (37 public and 2 private). Total student numbers rose to 672,000 by 1998 – an increase of 60 per cent in a decade. In relation to our population this is a large number, and we figure in the top echelons of OECD countries for participation in higher education. In fact, about 45 per cent of all young people will enrol in a higher education course at some time of their lives – of course, they will not all graduate, but about 70 per cent of them will. The expansion in enrolments has itself increased access and disadvantaged groups have generally benefited; in addition, the multiplication of university campuses has widened geographical access. But university access has not only widened; it has deepened. Post graduate course work and research training have expanded proportionately more than undergraduate work, enrolments doubling over 1988-98 as against a 50 per cent increase for undergraduates.

Note that if enrolments in award courses (of at least a year's length) in vocational education and training institutions are added to higher education enrolments, probably about 70 per cent of a cohort enrol in formal post-secondary education. In the longer run I would want to aim at a figure approach 90 per cent, split about equally between higher education and vocational education and training.

The last decade has also witnessed an astonishing increase in course completions, increasing by about 80 per

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From the President

Remarkable as it seems to me, by July I will have held office for a two year term. As indicated earlier I will not be standing for a further term. The job has been challenging, rewarding and time consuming. The opportunity to lead this Australasian society concerned with the furthering of higher education has been an honour. My commitment was for two years. It is now time for me to give more attention to local priorities.

What has been achieved?

We have moved forward with the accreditation/recognition issue, with HERDSA having established that it will pursue the idea of offering 'Certificates of Recognition' for programmes or courses in higher education teaching and learning. This possibility was recently canvassed with Vice-Chancellors of all universities in the Australasian region. While many were tentative, most responded favourably. The Executive commissioned Jackie Lublin to develop a project brief for the initiative and is currently considering this document.

On the international front HERDSA has played a more significant role in the International Consortium for Educational Development. I have acted as Australasian delegate to the ICED Council, most recently attending the council meeting in Maastricht. Patricia Weeks is one of the editors of the ICED journal, The International Journal for Academic Development. I was invited to bid to host the biennial ICED Conference in Perth in 2002. Having this conference in Perth is now a strong possibility.

Putting the 'R' back into HERDSA has progressed significantly, under the

portfolio created for this purpose. The 'New Researcher's Prize' is just one of a number of initiatives being instituted.

The Executive has developed a draft strategic plan for the Society. This is a major revision of the previous plan, developed in 1995. It will be subject to scrutiny by the membership before it is adopted.

A great deal of work has gone in to maintaining HERDSA's publications profile. HERD, the Green and Gold Guides, the NEWS and Conference Proceedings continue to be valued internationally as well as within the region. Bulk sales of various series have proved popular.

While I have not mentioned HERDSA conferences above, they continue to be a vital part of the Society's activity. Recognition needs to be given to the enormous amount of work required to mount a conference and special thanks are due for the work done by the people in Auckland and work being done by those in Victoria. With no offers for the 2000 conference the need to think creatively about this event becomes most pressing.

The achievements listed above are certainly not mine and the list is not exhaustive. Having generally resisted naming names, I would like to finish with a collective thank you to my colleagues on the Executive and the Canberra Office staff. A lot of what I have been involved in with them has been hard work. But mercifully some of it has also been great fun! I wish the new Executive every success.

Owen Hicks

President

"To talk in public, to think in solitude, to read and to hear, to inquire, and to answer inquiries, is the business of a scholar."

Samual Johnson

From the Editor

Welcome to another academic year which by now is well under way. Life certainly does not get any easier for academics and institutions. The uncertainty about the future of research funding, the controversy about student union contributions and the possible impact on funding and services and the continued stressful working conditions provide a difficult working environment in which it is increasingly difficult to be a high quality teacher. However as the articles in this issue show there are those who continue to work at good teaching and have encouraging results to show for their efforts.

Please read the report on the important Strategic Planning meeting held last November to re-think directions for the Society. Members comments are important to guide the Executive in finalising the strategic plan. At this time

HERDSA could play a greater role in offering comment on current issues in higher education and also provide support and resources for teaching at a time when teaching has never before had such a high profile in Australia at least. Please give serious thought to the nomination of a new President to lead the Society at this time of opportunity.

There is quite a variety of articles in this issue and I continue to be encouraged by the response (I hope the honeymoon as Editor continues!). Please let me know if there are areas of tertiary education that are being neglected and also try to encourage colleagues working in that area to write articles for the News.

I have tried to include more news and articles from our colleagues in New Zealand in this issue and am grateful for the response and hope we can build on that in future issues.

I had hoped to publish in this issue two reports of research that was previously included under Research in

Progress. Unfortunately space proved tight so the reports have been placed on the HERDSA Website. They will appear in the July issue.

We also have included some news and contributions from HERDSA Life Members. I have had a great response from some members and they have provided considerable information about their distinguished careers, which regretfully I will have to edit otherwise we would need a special issue devoted to them. In particular Peter Karmel writes some thoughts on the current situation in higher education which were reported in the National Press and which should give rise to some interesting debate.

Finally we welcome Liz Wilson to HERDSA News as our new desk top designer. Liz works as a graphic designer for the Queensland Performing Arts Trust.

Roger Landbeck
Editor

Intellectual Implosion

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cent to 155,000 annually. Given that staff has increased by only one fifth over that period, the rise in productivity of university staff, as measured in the usual way, has been very positive.

Over the past decade the Commonwealth Government's policy on higher education has been, broadly speaking, to expand the system and to reduce the total costs to the Government. In these objectives it has been successful. The system has greatly expanded and costs have fallen. Public expenditure on higher education as a percentage of gross domestic product peaked twenty years ago at 1.5 per cent of GDP; it is now approaching 1.0 per cent. In absolute terms Commonwealth expenditure, relieved by the Higher Education Contribution Scheme, is set to decline in 1998-99 for the first time ever,

in spite of the enlarged system. Within the total, Commonwealth operating grants, net of HECS, appear to have peaked in 1996 and by 2001 will be some \$500 million lower.

The Commonwealth's emphasis on expansion has been accompanied by concerns about quality. But the concept of university quality is an elusive one. The Government has largely relied on the publication of large numbers of performance indicators. Many of these are no more than indicators of diversity; of course, institutions differ in the backgrounds of their students, the students' academic standards, staff qualifications, subject mix, mix of teaching mode and so on. Such indicators do little more than acknowledge that any group of people will have differing heights and weights. Some indicators are quite unclear in their interpretation; for example, the proportion of students completing a course or a unit is confounded by its dependence on the quality of the students, the quality of the teaching, the

difficulty of the course, the standard of the examining. What conclusions can you draw from a high completion rate in a particular institution? Other indicators bear a clearer relationship to quality; for example, students' assessments of good teaching, of their overall satisfaction and of their acquisition of generic skills, but still need to be treated with caution, as students' judgments must be tempered with their teachers' greater understanding of what they should learn and experience at university.

In all the material on quality there is little reference to academic staff. Yet distinguished academic staff stand out: they are admired by their peers, they produce path-breaking scholarship and research, they write widely-read books and research papers, they inspire advanced students, they are elected to the learned academies and societies, they win prizes. Moreover, they tend to be concentrated in certain universities or parts thereof. Why have these aggregations of scholars and researchers been so ignored?



The answer lies in one word 'elitism'. Opposition to elitism in our higher education system from government, the public and the institutions themselves is so strong that all universities have to be treated in exactly similar fashion. There must be no tall poppies; none must stand out from the crowd.

Academic distinction is only one important dimension of a university's activities. Universities serve local communities, they offer many services, they seek to support disadvantaged students, they enter into partnerships with local industry. They may well achieve excellence and high reputation along any of these dimensions. But the advanced intellectual base that needs to be provided by appropriate institutions should be given high priority.

The antagonism to providing special support to a limited number of institutions on the grounds of its being elitist is really quite extraordinary, given the obvious ways in which top scholars and researchers stand out above the rest.

It is also extraordinary in its contrast to the Commonwealth's policy on sport. Commonwealth (and indeed State) Governments support popular involvement in sport, both professional and recreational, on a wide scale. However, very large sums are directed to the support of elite institutions, like the Australian Institute of Sport and the various State institutes, for the development of the elite sportspeople. The word 'elite' is commonly used in Commonwealth and State publications, in favourable terms, without the slightest embarrassment. Of course, success is readily measured – medals, victories and so on. But success in the intellectual world is also measured by similar distinctions. Education policy should be based on widespread participation for all and special facilities for top graduates and academics, just as sports policy is directed to widespread popular involvement and the training and support of elite athletes.

If the current populist, egalitarian approach to higher education continues, the intellectual base of the Australian universities will be eroded, Australian life will be the poorer and Australia will lose what has been its proud place in the world of scholarship and research. Moreover, these tendencies are being reinforced by reductions in academic staff numbers brought about by funding

cuts and salary increases. Since 1996 staff numbers have been falling, and cumulatively are likely to decline by about 10 per cent. Recruitment of young academics is thus becoming rarer. Bright young graduates are being turned away. As a result the academic workforce is ageing – unless reversed, its quality will inevitably decay.

What to do? First, the issue of research. I am not proposing major changes to the present system of competitive research grants or of support for special research centres, key centres or cooperative research centres. But I believe that Australia needs a number of

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major research aggregations with guaranteed long term funding to support intellectual inquiry at the highest level – so that long-term curiosity motivated scholarship and research can be undertaken. The Australian National University has ten such research schools. There have been rumours that the Commonwealth may change the present arrangements and severely cut the block funding. These Research Schools have over a long period involved a huge investment in physical infrastructure – buildings, equipment, libraries and information technology – but, above all, in human capital. Large numbers of distinguished scholars and scientists have been gathered together and nurtured – they form a most significant intellectual base. No doubt, the Research Schools may need to reinvent themselves and to change directions and emphases. But to weaken them significantly would be an act of pure intellectual vandalism.

I propose that the Commonwealth fund not only the ANU Research Schools, but another ten or so. They should all be known as National Research Schools. They should be located at universities that have appropriate infrastructure in terms of library and information technology and, above all, a sufficient aggregation of senior recognised academic staff. The cost would be about \$150 million a year. Already there are major activities in

some institutions that fit this model, for example, the Waite Agricultural Research Institute at the University of Adelaide.

My second suggestion relates to the basic humanities, social sciences and natural sciences. At many of our universities these are no longer seriously taught (largely because of lack of demand), and I have no quarrel with that. At others their staffing is under threat. Disciplines like philosophy, classics, modern languages, linguistics, physics, and mathematics are the very foundations on which important applied research is based. If we lose strength in these, much of what all the universities stand for will crumble.

I suggest that a total of some 20 to 25 National Faculties of Arts and National Faculties of Science be established. Again, they should be in universities with patent strengths in physical and human infrastructure. Their main tasks would be to maintain a critical mass of high level scholars in the basic arts and sciences, to offer superior honours courses at third and fourth year levels, to offer post-graduate course work and research training. They should be funded by supplementary funding on a per student basis in relation to the number of undergraduates attracted by the National Faculties who rank in the top 20 to 25 per cent at tertiary entrance examinations or the equivalent. There may be some 40,000 such students. I estimate a total cost, also of about \$150 million a year.

My third suggestion relates to the large number of professional schools that have developed. The Commonwealth has, quite rightly, kept a firm grip on the number of Medical Schools, but Schools of Law, Nursing, Engineering, Business etc have proliferated. This has to be accepted. However, there ought to be some discrimination in the offering of advanced specialisations and higher degrees, based mainly on staff strengths. Some form of accreditation should be introduced. The costs involved should be minimal – indeed, there may be savings.

Finally, there seems to me to be no case for interfering with the large number of general arts and sciences courses, many with an applied or semi-vocational bias. These are widely offered and the institutions are best left to make decisions about them. My three suggestions are aimed solely at achieving the highest level of intellectual understanding and professional practice through appropriate scholarship and



research. Incidentally, I would see the enrolment of PhD students limited to the National Research Schools, the National Faculties and the recognised advanced centres in the professional schools. Research training needs to be undertaken in an appropriate atmosphere peopled by a sufficient number of recognised scholars.

Arrangements of the kind proposed above will require decisions on where to locate National Research Schools and National Faculties and on the degree of regulation of the offerings of professional schools. These should be made by a statutory body comprising distinguished senior academics (not university managers or vice-chancellors) and prominent citizens, assisted by expert panels. Above all, the statutory body should be removed from political influence, especially of the electoral kind. That is the best way to avoid political wrangling in decision-making and to take account solely of the merits of the case.

The cost of the above proposals (\$300 million annually) is not large compared with the now falling total Commonwealth expenditure on higher education (about \$4.5 billion). It represents about one fifth of the savings that the Commonwealth has made through the introduction of HECS.

These proposals are not inconsistent with a view that I have held for ten years: namely, that undergraduate teaching, and perhaps some basic graduate work, should be funded through a system of scholarships, with the universities free to set fees and determine student numbers. Such an arrangement would have the advantages of greater autonomy for the institutions

and of the efficiencies to be gained through the operation of a freer market for educational services. My proposals, however, accept that a free market does not always produce results that are socially optimal. The degree of regulation that I am advocating thus balances the pursuit of the public good (emphasis on building up concentrations of high level academics engaged in advanced work) against the self-interest of the individual universities to be all treated equally. Access to higher education will in no way be affected.

How will these ideas be received? There may be a dozen vice-chancellors who will welcome them, but they will be

“I propose that the Commonwealth fund not only the ANU Research Schools, but another ten or so...”

very cautious in what they say. The self-interest of the institutions headed by the other vice-chancellors will ensure their opposition. The Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee is now a collection of very diverse interests and its utterings reflect the lowest common denominator.

It would be surprising to see it engage in a real debate on real issues. The staff and student unions pursue narrow interests: the National Tertiary Education Union is mainly concerned with staff conditions and salaries to the extent that staff losses seem a reasonable trade-off for higher salaries. The

National Union of Students is mainly concerned with keeping fees as low as possible. Both unions are likely to oppose any differentiation among the universities on the basis of abstract egalitarian principles, rather than concern themselves with what is good for individual students and the country. The Minister, and indeed politicians generally, show little inclination to engage in conversations on the real issues confronting university life in Australia, apart from cost containment and the efficiencies to be gained from downsizing pressures. The West Report addressed none of these matters.

My proposals are not necessarily the last word. But we must have a debate on these issues. Running a university is not the same as running a supermarket or a bank or a public service department. Too many university administrators mouth the mantras of modern managerialism without thinking carefully about the context in which they operate. We must recognise the need for a differentiated system of universities, acknowledging that the world of the intellect we are not all equal. If we do not do this, Australia, a gold medal country in the world of sport, will soon become a tin medal one in the world of intellect. Not much of a future for the clever country! We must confront these issues. But I am not holding my breath. *C'est le vie! C'est la mort!*

Peter Karmel is a life member of HERDSA. He retired as Vice-Chancellor of the Australian National University in 1987 after a distinguished career.

AWARD FOR CHRISTINE BRUCE

Christine Bruce, author of the *Green Guide 'Developing Students' Library Research Skills'*, has been awarded Association of College and Research Libraries' Instruction Section Publication Award for her book, *The Seven Faces of Information Literacy*. The Instruction Section Awards Committee was very impressed by her work and believed it to be a very important contribution to the literature of librarianship. The award will be presented to Christine at the Instruction Section dinner at the American Library Association's Annual Conference, which this year will be held in New Orleans, Louisiana, June 24-30. Christine hopes to be able to attend to receive the award.



Strategic Planning for HERDSA

Owen Hicks and Coral Watson

On 19 & 20 November, 1998, members of the Executive met in Canberra to work towards a new strategic plan for HERDSA. Dr Alastair Crombie, Executive Director, Adult Learning Australia, facilitated the meeting, which resulted in a working document, to be finalised by the Executive to present to members at the AGM in July.

Three initial 'brainstorming' sessions, to encourage broad consideration of the issues for HERDSA, were used to identify:

1. Changes taking place in the post-secondary education and training domain that may impact on HERDSA over the next 3-5 years.
2. The strengths and weaknesses of HERDSA as an organisation.
3. The threats and opportunities facing HERDSA?

This was followed by consideration of:

What is the purpose of HERDSA? - an attempt to get a succinct statement.

After much deliberation in small group and plenary discussion, the following draft was settled on:

by:

Bringing together and supporting interested individuals, groups and organisations through:

fora, discussion and debate, mechanisms for recognition and rewarding of outstanding contributions in tertiary education, strategic alliances to address key issues.

Advancing the scholarship of teaching and learning through:

- supporting and encouraging research into teaching and learning
- strengthening relationships between research and teaching
- encouraging systematic evaluation of educational practice
- facilitating the informing of educational practice by pertinent theory and literature

Initiating and contributing to debate, discussion and policy development on issues related to teaching and learning through:

- soliciting articles and essays from leaders in higher education for newsletter
- HERDSA members to write articles for newspapers using the HERDSA by-line communicating frequently with key political leaders

- developing more position papers
- mapping our personal network connections with political, community leaders, etc.

Collecting, distilling, collating, generating and disseminating information both to members and more widely, on good practice in, and on issues related to, teaching and learning.

The detailed outcomes of the day are being summarised into a working document to include the statement of purpose, general and specific strategies, positions within the Society responsible for the strategies, timelines and resource implications.

It is intended that this draft strategic plan be put on the HERDSA Web site and comment invited from members. Members are encouraged to make comment on the above outline to any member of the Executive or the Canberra Office.

Report prepared by Owen Hicks (President of HERDSA) and Coral Watson.

**THE PURPOSE OF HERDSA IS TO
IMPROVE TEACHING AND LEARNING
IN TERTIARY EDUCATION**

Using the Curriculum to Improve Participation of Indigenous Students in Legal Education

by Tina Cockburn

1. Introduction

Although there are no longer as many barriers to entry into legal education by Indigenous students as there have been in the past, the numbers of Indigenous graduates are still not adequate. Recent educational research suggests that the most effective way to improve Indigenous participation in legal education is to implement a culturally and socially responsive curriculum. The aim of this article is to promote discussion of strategies to improve access, participation, retention and success of Indigenous students in legal education and is the product of the author's own research and attendance at a workshop relating to this issue. It begins with an overview of the literature and concludes that the most important factor contributing to the successful completion of legal studies by Indigenous students is the implementation of a curriculum which is culturally and socially responsive in content, teaching and assessment. The aim of responding to and managing diversity in this way is to create an educational environment in which Indigenous students will want to remain. As this requires academic staff to undertake cross cultural training to obtain an awareness and understanding of Indigenous culture, the article contains an overview of some aspects of Indigenous culture, particularly communication and language issues which are critical in legal education. Finally it makes some suggestions in relation to the curriculum - content, structure and assessment. Similar strategies in relation to raising equity awareness, managing diversity and providing student support will be relevant across all disciplines and to other groups of students, the diverse student population.

2. Equity of access and participation of Indigenous Students in Higher Education

In accordance with legislation¹ and government policy² Australian universities have implemented student equity initiatives to increase the

participation of students in targeted equity groups, which include Indigenous students. Such policies aim to further social justice and equal opportunity through the removal of discriminatory barriers and the redressing of past disadvantage. In addition there has been an acceptance of the notion of "managing diversity" which recognises the contributions which individuals and groups from different backgrounds can make within organisations and the wider community³.

For example the Queensland University of Technology (QUT) has developed broad strategies to improve the access, participation, retention and success of Indigenous students⁴. These strategies include raising equity awareness, managing diversity and student support. The objectives in the QUT Equity Plan 1997-2001 include:

- providing an educational environment which values all student contributions, supports cultural and social diversity, and provides freedom from discrimination and harassment;
- ensuring a socially and culturally representative student body, more closely aligned with the general community served by QUT;
- providing appropriate support for students in equity groups;
- and increasing the retention and success rate of equity group students throughout QUT by providing all students with a flexible, culturally and gender inclusive education, including assessment provisions and support services.

3. Participation of Indigenous Students in Legal Education

As programs to improve access of Indigenous students have been in existence in most Australian law schools for some time, enrolments of Indigenous students in law schools have increased. For example in 1996 Indigenous students represented 1.87% of the student population in the Law Faculty at QUT, which is approaching the estimated 2.1% Indigenous population in the QUT

catchment area⁵. The number of Indigenous students enrolled in law (including justice studies) has increased from five in 1991 to thirty one in 1997⁶.

However in the Pearce Report it was acknowledged that merely to admit indigenous students without more support is unsatisfactory⁷. Participation in legal education means more than access to the law schools but entails success within the discipline of law⁸. Although the numbers of Indigenous law graduates have increased in recent years, attrition rates are still a major concern⁹. The focus has therefore shifted from access to improving success rates.

4. Factors Contributing to Attrition of Indigenous Students Enrolled in Law Studies

Indigenous students face many barriers, not merely scholastic, to acquiring a legal education. Some of the factors which contribute to poor rates of Indigenous participation and success in law studies include lack of financial support and low socio-economic background; lack of formal education; language difficulties; pressure from family and community; health problems; inappropriate curricula; experiences of alienation and isolation; lack of confidence and a perception by Indigenous people that law schools are not places for them; cultural differences, including ways of understanding what law means and negative stereotyping¹⁰. A law lecturer familiar with the problems faced by Indigenous students has commented:

I attribute their failure to poor school education (especially a lack of reading and writing skills) and possibly the lack of support mechanisms within the University. I have noted personal and psychological problems, lack of diligence and motivation and reluctance or inability to communicate with the counsellors or myself¹¹.



5. Factors contributing to success of Indigenous Students in Law Studies

Student motivation and determination are key factors in success in higher education. Research into factors contributing to success of Indigenous students in higher education generally has traditionally focused on improving secondary education; learning from the Indigenous perspective; learning skills perceived as valuable in the dominant culture; employing Indigenous staff members and using different assessment systems for Indigenous students¹². The research indicates that the factors contributing to the success of Indigenous students at law school include a pre-law bridging program¹³; role modelling¹⁴; a supportive law faculty; relevant and appropriate curricula; the encouragement of student networks; an aboriginal student centre; a far reaching student support scheme, particularly early in the course; aboriginal tutorial assistance scheme tutoring; cadetships, traineeships and professional study awards; and exchange programs¹⁵. Therefore a major assumption underpinning the orthodox strategies for increasing Indigenous participation in tertiary education has been the need to deal with knowledge, learning, language and cultural differences¹⁶, referred to as "deficits" and addressed by student

support schemes such as pre-law courses and extra tuition.

Recent studies have suggested, however that quality learning environments which support students through the various stages of learning, from assisted to independent and collaborative learning, rather than environments which seek to overcome student deficits, need to be established if the number of Indigenous graduates, and therefore Indigenous professionals, is to be increased¹⁷. Penfold has concluded:

It is clear from student responses that changes in university policy, in systems and environment, in staff attitudes and behaviour, and in the resources provided really can make a difference to the likelihood of Indigenous students completing law degrees¹⁸.

6. Using the curriculum to improve the participation of Indigenous students in legal education

The most effective measure to improve Indigenous participation is to implement a socially and culturally responsive curriculum which recognises and values Indigenous culture and therefore creates an educational environment in which the students want to remain¹⁹. This has been recognised by the National Aboriginal Education Committee which has expressed the view that support alone

will not solve the problems faced by Indigenous students at universities and stressed that the only effective approach is to change the content, structure and delivery of courses²⁰.

Traditionally Western education has been "hostile in its structure, its curriculum, its context and its personnel²¹" towards Indigenous people, as universities have focused on the majority culture and ignored cultural differences²². In a recent survey of undergraduate law students at QUT more than 50% of respondents indicated that they did not consider the curriculum was sufficiently inclusive of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues²³. The QUT Teaching and Learning Plan for 1998-2002 acknowledges that there is an increasing need for and pressure on universities and academics to respond to the issues of student diversity and specifically provides:

Objective 3: QUT's learning environment will meet student's diverse needs. Strategy 10: Support and monitor the development of socially and culturally responsive curricula. Target 10.1: by the end of 1999, all annual course reports to faculty academic boards will provide evidence of the inclusion of socially and culturally responsive approaches to teaching, learning and assessment.

In order to improve the participation of Indigenous students in legal education

HERDSA Gold Guide No 5

LEARNING IN THE FIELD:

A Manual for Conducting Field Classes

by M.Manning
J.A. Harris,
W.A. Maher and
K.G. McQueen

Field classes are a powerful means of facilitating learning because they provide concrete experiences in a realistic setting.

This manual is for those designing and planning field-based learning programs, working through rationale, structure, approaches and objectives. Relevant issues are explored, such as logistical and financial aspects, health and safety, social and gender considerations, and strategies for maximising learning outcomes.

A field class checklist, examples of specific programs and an approach to evaluating field-based learning are included.

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it is necessary to provide a curriculum which is meaningful to Indigenous participants. The curriculum must provide something which will connect to the student's point of view and must accommodate different voices in order to allow this connection²⁴. This involves not only the development of separate units focusing on Indigenous issues but also the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in existing units which reflect the fact of Indigenous people in Australia²⁵. It is therefore necessary for individual academics to review their units from the perspective of being responsive to the special needs and circumstances of Indigenous students, incorporating Indigenous issues into the curriculum and implementing socially and culturally responsive approaches to learning. The starting point for this process is to acknowledge these aims and goals in the mission statement. For example in the Unit Equity and Trusts at QUT the mission statement therefore provides:

LWB234 (*Equity and Trusts*) introduces the principles of Equity and Trusts and helps students to develop analytical, problem solving and other skills appropriate for work in private industry or government. Students are encouraged to critically evaluate the development of the law and consider future developments in the context of a diverse society and increasing internationalisation.

7. Intercultural Competency

In order to implement a socially and culturally responsive curriculum it may be necessary to undertake cross cultural education programs. Intercultural competency will enable an academic to be aware of and appreciate Indigenous culture and therefore understand the academic needs of Indigenous students²⁶. The need for cross cultural training has often been suggested by Indigenous students:

The law school is pretty much a reflection of our society. I think that a lot of people I know are unaware of indigenous issues. "They should be ... told more about Aboriginal students and what background they are coming from ... Some of them are really hard to approach... for normal students, ... for aboriginal people it's just hideous." "Having some of the lecturers aware of Koori culture... what we're all about. We are different from everybody else in the class ... in terms of our culture. And I guess, having cultural awareness workshops or something for the tutors and the lecturers ..."²⁷

A key goal of the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation was the education of non-Indigenous Australians to an awareness, understanding and appreciation of Indigenous views, beliefs and culture²⁸. This goal is reflected in the QUT policy on racial discrimination and harassment which provides that QUT aims to provide an environment in which positive actions are taken to: - affirm and value cultural identity; and - give due recognition to the history and experiences of Indigenous peoples of Australia, particularly through the provision of information on aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and society in the curricula of courses within discipline areas where such information is relevant.

8. Knowing Indigenous Students: Some Aspects of Indigenous Culture

Indigenous people are a diverse people. This has been recognised in the definition adopted by the Federal government which provides that to establish eligibility for programs a person must be:

- of aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander descent; and
- identify himself or herself as an aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander; and
- be accepted as such by the Indigenous community in which he/she lives²⁹.

Indigenous culture is diverse although there is an underpinning commonality. The differences in culture and identity can be explained in terms of the following factors:

- Residence: urban, rural, isolated/remote area, community (formerly reserves /mission)
- Adherence to traditional ways: traditionally oriented, non-traditionally oriented
- Language spoken: traditional language speakers, Aboriginal English speakers, Kriol speakers, Standard English speakers
- Ability to interact using mainstream non-Aboriginal ways³¹.

The central element of Indigenous culture is the dreaming and the spiritual and religious ties with the land and the sea. Other key elements are strong extended family networks (kin), dependence upon groups, support systems and ongoing family commitments within groups as well as the importance of indirectness in social interaction³². The sense of loyalty to kin and of acting as part of a community extend in many

ways which are greater than experienced in non-Indigenous Australia³³.

9. Communicating with Indigenous people

9.1 Culturally Inclusive Language and Presentation

QUT has developed a policy of inclusive language and presentation in all administrative and academic activities of the university. This requires the use of inclusive language, text and materials in all curricula, teaching practices and presentations in order to positively reflect the "richness of the social and cultural diversities of Australian society and the QUT community by acknowledging the lifestyles, experiences and values of a wide diversity of people³⁴."

Using culturally inclusive language and presentation means representing all ethnic and cultural groups as equally valid. The aim is to include everyone in the communication process by giving all participants equal attention (for example through body language, eye contact and encouraging questions and answers from the whole group); using content and materials (such as texts, quotes and examples) which include everyone; and using vocabulary which is non offensive to any individual in the group. Lecturers should model appropriate behaviour and actively encourage all students to use inclusive language and presentation³⁵.

Using language inclusive of Indigenous people will require a fair representation of Indigenous nations in Australia and their culture; using acceptable names and respecting racial identity when referring to Indigenous people and accurately presenting Australian history³⁶. This will necessarily require an understanding of Indigenous culture.

9.2 Acceptable Names and respecting Racial identity

Although popular and acceptable usage of names changes over time, the following table attempts to summarise the current generally acceptable and unacceptable means of referring to Indigenous people³⁷.

9.3 Diversity of Language

Although at least 93% of Indigenous people use some kind of English when talking to non-Indigenous people, most do not speak standard English. They speak Aboriginal English - standard English is a second language³⁸. The differences between Aboriginal English and standard English are found in every area of language: pronunciation,



grammar, vocabulary, meaning, use and style³⁹. Although some speakers of Aboriginal English are truly bi-culturally competent and can therefore communicate very successfully with non-Aboriginal speakers in English, many⁴⁰, including Indigenous students in tertiary education, lack significant bi-cultural competence⁴¹.

As many cultural assumptions form an important part of the legal language⁴², if both these assumptions and the language must be learned by Indigenous students, the study of law becomes more difficult⁴³. This has been noted by Indigenous students:

"The language is a problem. They're using words that even an educated blackfella hasn't heard. And assumed knowledge is a problem with lecturers. They assume you know the words they're using ... but they're not ours. And I spent my first year here with a dictionary. Every word they said, I had a list at the back of my book and I'd add to it, go home, check out what it meant. And then just every night go over the list to try and remember what they were. I just didn't want to appear dumb." "Even just in presentations and things you do in class, you feel that everyone else is using this amazing language and I'm not making myself clear and they're just all sitting

there, thinking ... 'why aren't you using the same sort of words we are?'"⁴⁴

10. Other Relevant Cultural Issues

To facilitate effective communication between speakers of Aboriginal English and standard English, it is necessary to understand and consider Indigenous society and Indigenous culture – the socio-cultural context⁴⁵ – as communication difficulties often arise because there are significant differences between Indigenous and non-Indigenous ways of using English⁴⁶.

In indigenous culture the confrontationalism of western communication is avoided. Communication involves indirectness; personal interactions; the maintenance of harmony and smooth social relationships; consensus in decision-making and taking time to respond⁴⁷.

Repeated direct questions, especially in situations where silence is not allowed as part of the answer, are not an effective means of eliciting information⁴⁸. Information is sought as part of a two-way exchange. Hinting, volunteering information for confirmation or denial, silence and waiting until people are ready to give information are all central to Aboriginal

ways of seeking any substantial information⁴⁹. Silence is a positive and normal part of conversation, particularly when answering questions⁵⁰.

Gratuitous concurrence is a common characteristic of Aboriginal English speakers when dealing with yes/no questions, particularly in intimidating situations. This is a tendency to say yes to any question (or no to a negative question) regardless of whether or not the person agrees with the question, or even understands it, in order to be perceived as obliging and socially amenable⁵¹.

Direct eye contact is frequently avoided in Aboriginal interactions where it is seen as threatening or rude. Children learn that it is rude and disrespectful to make direct eye contact with an older person with whom they are speaking⁵².

In giving specific information and responding to questions Aboriginal speakers often tend not to use expressions of quantifiable specification (such as numbers or days of the week) or else they use them vaguely, inaccurately or inconsistently. Aboriginal specification often entails reference to physical, social, geographical and climatic events and descriptions are often made specific by gesture. Therefore Aboriginal people may be disadvantaged in answering questions which require specific information⁵³.

An Aboriginal person's commitment to the future is often conditional upon family and social obligations which may arise. Traditionally Aboriginal time orientation is concerned with the present and the past, rather than the future. Therefore Indigenous people are widely regarded by non-Indigenous people as unreliable with regard to events in the future. This cultural focus is reflected in concepts of punctuality, deadlines, appointments and timetables⁵⁴.

As indigenous people are generally disposed to group goals and cooperate rather than compete⁵⁵, many Aboriginal people prefer to speak through a recognised leader or spokesperson. Knowledge is often tightly controlled, not everyone may speak with equal knowledge and authority on every subject and some information or knowledge (such as details of sites, ceremonies and genealogies) is often not freely accessible⁵⁶. Who speaks and who someone is speaking for are clearly observed protocols, therefore Indigenous people may be reluctant to adopt the academic tendency to use other people's words with acknowledgment, often without seeking permission⁵⁷.

Acceptable Terms

native title
Possibly Aborigine
aboriginal
aborigine; Aborigine
aboriginal people; Aboriginal people
aboriginal Australian
aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Indigenous (used by United Nations in recognition of the special and unique rights of "first peoples") Indigenous to this land
The first Australians
the first people of Australia
blackfella (but generally only as between aborigines or aborigines referring to themselves)

generally only as between aboriginal people or aborigines referring to themselves:
Koori (Northern NSW, Tas)
Murri (Qld) Nyoongah;
Nyunga; Anangu; Yolngu; Wongai (WA)
Wungi; Nunga (SA)
tribal names (NT)
Torres Strait Islanders

Unacceptable Terms

savages/natives
aborigine

Australian aboriginal
ATSI
indigenous

coloured
black; black Australians
full bloods; half caste;
part Aborigines



Furthermore the oral history tradition of Indigenous people may create difficulties for Indigenous students in law schools as "truth" is required to be located "outside ourselves" and it is inappropriate "to footnote the knowledge that my grandmother told me".

Indigenous people generally learn through imitation and observation, through trial and error and through story telling and performance rather than verbal instruction. They focus on skills for specific tasks instead of general principles, and put an emphasis on people and relationships instead of, in their white peer's case, information⁵⁹.

11. Developing and Implementing a socially and culturally responsive Curriculum

Barnett⁶⁰ has identified the following key questions relating to content, teaching and assessment in order to assist teachers to implement a socially and culturally responsive curriculum:

Therefore there are three areas in which changes can be made - content, teaching and assessment.

11.1. Content

Adapting the content of the law curriculum to acknowledge and manage diversity involves the development of separate units focusing on Indigenous issues, such as *Indigenous people and the Law* and the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in other Units, such as using examples from that culture⁶¹. This will give Indigenous students course material which they can relate to and which is relevant to them as well as being beneficial to all other students.

Where possible, Indigenous stakeholders such as students and community leaders should be consulted at the design stage in order to validate content. Guest lectures from Indigenous experts and resources, including texts and study guides, written by Indigenous persons should also be incorporated where possible and appropriate⁶². This has been suggested by Indigenous students:

Have speakers from the relevant groups in class, rather than just talking about them, which carries a "them and us" mentality⁶³

However students do not respond well to contrived "Indigenous issues" sections of courses, they must be integrated. Nor do Indigenous students generally appreciate being singled out and asked for their perspective, although

it is appropriate to give them an opportunity to comment:

I'm asked my perspective it's so embarrassing I'm treated differently because I'm aboriginal⁶⁴.

11.2. Teaching

In order to respond to diversity, individual teachers will need to have intercultural competency as well as adopt inclusive approaches to teaching. Good teaching is inclusive, therefore when teaching addresses principles of good teaching, such as implementing a culturally and socially responsive curriculum, all students benefit⁶⁵. The problems of teaching students from other cultures are often a more acute expression of the common problems of teaching students from majority cultures⁶⁶.

Some good teaching practices which may assist Indigenous students include:

- Audio tape or video tape lectures and seminars and make tapes available;
- Provide visual backups and diagrams notes and handouts as advance organisers;
- Adjust language, speed, and the use of colloquial expressions;
- Define key terms, write on the board and use words in context;
- Develop clear learning objectives, written in plain English;
- Provide an overview of the lecture, relate

material to the text book, give a course outline;

Use examples to establish the relevance of what is being taught and learned, such as case studies from different cultural backgrounds;

Set aside time at the end of lectures for students to raise questions;

In seminars allow time for silent adjustment, especially in 1st year. Silence does not always indicate ignorance;

Model cultural and linguistic sensitivity;

If you don't understand a response, ask the student to repeat it;

Be aware that in times of stress, language frequently 'breaks down', e.g. in oral presentations;

Create a supportive environment for all students - learn students names and pronunciations;

Establish ground rules for expressing opinions;

Have procedures in place to manage conflict in the classroom;

Adopt a variety of teaching approaches and questioning styles in lectures and seminars, including indirect methods, listening, and observing;

Encourage 'truly inquiring forms of learning', such as sharing leadership in the classroom and active participation;

and Develop cooperative structures and foster an environment of mutual respect, individual attention, small groups and peer group learning processes, for example

Content

In what ways does content acknowledge diverse cultural values?

In what ways does content value and build on diverse prior learning, experiences and goals?

In what ways does content acknowledge diverse cultural values and prepare students for the social diversity inherent in the modern world of work?

In what ways does content provide opportunities for students to access knowledge and skills that are assumed in the course (even if not officially prerequisite)?

Teaching

In what ways does teaching respond to the above?

In what ways does teaching build on student diversity as an educational resource?

In what ways does teaching facilitate equal and diverse participation of all students in the required learning activities?

In what ways does teaching support all students in working with diversity?

In what ways does teaching avoid advantaging or disadvantaging particular student groups or individuals?

In what ways does teaching support the development of all student's language skills to meet course requirements?

In what ways does teaching encourage collaborative work between students?

In what ways does teaching respond to differences in English language levels?

Assessment

In what ways does assessment avoid advantaging or disadvantaging any one group of students?

In what ways does assessment take account of diverse values, goals and experiences?

In what ways does assessment allow for the articulation of diverse perspectives?

In what ways does assessment require students to have an understanding of and interaction with diversity?⁶⁶

design group activities early in the semester to encourage all members of the group to interact with each other¹⁴.

11.3. Assessment

All students, including indigenous students, will benefit by being given a variety of assessment options as well as clear guidance as to what is expected of them¹⁵.

Some strategies which allow academic staff to respond to diversity in their assessment practice include:

Make assessment expectations and criteria explicit;

If possible and appropriate allow for variety and flexibility in assessment for example continuous assessment, group assignments, project based work, oral examinations, and not only time pressured simultaneous pen and paper tests;

Give students an opportunity to negotiate their own assignment topic and write assignments about their own areas of interest, such as indigenous issues or perspectives;

Provide models of past assignments to help clarify format, style, register;

Help students with time management skills in order to complete assessment on time. If grammar and mechanics are a high priority in the marking criteria, refer students to learning house BEFORE the assignment is due;

Provide detailed feedback on essays in class and on the paper itself. Give at least ONE encouraging comment. Encourage students in tutorials groups to share their successful strategies;

Recognise that plagiarism may be a cultural factor. The "big stick" approach may not work¹⁶.

12. Conclusion

It has been suggested that the most effective way to improve the participation - access and successful completion - of Indigenous students in legal education is to adopt a socially and culturally responsive curriculum. Academic staff will need to become interculturally competent and modify content, teaching and assessment in order to adopt an inclusive approach.

As good teaching involves an ongoing process of reflective evaluation and change - continuous monitoring of one's work to discover strengths and weaknesses, observing the effects of instruction on students and responding accordingly¹⁷, it is necessary to evaluate one's teaching. This process involves a consideration of the following factors:

Content and structure of teaching;
Teaching methods themselves;
Availability and feedback to students;
Colleagues and student's comments on your classroom skills;
Evidence of students' progress;
Quality of your assignments; and
Validity of the testing methods you use¹⁸.

By responding to and managing diversity in the curriculum it is possible to create an educational environment in which Indigenous students will want to remain and therefore the participation of Indigenous students in legal education may be improved.

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Endnotes

1 Relevant legislation includes Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Cth); Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (Cth); Disability Discrimination Act 1992 (Cth) and Anti Discrimination Act 1992 (Qld).

2 Relevant policy documents include "Fair Chance For All: Higher Education That's Within Everyone's Reach" 1990 which was reviewed in 1996 in "Excellence and Diversity: A Review of the National Framework for Equity and Higher Education"

3 see generally Queensland University of Technology Student Equity Report 1996 page 4

4 For example section 10.5 of the QUT Manual of Policies and Procedures provides for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander support as follows: "QUT aims to increase the access, participation and successful outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in conjunction with the overall development of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander resources, facilities, staffing and curricula."

5 This can be contrasted with the position Australia wide in 1993 when only 0.5% of total law students were Indigenous people (to be representative 1.5% participation would have been required): D Lavery *The Participation of Indigenous Australians in Legal Education* (1993) 4 Legal Education Review 177

6 QUT Student Equity Report 1996

7 Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, *Australian Law Schools: A Discipline Assessment for the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission* (Pearce Report) Canberra: AGPS, 1984 vol 2 at para 12.18

8 D Lavery (1993) at 183.

9 Attrition rates may be as high as 75%: D Lavery (1993) at 225

10 C Penfold *Indigenous Students' Perceptions of Factors Contributing to Successful Law Studies* (1996) 7 (2) Legal Educ Rev 155 at 155; see also S Wheeler *What Can Be Done To Help Students*

Succeed In Higher Education? 1989 referred to in CJ Bourke, JK Burden with S Moore *Factors Affecting Performance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students at Universities* 1996 DEETYA EIP program available on the internet at <http://www.deetya.gov.au/divisions/hed/operations/eip9618/front.htm>;

H Douglas *Indigenous Australians and Legal Education: Looking to the future* (1996) 7 (2) Legal Educ Rev 225 at 226; CJ Bourke, JK Burden with S Moore 1996

11 Marilyn Mao of James Cook University quoted in D Lavery (1993) at 193

12 CJ Bourke, JK Burden with S Moore 1996

13 D Lavery (1993) at 183. At the 1991 Australasian Law Teachers Association (ALTA) Conference it was resolved to support and implement, in conjunction with Australian law schools "the establishment of an intensive, short course, bridging Australian program of legal studies for Aboriginal (and Islander) peoples at one or more Australian law schools. The course should be a pre-law program specifically directed in the development of the schools necessary to succeed in law schools."

14 For a discussion of a program developed at Griffith University see H Douglas *Mentoring program for Indigenous students* (1996-1997) Vol 3 No 2 ALTA Newsletter 3 at 3

15 C Penfold (1996) at 155; 161-188; 190

16 These factors have been identified in the previous section, "Factors Contributing to Attrition of Indigenous Students Enrolled in Law Studies"

17 R Gluck and K Draisma *The Pipeline Project: An investigation of local infrastructures to educate Aboriginal professionals for community, professional and industrial organisations in the Illawarra and surrounding regions*, 1997 DEETYA EIP program available on the internet at <http://www.deetya.gov.au/divisions/hed/operations/eip9706/front.htm>;

see also Biggs *Teaching International Students: a new look*, paper presented at workshop for Academic Staff Development Unit QUT 9 Oct 1997 (Biggs has rejected deficit models in favour of focusing on student learning); J Barnett *Teaching for Diversity: Some First Steps* (1994) paper presented at Cross Cultural Action in the University of South Australia conference held at The University of South Australia published by The Centre for Cross Cultural Awareness and Communication University of South Australia at 41-42

18 C Penfold (1996) at 160

19 CJ Bourke, JK Burden with S Moore 1996; see also D Cobbin, A Barlow and J Dennis *A Longitudinal Study of the Academic Performance of Aboriginal Students at the University of Western Sydney: 1985-1991* in D Cobbin and A Barlow *Tertiary Access and Initiatives: A Handbook for Evaluative Research*, 1993 Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra; C McConaghy *Accessing Higher Education: A Case Study of Indigenous Higher Education Policy* in Bella N, McCollow J and Knight J (Eds) (1993) *Higher Education in Transition: Working Papers of the Higher Education Policy Project*, Graduate School of Education, University of Queensland, Brisbane.

20 The National Aboriginal Education Committee 1986 *Policy statement on tertiary*

education for Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders, Australian Government Publishing Service, Canberra.

21 E Hampton *Toward a re-definition of American Indian/Alaskan Native Education* (1993) 20 (2) *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 261 at 301.

22 CJ Bourke, JK Burden with S Moore 1996

23 W Cusack and P Tahmindjis *Equity Survey of Undergraduate Law Students at the QUT Faculty of Law* (1996)

24 H Douglas (1996) at 232; L Behrendt *Women's Work: The Inclusion of the Voice of Aboriginal Women* (1995) 6 *Legal Educ Rev* 169 at 172

25 H Douglas (1996) at 249-250

26 P Christensen and I Lilley *The Road Forward? Alternative Assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students at the Tertiary Level* (1997-1998) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Unit University of Queensland, DEETYA, EIP Project, Canberra; recommendation 3 available on the internet at <http://www.deetya.gov.au/divisions/hed/operations/eip9708/front.htm>; see also CJ Bourke, JK Burden with S Moore 1996 recommendation 21.

27 C Penfold (1996) at 188-189; W Cusack and P Tahmindjis *Equity survey of undergraduate law students at QUT 1996*; QUT Indigenous students' focus group 1996

28 P Grose *A Reconciliation Odyssey: Negotiating Towards 2001* (1993) QUT LJ 81 at 97, discussing goals as identified in Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation *Making things right: reconciliation after the High Court's decision on native title*, Canberra, 1983.

29 QUT Manual of Operations and Procedures section 10.9: *Racial Discrimination and Harassment policy*

30 Each requirement must be satisfied. Physical appearance and lifestyle are irrelevant.

31 D Eades *Aboriginal English and the Law Communicating with English Speaking Clients: A Handbook for Legal Practitioners* 1992 The Continuing Legal Education Department of the Queensland Law Society Incorporated at 7.

32 D Eades 1992 at 26

33 D Eades 1992 at 92

34 QUT Manual of Policies and Procedures section 10.7

35 See generally N Shatfan and Philip Neilsen, with the Oodgeroo Unit *Working with Diversity: A guide to inclusive language and presentation for staff and students* (1993) Equity Section, Division of Academic Affairs, Queensland University of Technology at 6; 11.

36 See generally N Shatfan and Philip Neilsen, with the Oodgeroo Unit (1993) at 13-15.

37 See generally N Shatfan and Philip Neilsen, with the Oodgeroo Unit (1993) at 13-14; D Eades 1992 at 5-6

38 D Eades (1992) at 4.

39 D Eades *Aboriginal English and the Law Communicating with English Speaking Clients: A Handbook for Legal Practitioners* (1992) The Continuing Legal Education Department of the Queensland Law Society Incorporated, Brisbane at 22

40 Almost 6% of Indigenous people have limited

English proficiency: 1986 Census; see also Commissioner E Johnston QC *Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody* (RCIADIC) Canberra: AGPS, 1991 vol 1 at 409

41 D Eades (1992) at 11

42 for example the notions of the reasonable person and unconscionability. Indigenous people generally have a more holistic notion of law, more circular than linear, "... law is about relationships ... a serious life and death business for individuals and for the world, it tells how the world hangs together." : H Douglas (1996) at 230 citing D Bird Ross, *Dingo Makes Us Human* (1992) Cambridge: Cambridge University Press at 44

43 H Douglas (1996) at 230

44 C Penfold (1996) at 157-158

45 D Eades (1992) at 26

46 Culture means the knowledge which we need to be functioning members of our society - our ways of thinking, perceiving the world and acting on it: D Eades *Cross Examination of Aboriginal Children: The Pinkenba Case* (1995) 3 (75) *Aboriginal Law Bulletin* 10 at 10; 13

47 D Eades (1992) at 94

48 D Eades (1995) at 10

49 D Eades (1992) at 27-28; 31

50 D Eades (1992) at 10

51 D Eades (1995) at 10; D Eades (1992) at 26; 44-54.

52 D Eades (1992) at 11

53 D Eades (1992) at 29-31

54 D Eades (1992) at 90-91

55 J Guider *Why Are So Many Aboriginal Children Not At Achieving At School An Aboriginal Child At School* (1991) 2, 42-53 at 46 referred to in CJ Bourke, JK Burden with S Moore 1996

56 D Eades (1992) at 93

57 L Behrendt *Women's work: the inclusion of the voice of Aboriginal women* (1995) *Legal Educ Rev* 6 (2) 169 at 173

58 H Douglas (1996) at 231; citing P Monture-O'Kane *The Roles and Responsibilities of Aboriginal Women: Reclaiming Justice* (1992) 56 *Saskatchewan L Rev* 237 at 240

59 See generally J Guider *Why Are So Many Aboriginal Children Not At Achieving At School An Aboriginal Child At School* (1991) 2, 42-53 at 46 and S Harris *Culture and Learning: Tradition and Education in North-East Arnhem Land* (1980) Northern Territory Department of Education Darwin referred to in CJ Bourke, JK Burden with S Moore 1996

60 Barnett (ed) *Working with student diversity: some issues in learning and teaching* (1994) ch 9 University of South Australia at 227-228

61 For example in *Equity and Trusts* a discussion of the fiduciary relationship between the crown and indigenous persons is appropriate; in *Criminal law* a case study could be undertaken in relation to the significance of aboriginal culture in the facts and circumstances leading to the trial and decision in *R v Kina*; in *Property Law* discussion of *The Murray Island Case* requires an understanding of aboriginal culture.

62 Some useful teaching aids suggested by Jenny Hughey, lawyer and trainer in Indigenous issues include Australian Anti Discrimination

Commission *Battles Short and Great* (video about the Racial Discrimination Act); Reconciliation Council *Study Circle*; McRae Nettheim and Bearcroft *Indigenous Law Issues* LBC Information Services 1997

63 Student response: W Cusack and P Tahmindjis *Equity survey of undergraduate law students at QUT* (1996)

64 Student comment QUT Indigenous students' focus group 1996

65 Biggs *Teaching International Students: a new look*, paper presented at workshop for Academic Staff Development Unit QUT 9 Oct 1997

66 Ballard and Clanchy (1997) pvl11 referred to in Biggs *Teaching International Students: A New Look* paper presented at workshop for academic Staff Development Unit held at QUT 9 Oct 1997

67 In the Unit *Law in Context* at QUT lectures are video taped and the video is viewed by students in a peer mentor session. The video is stopped in places where students do not understand the material. This was developed particularly for students who have English as a second language. The results of students operating under this method have been analysed and the results were higher than for the same students in other units where there were no videos available. There was a very good participation rate by students

68 This checklist has been compiled from suggestions made by Ballard and Clanchy (1997) pvl11 referred to in Biggs *Teaching International Students: A New Look* paper presented at workshop for academic Staff Development Unit held at QUT 9 Oct 1997; Tammy Pope, director Indigenous Management and Professional Services Brisbane; Margaret Keech, Language and learning advisor, QUT; Tania Armstrong, lecturer Oodgeroo Unit, QUT; Sue Whatman, Associate Lecturer, Oodgeroo Unit, QUT; H Douglas (1996) at 232; R Gluck and K Draisma (1997)

69 See generally P Christensen and I Lilley *The Road Forward? Alternative Assessment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students at the Tertiary Level* (1997) DEETYA Canberra EIP project, available on the internet at <http://www.deetya.gov.au/divisions/hed/operations/eip9708/front.htm>

70 This list has been compiled from suggestions made by Margaret Keech, Language and learning advisor, QUT; Tania Armstrong, lecturer, Oodgeroo Unit, QUT; Sue Whatman, Associate Lecturer, Oodgeroo Unit, QUT; Jenny Hughey, lawyer and trainer in cross cultural issues

71 See generally Ramsden and Dodds *Improving teaching and courses A guide to evaluation* (1989) Melbourne: Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne especially at 33, 35

72 Ramsden and Dodds (1989) at 35. A useful way of obtaining immediate feedback is to ask students to anonymously complete a "Harvard One Minute Evaluation" at the end of a lecture or seminar. For example students may be asked to identify: "Three things I have learned or am taking away from today's session" and "One unanswered question I am leaving with today."

Teaching productively - views from a metaphorical Macdonald's world

"That meeting was quite productive, wasn't it?" When we speak this way, calling a discussion, meeting or engagement productive we mean that it got somewhere, something useful eventuated, it delivered (at least some) 'goods'.

Nothing need be implied about the cost of the exercise. The meeting may have gone on for hours or days, the important thing is that it was productive. Nor anything about the quality of the outcomes. That is typically unqualified, enough that an outcome exists. How often do we say "If only something had been decided!!!"

On the other hand, in today's higher education world, concerns about cost and quality are present at every turn. So maybe it is a different usage of 'productive' that we need to examine. There is a different usage, and it comes from the history of industrial manufacturing and economic enterprise.

There, to call a manufacturing enterprise 'productive' means much more than that it merely 'delivered the goods' (in the unqualified sense). It implies that they were produced cost-effectively, with efficient resource usage and minimal wastage.

And also that they were of a quality appropriate to the future consumer. Interestingly, it means neither more or less than that, since to be below quality would make the product unsaleable, whereas exceeding the prescribed and expected quality would be economically irrational and thus contradict cost-effectiveness.

In respect of teaching and learning, perhaps the most intransigent challenge facing academic leaders is how to strike a bargain between these seemingly antagonistic forces. Cost efficiency for the institution (economic survival) is pitted against achieving optimal standards for the 'consumer' (giving them whatever they want).

I'm tempted to sum up today's university ethos as just that "How to give them whatever they want whilst

surviving economically". But how do they know what they want? And isn't our task to educate them so that they will change their views of what they want?

And the complications don't stop even there. There is at least one absolutely crucial difference between factory production and educational processes, and it has two aspects:

(i) In education the 'producers' are not machines, but human beings, who have their own intentions, hopes, expectations, aspirations, values and views about what 'quality teaching' might mean for them personally. In short, the people who deliver the goods have different (and regularly changing) views about what they think is worthwhile delivering. And so they should, because what they are 'producing' is something that reflects, or reproduces, what they themselves are - scholars, intellectuals, skilled professionals.

(ii) And in education the 'products' are not grommets or gimlets but human beings, again with their own intentions, hopes, expectations, aspirations, values and views about what 'quality learning' should mean for them personally. In short, the people who 'buy' the goods have different (and regularly changing) views about what they think is worthwhile purchasing. And so they should, because what they 'buy' is their future selves, and that is a profoundly serious matter. And a very risky one indeed, for them and for the entire society.

Several layers of complexity now enter to confound this whole picture.

(i) The primary 'production' agent in the system, the university teacher, has the choice of regarding him- or herself (and be regarded thus by both leaders and students) as either one of two things:

(a) The teacher may be a component of the manufacturing system (cog in the wheel) whose job is simply to produce things at the standard and level of efficiency required. Then an appropriate conception of teaching

excellence becomes "outstanding ability to demonstrate quality control and production efficiency". A teacher's moral obligation is "to work so as to at least sustain the system confidently at its present cost-efficient and marketable state". And a teacher's ambition is to make it even more profitable by increasing the quantity of its marketable output (rate of production).

(b) Alternatively the teacher may be a professional who understands they are pursuing a human practice of substantial human significance. Then their moral obligation (inherent within the practice) will be to strive at every turn to raise the standards of that practice. And the effect of their work will be to transform the practice, not merely continue it, by doing the job better. And their ambition will be to work so as to constantly raise the system to higher standards (not just greater efficiency) by increasing the quality of its marketable output.

(ii) In manufacturing, the product is an object or service intended to be purchased by a customer. But in 'education-as-manufacturing' this is not at all the case. The 'product' is the same person as the 'customer'. Both are the student.

But there are other 'customers', it will be objected. What about them? Certainly, future employers exist, and some will want us to call them also the 'customers'. They metaphorically purchase our 'products' (the skilled, trained, educated students who graduate from our assembly-line).

But lifting one's eyes higher still, one could argue that the ultimate 'customer' is global society; since every newly-educated student ups the composition of our planet's intellectual potential. Where will we let the metaphor stop? In this essay I want simply to examine the first-line of the picture. For us, in our day to day teaching work, a student is someone who is both first-line-customer and simultaneously the material out of which

some future educational product has to be made.

The analogy with fast-food production can help sort out the complexity here.

So, stand with me inside a profitable, clean, superbly run fast-food manufactory outlet. It produces guaranteed standardised hamburgers, on demand, for a ravenous public. It's a model of industrial efficiency and economic success.

A kitchen employee (it seems wrong to call them 'cooks', and they are certainly not 'chefs') if they are to succeed and hold their job, must hold certain clearly defined attitudes.

Towards the kitchen superintendent

An attitude of compliant and dedicated obedience. Inventiveness and creativity (unless directed towards efficiency) are taboo; they are liable to risk the standard quality of the product on which the firm's image depends. No employee who valued the job would ever dare admit to "experimenting a bit, just trying to make a slightly better hamburger". The defining characteristic of this job attitude is the annulment of self-development.

Towards the food being produced

An attitude of strictly bounded respect, which becomes indistinguishable from disdain. Each piece of food produced is - and must at all costs be - precisely like any other. The idea of 'food' being a potential gastronomic experience becomes totally absurd. It would be palpably false for a customer to be told "I hope you really enjoy the food tonight - we took extra care over it just for your sake". The defining characteristic of this job attitude is task-alienation (operating on 'auto-pilot', 'skilled inattention' as a way of being).

Towards the customer who is being served

An attitude of formally bounded interest, polite deference, again indistinguishable from disdain. Each customer's legitimate expectations may fall only within what the menu provides. Someone who requests "Your very best hamburger, if you please - not too overdone!" is a nut case. The very idea of a customer being someone whose individual needs establish the goal for

our work becomes absurd. The defining characteristic of this job attitude is the denial of generative interaction with other persons. It is the death of dialogue.

In contrast, the gourmet Chef, producing plates of menu-listed food that are attractive, nourishing and edible, is always experimenting. Their goal is to find, not more economic ways of producing means, though that is always a possible second-order interest, but ways of improving the quality of the food itself. Food and its finer qualities is what a good Chef loves and respects.

The Chef's "quality manifesto" is to personally develop a capacity to produce ever better food to delight and satisfy ever-demanding and better gastronomically educated customers. They thereby raise the standards of the culinary tradition itself. And they educate customers to become more discerning and demanding in their own relationship to food. The Chef's abiding interest, enthusiasm, even passion, is not merely holding a job, not even pleasing customers, but a love for good food and its preparation.

To this end Chefs taste and love their own food. They inquire from customers to discover how well it was enjoyed. They learn and develop through feedback and critique. All this characterises a professional stance towards work.

So, professional attitudes comprise three components, already indicated above

- (i) commitment to self-development,
- (ii) skilled attention to task combined with development of the highest perceptions of quality in the work done, and
- (iii) ability to listen and learn from those on the receiving end.

What interests me is that no such considerations apply, nor can they apply, to the kitchen-staff in our production-model fast-food eatery. And that is not because of any inferiority in the personnel involved - this is not a put-down of Macdonalds employees! Any fast-food worker may be capable of becoming an outstanding Chef. The difference lies in the way production is understood in the two contrasting systems, and consequently in the way each system's management has to operate to ensure the system works well.

So, do our academic leaders want us to pursue a fast-food or a gourmet-restaurant model of teaching?

Or can a combination of the two exist? Perhaps the binary is a false one, the dichotomy too extreme, and something is possible in between. If we look in the combination direction we will need to be very careful to understand how and when and where our workers are performing one task (with its own values and standards) or the other (with its different values and standards). And that will never be easy. It would be a very delicate balance indeed, demanding a high level of subtle understanding of the metaphors we live and work by. I haven't seen much of that around lately.

What I have been arguing here is that the very notion of 'productivity' - one of the dominant metaphors for our times - itself demands unpacking whenever we hear it uttered or used. This thoughtful, critical stance towards our professional work (and the way our institutions regard it) is the minimum required of us as intellectuals - whether we be leaders or followers.

Footnote:

A brief but interesting exchange arose from prior discussion about this essay on the ADSIG list. It was clear that some developers want better metaphors for higher education than factory-production. It was pointed out that 'Productivity' is itself a modern-day metaphor - an industrial notion transferred from factory to education - hence the article is about metaphors for unpacking another metaphor. Some warn about the dangers of arguing in terms of the extremes of any model or metaphor.

Others fear that the industrial production metaphor has become the dominant discourse of management and government, hence it is the reality we now stand in, whether we like it or not (eg Katherine Nicoll in HERD 17,3, October 98, 291-304; *flexible learning* is another new dominant metaphor; policy texts and official government rhetoric inserts particular metaphors within discourses, in order to control the production of "truth and knowledge") What do readers feel? Write and tell us.

National Survey on the Work Roles of Academics in Australian Universities

A sample of 5000 academics in 18 universities were surveyed in February/March this year as part of a Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne (CSHE) study commissioned by the Department of Education, Training, and Youth Affairs. The project will explore recent shifts in the allocation of time and emphasis given to the academic work activities across the full range of disciplines.

Anecdotal evidence since the CSHE conducted its last national survey in 1993 suggests there has been a marked acceleration in changes to academic work, and an urgent need to examine the ways in which academics are adapting to the shifting demands and expectations in the workplace.

The study will build on a 1993 study by the CSHE which identified key changes to work roles, including grater fragmentation of work time and energy. It will also replicate some aspects of a survey conducted for the UK Dearing Enquiry as well as other international surveys. The 1993 Australian survey

found that despite the pressures of change from the Dawkins reforms of 1988, the work values that have traditionally distinguished academics from other professionals remained fairly stable from 1973 when the CSHE conducted its first national survey. In 1993 academics appeared to be on the whole satisfied with their jobs and exceptionally motivated by the intrinsic interest in their work. They were most satisfied when they had the opportunity to pursue their own academic interests. That survey also showed that not all academics were negative about their work or their future.

The latest study will enable CSHE to map the level of change and continuity in the face of rising accountability measures, the market driven environment, the rapid expansion of new information technologies, and the everyday realities of internationalising higher education.

The 1999 project has two major objectives of interest to DETYA and the universities: to provide an analysis of the current work patterns and related attitudes and outlooks of academics; and to provide benchmarks for monitoring the changing work roles of the academic

Craig McInnis

workforce for comparative international and trend analysis.

The major elements of the questionnaire are: the allocation of work time; work values and motives; conditions of employment; work preferences and realities; career development and professional education; and, perception of changing work practices. The study is giving particular attention to the changes in approaches to teaching, assessment of learning, perceptions of student capabilities, and the use of new technologies.

The project team is being advised by a Visitor to the CSHE, Professor Jack Schuster from the Claremont Graduate University who last year co-authored a US study "The New Academic Generation". Like the US study, the Australian survey will give particular attention to the ways in which the post-Dawkins generation of academics are viewing their work and careers. It will be particularly interesting to see whether there are major trends emerging with respect to their relative commitment to the tasks of research, teaching, administration and service work.

Enquiries may be directed to the Project Director, Craig McInnis, Associate Professor and Director, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne, Parkville 3052. (c.mcinnis@cshe.unimelb.edu.au)

FINDING THE GEMS AMONGST THE PEBBLES

by Josie Gibson



A new book and CD package developed by a Monash language expert is aimed at helping teachers and students navigate their way through a wealth of potential resources on the Internet.

Virtual Language Learning: Finding the Gems Amongst the Pebbles was launched in early December but was selling well even before publication, according to its author and director of Monash's Language Centre Associate Professor Uschi Felix.

'The web is a treasure trove of resources, but it's also bewilderingly complex,' Dr Felix said. 'If its potential is to be tapped, some guidance is required not only about what is there but also how it can be used.'

Virtual Language Learning follows six months of intensive research in which Dr Felix and her team combed hundreds of Internet sites for those which could be of use in learning and teaching languages.

The result is a unique resource which offers a combination of useful examples and jargon-free technical information for language teachers, formal and informal students, and people simply interested in the delivery of language courses on the Net.

Besides the sheer bulk of sites to sift through, one of the more challenging tasks in developing Virtual Language Learning was keeping abreast of constantly changing URLs, or web site addresses.

According to Dr Felix, some languages required less research than others. Many European languages, for example, were already well established on the Internet so it

was not necessary to 'reinvent the wheel'. Digging out useful sites for less popular languages sometimes proved more difficult.

'The book includes references to literature as well as to technology,' Dr Felix said. 'Readers will be able to look up the applied linguistic literature, try out a site in several languages, and read about how it works technically.'

A practising language teacher who has overseen the development of a number of language-specific Internet sites, Dr Felix knows how confusing and time-consuming the technology can prove.

'I would have killed for this book three years ago when we started developing sites on the web,' she said.

Virtual Language Learning: Findings the Gems Amongst the Pebbles is available from Language Australia Ltd, GPO Box 372F, Melbourne, Victoria 3001 (fax (03) 9629 4708). The cost is \$35, plus postage and handling.

This article first appeared in the Monash News on Dec 18th 1998 and we are grateful for their permission to reproduce it.

Introducing Mandatory Professional Development for Academic Staff: a case study

by Judith Nathan and Gordon Suddaby

Introduction

Since the establishment of the Training and Development Unit (TDU) at Massey University in December 1994, four mandatory training programmes have been introduced: a seven hour induction programme, a 30 hour modular teaching skills development programme, a one day PhD supervision course and a half-day staff appraisal course. This paper focuses upon a case study of the organisational issues that arose and the strategies adopted in relation to the rationale, development and promotion of the mandatory teaching skills development programme for newly-appointed academic staff.

The TDU was established in the Human Resources Section of Massey University to meet the training needs of 2000 general and academic staff. Previously, there had been one staff development officer who had organised a wide variety of short programmes. Amongst many Massey staff, including many Heads of Department (HoDs), there was not much commitment to on-going professional development beyond the traditional overseas leave for academic staff. Formal organisational policies and procedures related almost exclusively to overseas leave and staff taking Massey papers, for which there was generous provision.

Thus the Director had to establish both programmes and policies. She visualised the unit contributing at both the organisational and individual levels, a constant balancing act as noted by Johnston (1997). She had to begin by establishing the presence and credibility of the TDU through making personal contact with senior academics, meeting as many as requests for courses as possible, advertising repeatedly in the campus newsletter, and delivering quality courses. Initially sole charge, she used respected academics to deliver training programmes. The first series specifically for academic staff was a monthly series on research, for example on obtaining funding, budgeting, and managing research projects: popular sessions that were well attended. They were run in association with the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Research) who had high credibility amongst HoDs.

At the time of the establishment of the TDU, the issue of training for teaching in universities was becoming of increasing importance:

- the student body was becoming more diverse as a larger cohort attended university
- a growing body of literature questioned the effectiveness of traditional university teaching methods
- the 1990 *Education Amendment Act* placed increased demands for accountability upon tertiary institutions
- universities had to compete for students with polytechnics now able to award degrees
- rising expectations from stakeholders, especially students as they were paying every year an increasing proportion of the cost of their tuition.
- a new focus upon the ability of universities to establish quality systems and to demonstrate a concern for the quality of their product, as embodied in the Academic Audit Unit established by the New Zealand Vice-Chancellors' Committee.

Training in teaching was a possible means of addressing such issues; however, the university tradition of academic freedom appeared to run counter to the notion of mandatory training. There was also an on-going issue as to the perceived relative importance of teaching and research amongst university staff and decision-makers such as promotion committees.

Steps in the Introduction of the Programme

In November 1995 a training consultant in teaching skills was appointed to the TDU. From February 1996, he offered voluntary two-day introductory teaching workshops, aimed at appointees new to teaching but open to all. Three-hour sessions for graduate assistants and other part-time staff were also held. At the end of that year, the outline of a coherent modular training programme was developed, based in part on workshops that had already been run. Building upon the November 1995

decision of the Academic Board to make training in PhD supervision mandatory for new PhD supervisors, it was decided to aim to make attendance at 30 hours of the Teaching Skills Development Programme mandatory for new full-time teaching staff within two years of their taking up their position. Appointees with a teaching qualification or three years' tertiary teaching experience could apply to the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) through the Director of the TDU for a full or partial exemption.

The proposal was endorsed by the Training and Development Advisory Committees on both campuses. Their membership included the Registrar, Human Resources Registrar, several senior academics and union representatives. A strategy for the development of teaching skills was formally adopted by the Committee of the Vice-Chancellor and Deans in mid 1997.

Implementation of the Programme

The Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) wrote to heads of department explaining the new requirement. The Vice-Chancellor agreed that certificates could be issued under his signature and a photograph of him issuing certificates to two staff who completed the 30 hours in 1997 was published in the campus newsletter in January 1998 when it became mandatory for new staff. At the same time, all existing academic staff were sent an individually-addressed glossy brochure outlining the programme. As result, all 1998 courses had far more existing than new staff participating (for example, 68% of participants on the two-day introductory programme). Such large numbers of existing staff enrolled for one or more modules in the first semester of 1998 that several had to be repeated more than once. By the end of the first semester of 1998, 185 staff had attended the two-day introductory block since its inception in 1996, representing nearly 20% of staffing establishment.

The mandatory requirement for 1998 onwards was incorporated into letters of appointment within the terms of the existing collective employment contract.



Administration of the programme is supported by the training and development module of Open Door, the Human Resources Section's integrated personnel and payroll system. New staff are sent information about the programme with their letter of appointment and given an enrolment form by Human Resources staff when they sign on the payroll. They are reminded of it at the induction programme. By the end of the first semester, 88% of new full-time staff had attended or been exempted as qualified teachers. Thus only 12% had still to begin the programme six months after appointment. Of the new part-time or temporary staff, required to attend only a three-hour programme, 22% opted to attend the two-day workshop.

Issues Arising

1. Sustainability

With only one consultant in teaching, TDU could not fully staff the programme itself as this would not be in the best interests of either the participants or the consultant. Thus for pedagogical as well as logistical imperatives, a range of staff from outside the unit is invited to assist in delivering the programme as part of their service to the University, which has since adopted a training and development policy statement specifically valuing this kind of contribution.

2. Acceptability to staff

Thirty hours was selected to minimise resistance as research has shown that lack of time is the most frequently cited reason for not attending staff development workshops (Johnston 1996). In addition, the element of choice amongst modules, and the possibility of full or partial exemptions were built in to

encourage staff to take ownership of their own professional development and participate willingly in the programme. The regular offering of the most popular modules and the two-year deadline give considerable flexibility over timing.

Few full-time appointees have had to be contacted by TDU to enrol. If it is necessary, a copy of the memo is sent to their head of department and followed with a phone call to the staff member if required. If a further memo is needed, a copy may also be sent to the next level of management, the appropriate Pro Vice-Chancellor (Dean). The two-year deadline avoids potential problems at the Albany campus where numbers do not warrant offering more than 30 hours per year.

The extent to which existing staff enrolled for the pilot two-day programme in 1996 was unanticipated, as was the high number of enrolments from them in 1998 when all academic staff were sent a glossy brochure. This clearly had more impact than previous attachments to the Human Resources Section's quarterly newsletter. The high proportion of existing staff on the programme has emphasised its perceived value but also raised challenges as to the focus of the sessions.

The programme has been well-received by participants which is presumably contributing to the on-going enrolments from existing staff. Positive feedback was obtained from end-of course evaluations and from a more in-depth survey of participants on the two-day introductory workshop carried out after two years of operation. An evaluation of its long-term impact upon teaching practice will be commenced in 1999.

The requirement for temporary and part-time staff to attend at least a three hour session has proved more difficult to implement. Often such appointments are made directly by the College concerned and not processed through Human Resources Section. This means they are not alerted to the programme by HR staff, and, paid by the hour on time sheets, they do not appear on the Human Resources database through which enrolments for the courses are administered. Since the acceptance of the proposal, the TDU has succeeded in getting a training and development policy adopted which requires the University to pay any staff attending mandatory training. Putting responsibility for the training of part-time staff in the hands of the Colleges is the only way to make it work but to date implementation has been patchy.

3. Acceptability to senior management

The initial proposal was directly linked to statements in Massey University's Charter and has subsequently been reinforced by the recommendations of the New Zealand University Academic Audit Unit Report on Massey University (NZ Universities' Academic Audit Unit 1997), the University's Strategic Plan (in which Objective 10 of 20 objectives states: Ensure that verified teaching excellence is an important criterion in the selection, professional development and promotion of staff (Massey University, October 1997)), the reintroduction of mandatory student evaluations of teaching, and the adoption of a more systematic staff appraisal system with a strong developmental emphasis.

It has always been enthusiastically championed by the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and actively supported by the new Vice-Chancellor who included reference to the programme in his introduction to the Annual Report (Massey University 1998). TDU staff appear to have successfully countered the view that the programme could be promoted as a means of dealing with poor performance, while recognising that consultation over poor teaching performance may lead to staff enrolling in the programme. It is important for its credibility amongst newly appointed staff that it not be perceived as a remedial programme.

It is too early to say how wholeheartedly heads of departments support the programme as not all have appointed staff since the introduction of the requirement. It would seem that

Teaching Skills Development Programme
Overall attendance since commencement in 1996

Year	2 day foundation course	3 hour modules ¹ (11 different topics)	Part-timers' teaching skills ¹ (3 hr sessions)	Completed 30 hours
1996	62	—	128	not offered
1997	57	182	57	2
1998 to 12/6	66	284	36	10
TOTALS	185¹	466²	219¹	12

¹ Each attendance is a separate individual

² Attendances at each module aggregated; not separate individuals



Attendance at 1998 Introductory Teaching Skills Semester 1, 1998 (2 day foundation course)

	n	% total participation	% target group
new full-time staff (mandatory)	1 2	18%	48%
new temporary/part-time staff ¹			
graduate assistants ²	1		
part-time tutors	3		
temporary lecturers	3		
part-time lecturers	2	14%	22%
existing full-time staff			
(not required to attend any training)	4 5	68%	
TOTAL	6 6		

¹ Not required to attend the 2 day programme

² Graduate students employed part-time to conduct tutorials etc

New Full-time Permanent Teaching Staff 1/1/98-3/6/98 (on contracts of more than 12 months)

Attendance at Introductory Teaching Skills, Semester 1 1998

Position	Appointed	Attended		Exempted		Neither	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Assistant lecturer	4	3	75%	1	25%	0	0
Lecturer	19	9	47%	8	42%	2	11%
Senior Lecturer	1	0	0	1	100%	0	0
Associate Professor	1	0	0	0	0	1	100
TOTAL FULL-TIME	25	12	48%	10	40%	3	12%

New Part-time Temporary Teaching Staff 1/1/98-3/6/98

Attendance at Introductory Teaching Skills or Tutor Training Semester 1 1998

Position	Appointed	Attended		Exempted		Neither	
		n	%	n	%	n	%
Graduate Assistant	20	19	95%	0		1	5%
Part-time Tutor/Senior Tutor	7	3	43%	1	14%	3	43%
PT Lecturer/Senior Lecturer	7	2	29%	2	29%	3	43%
Temporary Tutor/Lect/Snr Lect	7	3	43%	0		4	57%
TOTAL Part-time or Temp	41	27	66%	3	7%	11	27%

some lack commitment to organising training for graduate assistants and temporary part-time tutors.

4. Acceptability to unions

The union representatives on the Training and Development Advisory Committee were very supportive of the

concept and there was no additional feedback when a copy was sent to the union for comment. There were concerns amongst management that it might become bogged down in employment contract negotiations, but in the event it was decided it was not necessary to include it in the contract because of the

existence of a clause requiring new staff and their head of departments to determine training needs and there was no intention to require existing staff to attend.

5. Administrative load

The strategy could not have been so successfully implemented without training and development information being an integral part of the Human Resources database. This provides lists of new staff as soon as they are on the payroll, and the ability to log training needs against individuals, and view the training record of any staff member and attendees at any course. However, because of some problems with the database, the differing requirements of temporary and long-term and full and part-time staff, and the fact that participants can enrol for individual modules, the programme proved much more time-consuming to administer than expected.

6. Exemption criteria and processes

The provision to allow appointees with at least three years' tertiary teaching experience or a teaching qualification to apply for a full or partial exemption was included to prevent the learning experience of other participants being adversely affected by reluctant attendees. During the six month covered by this paper there was only one permanent appointee above the rank of lecturer (and only two such temporary or part-time appointees) and no applications for exemption on the basis of tertiary teaching experience.

7. Links with confirmation of appointment

The two-year time-frame was chosen as HoDs have to formally report on new staff after two years as part of the process of confirming their appointments. Confirmation can be delayed if requirements have not been met.

8. Links with promotion

The criteria and procedures for academic promotion are currently being reviewed by a union-management working party, on which the TDU is represented. This is partly because of ongoing debate as to whether teaching is given enough emphasis in promotion decisions. Some participants on the Teaching Skills Programme have obtained a record of their training history to support promotion applications and the certificate signed by the Vice-Chancellor is keenly sought by those nearing completion.



9. Links with possible accreditation of university teachers

With its modular structure, the programme could easily be extended, as has tended to happen once short programmes have become established in Australian and other overseas universities (Martin and Ramsden 1994). However, as a non-assessed, mandatory programme its whole nature would be changed if it were developed into a accreditation instrument. Nevertheless, the success of the programme has established the acceptability and desirability of training in university teaching and created a group of staff keen to build upon the foundations that it lays.

Conclusions

Because of its flexible nature, administration of the programme has proved more time-consuming than expected and the provision for mandatory training of part-time staff has not been fully effective. However, overall, implementing this programme proved easier than expected for a number of reasons:

- the climate was favourable with a rising emphasis upon the quality of teaching both internally and externally;
- senior management was supportive;
- on-going enrolments from considerable numbers of existing staff implied that the programme was effectively meeting needs;
- the involvement of a cross-section of academic staff as presenters gave credibility to the programme and prevented an undue burden falling on the TDU consultant;
- it was mandatory only for new appointees, most of whom were relatively inexperienced tertiary teachers and keen to participate;
- close co-operation with Human Resources administrators provided effective communication with most new staff;
- the flexible format provided considerable choice about what and when to attend;
- the integrated training and development and human resources database allowed tracking of new appointees, logging of training needs and monitoring of attendance.

Proposed Future Developments

- Raise the threshold for exemption through tertiary teaching experience.
- Introduce a module for trained school teachers.

- Develop some second-tier modules suitable for more experienced participants.
- Streamline administrative systems so that this aspect is not so time consuming.
- Improve mechanisms for communicating with departments regarding the training of their part-time temporary staff.
- Research the long-term effectiveness of the programme.
- Introduce a post-graduate certificate in tertiary teaching with papers that staff who wish to build upon this programme could enrol for. Completion of this certificate could then become a vehicle for accreditation.

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- Judith Nathan is the Director and Gordon Suddaby the Consultant in Teaching at the Training and Development Unit, Massey University, New Zealand.*
- E Mail contacts:
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- They facilitated a roundtable discussion on this subject at the 1998 HERDSA conference.*

APPENDIX

MASSEY UNIVERSITY TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT

Strategy for the development of the teaching skills of academic staff

In acknowledgement of the importance of teaching, the University supports a strategy for the ongoing enhancement of the teaching skills of academic staff at all levels. It includes, but is not limited to, the following elements:

- a mandatory training programme for new appointees (open to all teaching staff);
- additional workshops and seminars on good teaching practice;
- Individual consultations and assistance from the Training and Development Unit where needed;
- advice on extramural teaching from extramural teaching consultants.

Mandatory training programme for newly appointed academic staff

All new staff appointed to teaching positions under the academic contract of employment are required to attend a University induction session and complete a modular training programme in teaching skills administered by the Training and Development Unit (TDU), unless exempted by the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic).

- All full-time staff on a contract of more than one year's duration are required to complete a modular programme of at least 30 hours unless exempted.
- Staff who are subject to the confirmation of appointment procedures are required to complete the modular programme within two years of taking up their appointment as part of their duties and expectations, unless exempted.
- Staff employed to teach part-time, or for one year or less, (for example graduate assistants or part-time tutors) are required to complete at least a three-hour teaching skills programme.
- Departments (or Colleges, as appropriate) are expected to assume responsibility for training graduate assistants and other part-time assistants, with support from TDU.

The Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), in consultation with the Director TDU, may exempt staff who have a teaching qualification, or who have previously held university teaching positions for at least three years, from some or all of the programme.

The case for generic skills tuition

by Alison Brown

During my two and a half years as a lecturer with the Learning Skills Group at the University of Newcastle, I have assisted students from many different faculties and levels of study. Over that time I have come to identify that the most common problem with which students present is an organisational one. But this is not just a matter of being a disorganised or distracted time manager, or having a chaotic or serendipitous approach to academic tasks. Granted, some students genuinely present with alternative approaches to life and learning, and they require validation of their choices, and practical, alternative management strategies¹. The majority of students who approach me for assistance, though, are those who are entirely unaware of the kinds of cognitive, organisational skills needed to manage their work as a tertiary student. This is not just a case, then, of an inability to organise time or tasks; it is a problem with organising thoughts. And this type of problem manifests at the level of their fundamental academic literacy skills: students exhibit problems with reading and writing in an academic context.

Students with this problem include those who are daunted by the quantity and obscurity of their academic reading. A common response to a reading task for these students is to try and read everything from beginning to end, in the way one reads a novel. It is as though students are expecting the sort of "aha" experience we have at the end of a novel, when we find out "whodunit" or "what the story was about". Students believe that the "meaning" of an academic text will fall into place at the final page, as it does with the traditional novel.

Many of these students present to the Learning Skills Group with what they believe to be time management problems - problems finding the time to read "everything they want me to read". But their problem, at least at the surface level, is with reading, not time. The

students do not have the reading skills required for academic work: they do not have an awareness of the range of reading styles available to us; they do not know how to select the appropriate reading styles for the appropriate task; and, finally, they do not know how to read efficiently in each of these styles. When I have suggested to these students they have a learning difficulty known as "you can't see the forest for the trees", they invariably identify that this is their problem. At another deeper level, then, the students' problem is with learning, though this is more an effect of inefficient reading skills than a cause. By attempting to consume the literature word for word, the students limit their ability to comprehend and to recall the meaning of the reading.

The first remedy for this learning difficulty is to supply students with the knowledge of, and ability to select and use, different reading styles and strategies in different contexts. The main reading styles and strategies available to efficient readers that I teach are: selective reading, scanning, skim reading, summarising, and active reading². Secondly, a student needs to be aware that these reading styles and strategies utilise organisational thinking skills that are both common and crucial to all academic tasks: the ability to identify main ideas, and the ability to cluster, link and develop ideas.

Fortunately these strategies and skills are supported by the structure of expository/academic texts, and so it is relatively easy to teach these skills using the students' own reading material³. For example, a student can learn to identify main ideas by knowing that a text's thesis is invariably introduced in its title or introductory chapter or section. A student can learn to cluster and link ideas by analysing the division of a text into its logical parts - outlined in its Table of Contents or headings and subheadings. And a student can learn to identify the narrative sequences that move an argument from beginning to end, by analysing the overall development of its story. (The common top level structures⁴ - problem/solution, cause/effect, comparison & contrast, and listing - and other sequencing structures - like time, importance, generality, position etc - provide the overall framework of an expository text's development.)

Of course, the "wood for the trees" syndrome also occurs in those students who present with problems in academic writing. A typical student in this group has had feedback on his assignments which tells him he has problems with essay structure; so he comes to the Learning Skills Group to learn "how to write an essay" or even "what an essay looks like". He may have some vague knowledge about the "introduction, body and conclusion" structure, and figures he'd better go and learn how to make this happen in his own essays.

Unfortunately, the answer to the problem is not as simple as this, though, in its own terms, it is deceptively simple. And it certainly has to do with structure, but not just the structure of an essay. It has to do with the structure of sentences, as well as the structure of combined sentences, as well as the structure of paragraphs and essays: in other words, it has to do with the structure of thoughts, small and large. And this need for structure is just as necessary to brilliant, ingenious or deep thinking, as to ordinary ideas.

To compose effective academic essays, then, students need two main organisational strategies. The first is simple to articulate and absolutely crucial, but extremely traumatic for most students: it is the ability to see the big picture of our argument, or to conceive a clear and summarising thesis that will hold the whole argument together. The second organisational skill needed for essay writing is more a group of skills, and it incorporates the group of thinking strategies we have already considered as necessary for effective reading. These are the building skills of thinking and writing: the ability to categorise, cluster, link, and develop ideas.

Writing skills tuition aimed at assisting students with these organisational problems is most effectively and efficiently given in the context of interdisciplinary classes. In these generic writing skills classes we work, as a class, through a sample essay question, either from a list I have available or from one that a student offers. Very rarely do students offer questions that cannot be used by a class of students from mixed levels and mixed disciplines; the exceptions are those assignments which must be delivered in the report genre, or those assignments which require descriptive essays as opposed to persuasive analytical essays. And taking the students through the first two steps in essay planning are enough to illustrate the types of organisational thinking skills needed for effective essay writing.

The first step is to work through the process of analysing the essay question. This question, for example, is the first half of a question from Geography 302, *Advanced Methods in Human Geography*:

Apart from their functional role, urban plans and policies incorporate distinctive values and ideologies about the city, city lifestyles, gender, community, the family, work, consumption, recreation, leisure, etc... These values and ideologies are expressed in the plans' and policies' aims, objectives and operationalisations to produce specific socio-cultural and economic impacts. Discuss this claim in regard to urban liveability and inner Brisbane.

As a class we would analyse this question to produce the following diagrammatic sketch of the question's topic area and its instructional terms: urban liveability/inner Brisbane plans & policies

(causes)	(effects) impacts
a) aims	
i) values	ii) ideologies
i) economic	ii) sociocultural
b) objectives	
i) values	ii) ideologies
i) economic	ii) sociocultural
c) operationalisations	
i) values	ii) ideologies
i) economic	ii) sociocultural

To arrive at this outline, the students have to be guided through the process of identifying key words, grouping like terms together, and thinking through the links between the ideas. Pragmatically, describing the main topic area of the question, its main parts, and their relationships, means that students now have a clear, structured map of the question, which can guide the reading and thinking and planning stages of their essay. Cognitively, it means that the class scaffolds the skills of categorising, clustering and linking necessary to their writing tasks.

After analysing the question, the next step in essay writing is to plan the essay. (So far we only have a mind map or an outline of the areas we are asked to cover, not a plan for a clear and persuasive argument.) For students, this step requires some clarification about the assumptions of academic writing: that essays are our response to issues being debated, a way of participating in that debate, a way of presenting our own position on the issue in question. And practically, it also requires that we

identify the issue, or problem, not just a topic area, underlying the essay question. The issue may often be assumed from the question alone; in the above question, for example, the issue would be: Are the effects of urban livability in inner Brisbane good or bad? Or it may be that we need to determine the relevant issue(s) from the reading material or the context of the course of study. Consideration of these matters draws us away from the issue of organisational skills into the realm of critical and reflective thinking crucial to tertiary study. Once our critical reading in hand, though, we can begin the task of creating the plan for our answer.

This planning step adds several new elements to our repertoire of organisational thinking skills: the ability to formulate a thesis, a position, a response to the essay question (which holds the entire work together); to identify appropriate sequencing structures (like for and against arguments, or larger or smaller implications); and to impose overall structure on the narrative (like the beginning to end, past to present, problem to solution, and cause to effect structures).

This step, then, changes the way we conceptualise the ideas we are working with: we need to move from the spatial representation of a mind map into the temporal mode of narrative. And it necessitates the using of narrative skills, of the type not too dissimilar to those we need for crime writing after all. We need to be able to show ends in beginnings, and vice versa; to carefully build a case, piling evidence on evidence; and to link and develop the elements of the plot coherently and convincingly. And yet, again, the analytical persuasive essay needs us to offer one clear verdict on the issue under examination: an essay's readability, its function, its success, depends on it having one central idea (its thesis) that holds everything together.

Though they may seem simplistic, analogies with crime writing or even criminal law can help make the forms and functions of academic writing explicit for the students. They help emphasise the crucial point that we need to compose an argument about the issue of the essay question which is as clear and all encompassing as a guilty or not guilty verdict. They help to describe the strategies an essay employs to support this verdict: the strategies of persuasive language, evidence and logical argument.

Of course, the nature of academic issues and evidence rarely allows us to pin down a response to a YES or NO, a

guilty or not guilty. Nevertheless, the legal analogy works for students because it identifies the need for one embracing statement that summarises our evaluative response and holds the argument together. The ability to compose summarising statements in this manner is a crucial organisational skill in the academic context, and the resulting clarity in a student's thinking can be the most important acquisition for the "wood for the trees" sufferer.

Conclusions

One of the problems with teaching discipline specific genres is that the transferable skills learned through academic reading and writing tasks are often glossed over in the effort to produce an end product. With product oriented tuition, of course, there is the risk of prescribing outcomes, and of teacher centred control of material. Generic skills tuition, too, has been criticised for the narrowness and prescriptiveness of its learning outcomes. However, when the emphasis of the learning session is on skills and not product, generic skills tuition can avoid the danger of rigidity attached to teaching the discipline specific genres of academic writing. During the workshop process in a generic skills class, it is important, then, that we articulate the kinds of steps that have been followed, and make explicit the skills that have been used. It is important that the student know that these skills are transferable between essays, and even into other contexts. And it is important that students are given the opportunity to independently practise these skills in the context of the class.

Cognitive organisational skills are a "first thing first" that students need to bring to their academic tasks. They provide the foundation that allows the student to interact with the specific discourse of their discipline or to activate the reflective critical skills specific to higher education. Yet the need for these generic skills instruction is, of course, not isolated to the higher levels of education. In fact, lately I have become more aware of a phenomenon that reverses that assumption altogether. I am realising that these thinking or organisational skills are common to, at least, the entire western workaday world; and that these are skills which many students, especially mature age students, could successfully transfer from their former business life, or the business of running a family, to their academic work, if only they knew they possessed



them. My role as a Learning Skills lecturer is to make that kind of awareness available to students, and generic skills tuition is a clear and effective way of achieving this.

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Endnotes

- 1 For example, the study skills method known as 'unscheduling', where a student records work only after it has been completed. The end result is that a record of progress is maintained but no planning is required.
- 2 Selective reading is a term I have coined and it means being directed in one's reading choices; scanning involves searching the surface of a text to find a particular item of information; skimming means finding the big picture of a text and sketching its outlines; summarising means being able to synthesise material and identify main ideas; active reading

(from Gwen Gawith, 1991) means using all these reading strategies to 'focus your listening and structure the questions you ask of the text' (p90).

- 3 Bert Morris (June, 1987, p.2) illustrates the difference between fiction and non fiction (which he calls "content area" reading) that allows us to use these reading skills: "When we read a story we follow the narrative from beginning to end developing images of the characters and finding out how they interact as the plot unfolds. On the other hand, content area reading tries to teach us something; it explains. If we miss a point we can go back. If we are not concerned about another point we can miss it out Some people refer to this as a top-down approach to reading. You develop an overall picture and then move down into the reading to fill in the details."
- 4 Top level structures were identified by Bonnie Meyer (1979); P Peters, P (1985, pp25-34) discusses other narrative sequencing structures.

Space for Learning

by Alex Radloff & Peter Radloff

The HERDSA Conference in the University of Auckland took many of us back to the classrooms of our youth – tiered (and tired) lecture theatres, hard seats and that special smell that only science classrooms have. Many of the venues were less than comfortable and not particularly conducive to interaction or discussion as a number of workshop presenters demonstrated when they had to make do with standard lecture theatres, brought home to us, once again, the importance of physical space for teaching and learning.

We had been thinking about classrooms/physical spaces quite a lot recently, partly because our university like many others has been debating the issue of space – how it is being used, future space needs and most importantly, how best to maximise the use of available space. One strategy to encourage better use of available space and thus reduce costs is the leasing of space to Divisions, an approach already adopted by a number of universities in the UK and presently being discussed at Curtin. It is suggested that such a move will help departments make informed decisions about their use of space and

improve the efficiency of space use thus freeing up resources for teaching and research. Not surprisingly, this proposal has sparked debate about a number of issues including the quality of existing teaching and research spaces and where the university might be heading in terms of future space needs.

These discussions, although largely prompted by the resource implications of having to rent space, are also related to the other reason we have been thinking about space, namely the widespread calls for higher education to move from teacher-led content focused transmission of information to learner-centred process focused construction of knowledge and the related shift from traditional classroom based lecture and tutorial/lab teaching to flexible resource based learning (Barr & Tagg, 1995). The introduction of IT into all aspects of education has also raised questions about the kinds of spaces students staff need to make best use of IT and where such spaces should be located (Fawson & Van Uiter, 1990; Roberts & Dunn, 1996).

Changes in how we conceptualise teaching and learning as well as changes in the student body (increased size and heterogeneity) have implications for how we arrange the learning environment. One example is the use of collaborative

group learning which requires students to discuss ideas, share information, solve problems, teach one another and work on assessable tasks such as projects and presentations. Successful group work requires spaces which allow for easy student interaction and which are accessible outside normal class times. In other words, students need small seminar or study rooms which in our university are in very short supply. Another example is the need for expanded library and information services as more students study at a distance and more courses turn to resource based learning. Does this mean that the library should increase its print based holdings using up more valuable space for storage, move more towards electronic sources and use library space for computer terminals, or provide more space for individual study and group work? In our university, the library reports increased requests from students for study areas for group work and especially from mature age students, for quiet weekend study space away from the family. Are such requests legitimate and can they be met? Then there is the use of IT in teaching and learning. Where should the hardware be located – in centralised computer labs, in the library, in each department or perhaps not on campus at all but in student residences and homes? There are questions of access, security and equity which have to be addressed in addition to the quality and cost of spaces needed.

How we think of a university also has implications for the design and use of space. There is much talk presently of



the 'virtual' university suggesting that the campus as we know it may soon be replaced by a name, a logo and a web site. The hallowed halls and dreaming spires will disappear along with the ivory tower and the overcrowded car park. Students will learn from home or office and interact with peers and lecturers using a variety of technologies thus never needing to use expensive campus spaces which can be refurbished and used for other purposes to generate funding. We have our doubts that such a move is either practicable or desirable given the current cost and level of sophistication of the technology needed and the importance of 'warm bodies' for the development of a genuine community of learners. Nevertheless, such scenarios should be considered when thinking about future space needs. Considering a university's 'virtual space' needs may indeed provide the impetus for all of us to recognise that in thinking about hardware and software we have been neglecting the 'peopleware', and their needs to be networked.

What about the spaces in which we currently undertake the core functions of the university – teaching and research? What are they like and how suited are they for the way in which students and staff work? Personal experience and anecdotal evidence would suggest that many spaces are far from satisfactory. However, one view may be that since universities are engaged in the work of the mind, the physical environment is largely irrelevant so that physical accommodation is not that important. In this view, it matters little that seats are uncomfortable and sometimes not available in crowded classrooms, or that the lecturer cannot be heard or the visual material seen from the outer reaches of the cavernous lecture theatre, or that student interaction is difficult in classrooms with tiered rows of fixed seats, or that the general campus ambience is dull, dreary and rundown and the outlook from the windows (where there are windows) is uninspiring and consists mostly of treeless car parks.

How valid is such a view? Not valid at all as we found when we delved into the literature on physical spaces. Evidence from psychology, architecture and design shows that people are sensitive to their physical environment and that among others, factors such as overcrowding, seating layout, temperature and ventilation affect behaviour and productivity (Fulton, 1991). Surveys of university students and staff (Babey, 1991; Owu, 1991; Weir, 1994) have

found that they do notice and are influenced by classroom aesthetics such as colour, furnishings, texture and pictures and plants. Factors related to comfort such as seating, temperature, ventilation, lighting and acoustics are also important to teachers and learners. And, as the increased use of IT is being encouraged, adequate provision and maintenance of IT equipment in classrooms becomes an important factor in acceptance and use of the new technologies.

Classrooms which are judged to be inadequate have a negative impact on both students and staff and are typically avoided thus representing a waste of resources. However, when such spaces are redesigned and refurbished their use can go up dramatically as Owu (1991) found at MIT where upgrading one lecture room and installing the latest technology reduced seating but increased comfort and resulted in the space being used 50 to 60 hours per week whereas before it had been underused. The downside of the story is that the refurbishment cost US\$1 million ten years ago. Clearly, it pays to pay close attention to design when new classrooms are being planned to ensure that teaching and learning needs are understood and taken seriously. This is a lesson that the University of California at Santa Cruz has learned the hard way when it needed to spend millions to remedy classroom design flaws at its relatively new campus. Why was that the case? According to Wendell Brase (Brace, 1988-89), vice chancellor for planning, finance and administration, it was not due to the incompetence of the original planners or lack of initial funding. Rather, "[t]he problem had to do with attitudes and programming: the attitude that the classroom element was the least demanding in the architectural program for an instruction and research facility. Client and architect apparently regarded classrooms as non critical, unchallenging parts of the program" (p. 81).

It is not difficult to uncover problems with classrooms – if we bother to ask. We have been quick to adopt student feedback on teaching, but have not felt the need to add one or two questions on the suitability of the lecture or tutorial spaces in which the teaching has been undertaken, and more importantly the learning has been assumed to be taking place. Including the question "How suitable was the lecture room for your learning?" in a feedback questionnaire completed by Behavioural Science students last semester, yielded a median

of 3 on a 10 point scale from zero "most unsuitable" to 10 "a perfect venue". It also drew comments such as "This lecture room could not support learning in any subject." "Cramped, a feeling of being trapped. Hate the lecture theatre." "Uncomfortable lecture theatre" and "The worst lecture theatre on campus." Another question, "How suitable was your classroom for the tutorial/laboratory/workshop activities?" yielded a median score of 6 for all venues combined but two spaces were not acceptable. Comments on these included "Too small, not enough seats to go round. No windows, very claustrophobic." Too crowded for our group size." Using such questions on student feedback forms could quickly locate the least suitable accommodation, and refurbishing these spaces could lead to general improvement in student attitudes and learning.

The quality of classrooms is important for learning but given that most learning tends to take place outside formal classes, we should also pay attention to those other spaces which students use on campus. As we pointed out earlier, students need group meeting and individual study spaces and easy access to technology. They also need to feel part of their university and identify and connect with their course and discipline. Come to think of it, so do staff. In short, the campus should be a place where students (and staff) have a reason to come, where they feel welcome and comfortable and where they have opportunities to become part of a community of learners. Unfortunately, as campuses have grown to accommodate increased student numbers and as budgets have tightened, informal spaces such as common rooms, staff rooms and seminar rooms have all but vanished to be replaced by classrooms. It is hardly surprising then, that staff and students are less likely to engage in informal contact with one another or to become involved in conversation so vital for the intellectual life of a university. Libraries too have found it hard to keep up with growing demand for space and many are hard pressed to provide adequately for their users. And where trees and open space were once, now are buildings or car parks despite the fact that open spaces are a valuable resource (Griffith, 1994; Kleberg, 1992). And the maintenance of buildings and gardens is under threat as further cost-cutting targets 'non-essential' spending. As a result, even newer campuses may be beginning to look rundown and neglected. One consequence of poorly



maintained spaces is increased vandalism which in turn, results in reduced use of such spaces, increased security problems and a lack of pride in and ownership of, the campus by students and staff.

So we are back where we began – with the question of resources and how these can affect spaces for learning. The challenge is how to maintain and enhance the physical environment in our universities given current trends in teaching, learning and technology in higher education and tight budgets. What can we do on our campuses to ensure effective use of existing spaces for learning and protect, maintain and enhance them? Here are a few suggestions.

- 1 Focus on learning spaces rather than teaching spaces. Consider how your students learn and what the aims of your courses are and identify the physical spaces which you need based on these factors. Try to think beyond the teacher-centred view of learning which focuses on lectures, tutorials, labs and think instead from your students' perspective and about the potential of IT. Don't overlook factors such as aesthetics and comfort which affect the quality of student learning. Obtain regular feedback from your students about the quality of their learning environment.
- 2 Distinguish between formal and informal learning spaces. Remember that most learning takes place outside the classroom. This should be recognised when space is allocated for your course. As we move towards collaborative group work and resource based learning, recognise that students need space for meeting outside formal classes and build these into your space requirements.

- 3 Create space for a learning community. Physical proximity is a prerequisite for interaction and the building of a learning community. Include meeting places in all buildings and provide access to students and staff common rooms and other spaces where they can get together. Consider what symbols and signs distinguish your discipline from others and display these prominently to give students and staff a sense of place and of belonging. Show respect for the users of campus space by maintaining order and quality across the campus.

- 4 Demand input into decision-making related to space. Engage your colleagues in discussions of learning spaces. Articulate your teaching and learning needs and your students' feedback in appropriate forums such as teaching and learning committees. Get onto working parties which deal with space use. Invite your campus architect to lead a discussion on the latest in classroom design. Take a camera on your visits to other campuses and record examples of good design.

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Research in Higher Education

The following research reports have been placed on the HERDSA Web site

Co-operative learning in a first year zoology class
by Susan Jones

Teaching for Learning in a first year Chemistry Class
by Peter Zeegers and Lisa Martin

There is also news of a number of new projects that are just beginning. Those interested in receiving more details are invited to contact the researchers directly.

<http://sunsite.anu.edu.au/education/herdsa>



REPORT FROM A POSTGRADUATE Award Holder at the 1998 HERDSA Conference

I presented a paper at the Auckland conference on Change, Risk and Trust. It was good to be back in Auckland where I completed a Masters degree in 1994 before going to La Trobe University to do a PhD in education in 1995.

In my session, I talked mostly about trust, in particular about two forms of trust described by the philosopher Annette Baier. I have used these forms of trust to investigate students' attitudes to traditional mathematics education in my PhD thesis. I will talk about each of these forms of trust and then explain how I think they impact on education.

The first form of trust is called reliance. It involves contracts or deals, which historically have been made between equals, who each have the same opportunity for redress if things go wrong. This form of trust is characteristic of public life, and it is so familiar to us because western legal systems are set up to support and promote it. We contract with others for the delivery of many things that are important to us in life - with banks for loans (on terms favourable to us, if we can get them), with employers for a pay check (ditto), with dentists to fix our teeth appropriately, etc. Reliance builds between individuals when each consistently honours her or his side of the contract; for example when the employee continues to produce and the employer continues to pay. When each honours their obligations, they come to see each other as reliable. Individuals who engage in reliance trust in systems (such as contracts and deals) more than in people.

Through most of western history, this form of trust has been the only form recognised. However, philosophers such as Baier have begun to recognise and describe another form of trust, which I will call personal trust here. Personal trust has nothing to do with contracts or deals, and has actually developed in relations between unequals. Baier focusses on the unequal power relationship between parent and child, but we could equally well focus on teachers and students. A relationship between unequals does not have to be

exploitative, Baier argues; indeed, there are numerous examples of people (for example, most parents) attending to those who have less power than them in caring, productive, and empowering ways. The form of trust that produces this empowerment is personal trust. Personal trust depends on the presence of certain qualities in the more powerful person, such as generosity, patience, and humility (as in non-arrogance), for example. Such individuals act generously towards their students (giving them the benefit of the doubt when doubt exists, for example), with patience (giving them plenty of time to do things at their own pace), and with humility (expecting themselves to be wrong and the student to be right at least some of the time). To be concerned with developing such qualities in oneself, and to be able to recognise them in others, is characteristic of an individual who engages in personal trust. Individuals who engage in personal trust place more trust in people than in systems.

What are the implications for educational practice? In my case, I was interested in how people who predominantly engage in personal trust experience traditional mathematics education compared to people who predominantly engage in reliance. In traditional mathematics education, students usually work quickly, silently, competitively, and the maths is presented abstractly, detached from "real life". The deal offered in traditional mathematics classrooms is clear - be quick, be right far more often than not, and don't worry about wanting to use maths in real life. In return, you'll be rewarded with the label "good at maths" (even if you don't understand why you're getting the answers right). This will suit students who engage mostly in reliance as a form of trust. They will understand the "deal" and it will work for them.

For those who engage in personal trust, however, the requirement for speed will be read as a lack of patience; the emphasis on trying to "be right" all the time will be read as a lack of humility; and the lack of attention to personal qualities and situations will mean that, in this type of classroom, people do not

matter. Students who engage predominantly in personal trust rather than in reliance will not be able to develop trust in these classrooms, and will therefore avoid them. I suggest that they leave traditional mathematics education as soon as they can because they will experience it as a hostile environment. It is those who engage predominantly in reliance, those who trust systems more than people, who stay.

My thesis looks more deeply into trust-based attitudes to traditional mathematics education, and links them to gender, using the work of Carol Gilligan to suggest that reliance is characteristic of males (although by no means exclusive to them) and personal trust characteristic of females (ditto). This connection may be part of the reason why so many more females than males exit traditional mathematics education as soon as it becomes non-compulsory. The form of trust they predominantly engage in has no place in the traditional mathematics classroom. Consequently, educators who are interested in increasing the participation of women in their mathematics courses should examine their own classroom practices rather than seeing the "fault" as lying with the student.

Personal details:

I am originally from NZ where I worked at Unitec in Auckland, but am now permanently in Australia, living in inner-city Melbourne. I am currently writing the last chapters of my PhD thesis, which investigates gendered moral perspectives, especially forms of trust, and their interaction with traditional mathematics education. I have specialised in teaching mathematics to women and girls who dislike it.

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Using the World Wide Web in the Classroom

by Lenore Lyons-Lee

If the booking sheet for the first few weeks of session in the Faculty of Arts Computer lab is anything to go by, teaching staff are increasingly utilising Information Technology (IT) as a teaching tool and a learning resource. One of the main IT skills that students are being encouraged to learn is the use of the Internet, including Electronic Mail, Telnet and the World Wide Web. While staff may be familiar with the use of the Internet for research purposes, they may be less aware of its use in the classroom. In this paper I want to briefly reflect on my own decision to use the World Wide Web as part of my teaching practice in the Sociology Program.

The Web as a Teaching Resource

I have used the Web for three main purposes - as an additional library resource, as a tool for retrieving materials not generally found in libraries, and as a non-traditional teaching space. Some of these tasks are skills oriented (i.e. teaching students how to 'use' the Web), while others are more closely linked to the specific learning objectives of individual subjects.

Library Resource

One of the important resources that students can access via the University's Home Page is the University Library Catalogue. The Web Catalogue has many more features than the version that students use in the library. The catalogues of other university libraries in New South Wales can also be accessed from the same page. In addition, it is now possible to access most of the library CD ROMs via the Library Home Page. These are available using the programme Webspurs* which is very similar to the Macspurs* programme that many staff access via their desktops. Students can also connect to Current Contents, ABI/Inform, Expanded Academic Index and several other trial databases**. The library has also set up Faculty specific library home pages with information about sites of interest to students in each discipline.

Information Retrieval

The Web offers an important site for the retrieval of information generally not available in libraries. For example, students can find information about other universities and research institutions, government and commercial organisations, and non-profit organisations. In addition, there is a large amount of material available in the art and entertainment fields. In recent years, there has been a huge increase in the number of journals published electronically, and many scholars are now 'publishing' their own research by placing it on their personal home pages. This is particularly true of the science disciplines.

Alternative Teaching Space

By developing subject home pages, the Web can provide both staff and students with an alternative teaching space. The subject home page can be used both as a site for information retrieval, as well as an interactive space for student-student, and student-staff contact. For example, lecturers can place their subject outlines, information sheets and lecture notes on the Web so that students who have lost their hard copy, or who missed a particular week's classes can download or print the missing pages. In addition, the Web page can contain links to sites of general interest (e.g. an electronic journal or database) or task oriented sites (e.g. a dataset). The Web page can also provide a site for the presentation of student materials (including individual or group projects) or the submission of student assignments; and an access point for email, discussion lists and chat sessions.

Flexible Delivery Benefits for Teachers and Learners

One of the main benefits of introducing students to the range of resources available on the Web is that it enables remote access. Students are able to access the catalogues and CD ROMs without having to go to the library - they can do it from Faculty based labs, the Berry campus lab, the Shoalhaven library, or even from home. In addition, the Web provides students with a site for the collection of materials that may take time to access via traditional means - for example, information on the aims and objectives of Non-government Organisations in another state, or the latest

release figures on employment from the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

For staff interested in using their teaching time more flexibly, the Web may offer a site for the presentation of materials and staff-student interaction outside the traditional classroom. This may include reducing time spent in face-to-face consultation (the student who has lost their assignment sheet can print it off the Web, or send an email to their lecturer) and offer a site for contact between students who have trouble getting together outside of class time (taking part in a chat session to discuss an assignment topic). At the same time, however, the Web does not offer a substitute for going to the library, nor a replacement for the teacher.

Technical skills versus discipline based learning

While the Web may provide a useful resource for both staff and students, a question remains over the appropriate forum for teaching students to access and use it. Some may argue for example, that learning to use the Web is a technical skill that should be taught outside normal class time. By incorporating it into individual subjects the already limited amount of time available to be spent on discipline based learning may be lost. In my own view, there are important reasons why Web based tasks should be incorporated into the curriculum.

First, it is my experience that by the time students reach tertiary education they have been successfully socialised not to be proactive learners. While the library offers many workshops on using the Internet or using CD ROM, many students do not take part. Some are techno-phobic and will not learn to use the Internet because they are uncertain or afraid of using a computer. Others will not learn any more than is necessary to pass the subject. Getting students into the computer lab in the first few weeks of session and designing assignment tasks around IT skills may be one way of ensuring that all students have a basic level of competency when it comes to using the Web.

Second, students need to practice these skills in order to master them. Once again, unless students are 'forced to' learn how to use the Web, many will not build on the skills they learnt in the introductory workshop. It is not



uncommon for students to comment that, "We went to the library and did something like that last year but I can't remember how to do it". For this reason, ensuring that students obtain the generic skills listed under the Competencies and Attitudes of the Attributes of the Wollongong Graduate depends upon the incorporation of skills with discipline based learning.

Finally, I think teachers need to think of IT skills not as something that we 'add on' to our content based lectures and tutorials, but as learning tools that can be made integral to the learning process. Exercises and tasks need to be subject specific, so that while students may be practicing the same skills, they are applying them in different ways. For example, in my third year subjects, students are required to show their competency in accessing library resources via the Web through a series of short exercises designed to gather materials on their major assignment. In this case, because I am assuming that students have already learnt how to 'do it' (in first and second year), they merely have to demonstrate proficiency in the skill. A limited amount of lab time may be set aside for brainstorming and sharing of information among students, or the task may be set as homework.

The Web may also be used as a resource for teaching students to be critical learners. One of the biggest problems with using the Web for information retrieval is the number of hours spent searching the Web versus the quality of the information obtained. One way to address this problem is by teaching students to be critical of the information they access. For example, in a second year Research Methods subject students are required to retrieve information from the Web on a specific topic as part of their homework. In class, students present the information and must assess its usefulness when compared to materials gathered through more traditional means. In this way, the skill (Netsearching) is combined with a discipline based task (assessing the value of different information).

Will the Web replace face-to-face teaching?

Another important issue raised about the Web as a teaching tool is the potential that it creates for both teachers and class time to be reduced. In other words, as part of a push towards 'flexible delivery', the Web may render traditional face-to-face teaching obsolete. My own experience has shown that placing written lectures, question and answer

tutorials, and 'real time' chat sessions on the Web does not necessarily make learning easier, more interesting or more cost effective. We know that on-campus students already want more contact hours and they do vote with their feet. While distance learners may have more reduced expectations about face-to-face contact, they don't expect to be talking to a computer every day. At the same time, while the Web may be used to reduce contact hours, that doesn't mean a reduction in working hours. Placing materials on the Web requires both time and money. Monitoring chat sessions or discussion lists and answering email queries can be time consuming. What needs to be stressed here is that flexible delivery doesn't mean doing it less, just doing it differently.

Potential Problems or Concerns

For staff interested in incorporating the Web into their subjects there are a number of potential problems that they need to be aware of. The first are technical issues, and the second relate to curriculum development.

Technical Issues

We are all familiar with the problems facing us as individual users of the Web. These problems become magnified in the classroom. These include downtime and slow downloading speed. There is nothing worse than setting up a class lab exercise only to find that once everyone has logged on that the links are down, or that only a few students can access the same page at the one time. Similarly, it can be extremely frustrating and time consuming to design an exercise only to find that a web page has changed. These are problems that as teachers we have little control over.

Lecturers who have developed their own subject pages face a range of related issues. Foremost amongst them is updating information. Not only is the process of producing a home page time consuming, but staff require technical assistance and training to continuously upload new materials. Additional problems may arise when links are down or software is not working.

Curriculum Issues

The integration of IT, including the Web, into the curriculum involves a review of course content and a sharing of information between staff. Introductory workshops need to be scheduled in first and second year subjects, and staff teaching in later years need to know what has been taught before students

arrive in their classrooms. This will avoid problems of repetition and enable the sharing of site information amongst staff. In addition, questions need to be raised about whether in using subject home pages, information is being duplicated unnecessarily, thereby increasing staff time with no tangible benefits in terms of student learning outcomes.

Conclusion

As with many teaching resources, the Web is time consuming in preparation, it involves continuous updating, and is subject to technical problems. Nonetheless, I think there are many useful applications to which the Web can be put. These include not just providing students with technical skills, but also actively using the Web as a discipline based learning tool. It can provide an interesting alternative to the more traditional techniques that we use as teachers. To be successful, however, Web based teaching and learning needs to be well integrated into the curriculum.

* Webspurs and Macspurs are both software programs that allow remote access from your desktop to Silverplatter databases. Macspurs is a program that is loaded on to Macintosh machines, and Webspurs is a similar program that is accessed via the library's web page:

[www-library.uow.edu.au]

** Current Contents, ABI/Inform and Expanded Academic Index are all electronic databases that contain a range of disciplinary materials, all with abstracts and some with full-text documents. Expanded Academic Index contains material from arts and the humanities to social sciences, science and technology. It provides access to academic journals, magazines and newspapers, some with full text and images. ABI/INFORM provides citations and abstracts for articles in mainly business and management areas, many with full-text. Current Contents provides access to the tables of contents and bibliographic data from current issues of the world's leading scholarly research journals in the sciences, social sciences, and arts and humanities.

Dr. Lenore Lyons is a lecturer in the Sociology Program at the University of Wollongong. She is interested in questions related to the use of computer technology in the classroom and is currently a member of the Faculty of Arts curriculum development team working on subjects for Flexible Delivery at the University's South Coast campuses.



Many Routes One Destination:

Profiles of Successful Academic Women

by Izabel Soliman

The difficulties experienced by academic women in male dominated universities have been documented internationally. *Many Routes One Destination* focuses upon successes rather than difficulties. It is concerned with the development of the careers of a group of academic women who are at different levels, in different disciplines, from different ethnic backgrounds and who have different family responsibilities. They have either advanced to the level of professor or are 'on track' in doing so.

Izabel Soliman, a Senior Lecturer in Education at the University of New England, focuses on the research component of the academic careers of eleven senior women. They spoke to her frankly about their families and early education, their educational attainments, their mobility, the role of supervisors/mentors in the development of their careers, their approach to research and the values which underpin their research, and their publishing strategies. Izabel Soliman compares their experiences with those of early career women who report difficulties in developing a research program due to lack of time, heavy teaching loads, teaching separated from research, sense of isolation, and lack of encouragement and support. Her narratives of the eleven women reveal the personal strengths/strategies they have developed to deal with their family responsibilities, the difficulties/constraints encountered in research and in the management of academic work. Their stories depict their struggles, courage, perseverance and achievements,

1998 University of New England

ISBN 186389478

265pages

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School of Education Studies, UNE,
Armidale, NSW 2351

Fax: (02) 6773 3350 email:

isoliman@metz.une.edu.au

ISSUES IN RESEARCH

Perceptions of Successful Academic Women

Companion Video to *Many Routes One Destination: Profiles of Successful Academic Women*

Izabel Soliman

Developer and Producer

This video addresses issues in research from the perspective of seven academic women at the University of New England who are active in research and who have been successful in attracting research grants.

The target audience is academics at the entry level. It is a useful resource for professional development and can be shown in segments to facilitate discussion among the viewers.

The issues discussed are

- the difficulties posed by the academic culture and how they address and manage them
- the kinds of questions they investigate and the values underpinning their research
- the challenge of balancing teaching and research
- the pros and cons of conducting collaborative research
- their strategies in applying for research grants, and

- how they would approach research if they were starting their academic careers today.

The participants are:

Dr. Eilis Magner, Professor in Law

Dr. Margaret Katz, Senior Lecturer in Molecular and Cellular Biology

Rachel Sharp, Professor of Education in the Faculty of Arts

Dr. Majella Franzmann, Associate Professor in Studies in Religion

Dr. Anne Pauwels, Professor in Linguistics, (currently Dean of Arts, Wollongong University)

Dr. Kay Harman, Senior Lecturer in Administration and Training

Dr. Amarjit Kaur, Professor in Economic History

At the end of the program, further questions are presented to initiate discussion among the viewers of their own goals, strategies and concerns and to encourage reflection about ways of developing their skills to enhance success in research.

1998

University of New England

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Izabel Soliman is a Senior Lecturer in Education Studies, University of New England. Her research and teaching interests are teacher education, gender and education, school-community relations, and higher education.



HERDSA Life Members

In the November 1998 issue we published a list of the life members of the Society and promised to feature in future issues some details about them and their current activities. Regrettably we omitted three names, Barbara Falk, Norm Henry and Kol Starr and we sincerely apologise for this. Norm and Kol are no longer alive but Barbara Falk, now in her 89th year, still enjoys contact with tutors and postgraduate students at the Department of History at the University of Melbourne. She is continuing to research and write. Her latest publications are:

"D.J." A biography of Dorothy Jean Ross. In press. Melbourne University Press.

"Caught in a Snare," Hitler's Academic Refugees, 1933-1949. Department of History, University of Melbourne, monograph no. 25, 1998.

Barbara was head of the Centre for the Study of Higher Education (CSHE) at the University of Melbourne in the 1970's. CSHE was one of the first centres of its kind in Australia.

Peter Karmel

Peter Karmel, who wrote the article on the front cover of this issue, was Professor of Economics at the University of Adelaide (1950-63), Foundation Vice-Chancellor, Flinders University (1963-71), Chair Australian Universities Commission (1971-77), Foundation Chair, Commonwealth Tertiary

Education Commission, (1977-82), Vice-Chancellor, The Australian National University, (1983-87).

He has chaired a number of important policy making committees in education eg Quality of Education Review Committee, 1985, which produced the report 'Quality of Education in Australia.' His current research interest is higher education policy.

Alan Lonsdale

Alan is the sole surviving member of the gang of three which founded HERDSA in 1972 (the other two being Fred Katz (UNSW) and Kol Star (AVCC)).

Alan has had a varied academic career beginning as a secondary science teacher in the 60's and culminating as Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Staffing) at Deakin University. In between he spent twenty years from 1970 at the Western Australian Institute of Technology, now Curtin University of Technology. There he established the educational development unit and eventually became Director of University Development.

In 1995 Alan decided to live dangerously and became an independent consultant in higher education management which he finds varied and stimulating.

Alan's thoughts on the current state of higher education? In a word: troubled (very). The last decade has seen irreversible changes in the nature and role of universities, and in the role of

academic staff. The preoccupation not only with making ends meet but, more fundamentally, with the transformation of universities to commercial enterprises in which making a profit is paramount, has substantially distorted their role in society. In particular, the implications for staff are enormous -the role is now over-diversified (entrepreneur and business manager as well as scholar, project manager as well as teacher), the workloads keep growing, and job security and career advancement are a continuous preoccupation for many.

It's nice to be a participant observer!

Alan Prosser

Alan taught and researched in Physical Chemistry in UK before taking up an appointment at the University of New South Wales in 1970, thus returning to the country of his birth. Back in the 1950's Alan was experimenting with different teaching methods and subject contents so it is not surprising to learn he was a founding member of HERDSA, serving on the Executive in the mid 1970's and 80's. Alan is well known as a person who championed the active role of the practicing teacher in HERDSA. He also persisted in trying to establish local branches of the society. He is a valuable mine of information about HERDSA and recently completed the task of compiling an index for HERDSA News which is available on the web site. For example for the subject article look up <http://sunsite.anu.edu.au/education/herdsa/subart.html>. He is about to start on the task of indexing the conference proceedings!

HERDSA SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS (SIGS)

ACADEMIC DEVELOPERS (ADSIG)

Convenor:

Barbara Grant, University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Phone: +64 9 373 7599

Email: bm.grant@auckland.ac.nz

The Convenorship of ADSIG changed from Di Thompson (Deakin) to Barbara Grant (University of Auckland) at the HERDSA Conference in July. At that meeting of the SIG, various matters were discussed. There was an agreement that "volunteered" members would take turns to introduce a discussion topic at the beginning of each of the next five months. This has happened with Kym Fraser (Monash) kicking off in

September with "What's in a name", followed by Carol Nicoll (University of Queensland) whose questions sparked the whingers debate, and most recently Moya Adams' (Macquarie) contribution which raises the question of how we negotiate some of the tensions that arise in our multiple roles as academic developers. There has been a reasonably active response to these provocations so it has been a successful strategy for keeping some life in the discussion list.

Another matter raised at the July meeting was that of establishing a web presence in which members might list brief bios and which might be linked to their individual or institutional home pages. There has been no progress made on this as yet.

The current membership is 137. Erika Martens continues to moderate the list.

Joining the list: Send an email message to: LISTSERV@latrobe.edu.au.

Leave the subject line blank.

Write into the text area: subscribe adsig

CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT

Convenor: John Hoddinott, University of New South Wales

Phone: +61 2 9385 4991

Email: j.hoddinott@unsw.edu.au

HIGHER EDUCATION LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT

Convenors:

Val Clifford, University of Canberra

Phone: +61 2 6201 2253



Email: vac@isd.canberra.edu.au

To join the Special Interest Group in University Leadership and Management

email listserv please send a message to:
listproc@listproc.anu.edu.au

leave subject line blank and in body of the message put:

subscribe siglead@listproc.anu.edu.au your
firstname your lastname

These instructions must be followed exactly, any niceties like please and thank you lead to your subscription being rejected (and you thought that your parents had brought you up so well!)

We also have a web site for people to post information on courses, research and new developments:

<http://www.nettl.usyd.edu.au/leader>

LANGUAGE & LEARNING

Convenor:

Anita van der Wal, University of Newcastle

Phone: +61 49 21 5890

Email: alaev@cc.newcastle.edu.au

The Language and Learning Special Interest Group has been quite active over the last few months. In Victoria, the Language and Learning SIG is closely aligned with the Victorian Language and Learning Network (VLLN) and bi-annual seminars are held, which are advertised through the Unilearn electronic discussion list. On Thursday 25th & Friday 26th November, 1999, the Language and Academic Skills Conference will be held at Monash University (Clayton Campus), Melbourne. The conference convenors are Glenda Crosling, Tim Moore, and Sheila Vance of the Language and Learning Services at Monash University. Further information about the conference can be obtained by emailing Tim Moore at: tim.moore@arts.monash.edu.au

In South Australia, language and learning staff have participated in joint events which have involved staff developers, study advisers and faculty staff.

In NSW and the ACT John Grierson (UWS - Macarthur) took over the coordinator's role during 1998. He writes: Flexible learning and collaboration: The themes of 1998

The NSW/ACT branch of the HERDSA Language and Learning Special Interest Group has had an active year, with seminars at the University of Western Sydney (Macarthur), the University of Western Sydney (Nepean), and Wollongong University, with a final

meeting at the North Sydney campus of the Australian Catholic University. Just as it has in the rest of higher education, the place of flexible delivery and information technology is dominating the agenda.

In 1998 these themes have often been combined with another major one for us, the relationship of learning support teachers and faculties. At UWS Macarthur and Wollongong, Learning Centre teachers from Wollongong discussed their faculty-based work in developing interactive, online learning and literacy-support resources for students. At UWS Nepean, The Learning Assistance Centre from the University of Sydney talked about their collaboration with the School of Biological Sciences to develop a computer-based learning package which engages students in analysing and constructing laboratory reports. Robyn Woodward-Kron from Wollongong also described a CD-ROM being developed in the Department of Modern Languages to support students needing explicit advice and immediate feedback on the organisation and language features of academic writing. At the Nepean meeting also, Chris Corbel from Victoria took participants on a web tour of some of the most recent learning technologies.

The limitations of technology have also been recognised. At the UWS Nepean meeting, the Language and Learning Unit from the University of Sydney (Cumberland) emphasised the continuing importance of personal contact, including telephone, fax, email and the post, which allow students to interact with a live reader and to manipulate their own texts rather than texts produced by someone else and put on a server. At Macarthur, Barbara Hilliard showed a 'traditional' print-based study skills guide newly developed for students at ACU. And other speakers, such as Beth Murison and Helen Bonanno from the Learning Assistance Centre at the University of Sydney, who gave a paper on "Staff tolerance of grammatical error in student writing", reminded us that some old issues are still relevant. The study confirmed their hypothesis that high irritant level grammatical error (e.g. sentence fragments) in student writing affected the overall assessment of that writing.

At the end of the year, the University of Wollongong (with UWS Macarthur and Melbourne) won a large CUTSD grant to develop interactive web-based learning resources. The flexible learning issue looks like it will stay with us for a long time.

With both the HERDSA conference and the Language and Academic Skills Conference happening in 1999, it looks like we are heading into an exciting year, with lots of opportunities to share information and experiences. We look forward to meeting you all in Melbourne this year!

(Report by: Anita van der Wal,
The University of Newcastle,
ALAEV@cc.newcastle.edu.au.)

To subscribe to the Language and Learning SIG send an email message to:

majordomo@uws.edu.au

Leave the subject line blank and in the body of the message put:

subscribe UNILEARN

STUDENT LEARNING

Convenor: Gillian Boulton-Lewis,

Queensland University of Technology

Phone: +61 7 3864 3118

Email: g.boulton-lewis@qut.edu.au

The SIG Members plan to hold a symposium of papers at the HERDSA conference in Melbourne if enough people volunteer. At present there have been five tentative offers. Please contact Gillian if you are interested in presenting a paper.

To join the e-list send an email message to:

mailserv@qut.edu.au

Leave the subject line blank and in the body of the message put:

subscribe HERDSIG your email address.

VISUAL & PERFORMING ARTS

Convenor: Nancy de Freitas,

Auckland Institute of Technology

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Email: nancy.defreitas@ait.ac.nz

To join the e-list send an email message to:

majordomo@ait.ac.nz

Leave the subject line blank and in the body of the message put:

subscribe vipasig



News from Branches

There are HERDSA Branches in Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong. Some organise annual conferences and most have at least one meeting each semester which usually features a speaker talking about a current interest or issue in higher education. For details of activities contact the President or where available the local HERDSA web site. The addresses appear below. Unfortunately at present there is no branch in New South Wales or the Northern Territory.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

John Dearn
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HONG KONG

Catherine Tang

Centre for Learning, Teaching and Supervision
The Hong Kong Institute of Education
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NEW ZEALAND

Membership

Membership of HERDSA NZ is holding steady at 141. Of these:

- 44 are discipline-based academics
- 47 are staff in staff development units in public tertiary organisations, including heads of units
- 7 are staff who work in the learning skills area
- 8 are senior administrators, CEOs etc in public tertiary organisations

The rest are allied staff, librarians, consultants, union (staff or student) administrators, research officers, quality assurance experts etc.

Of the members, 71 are from polytechnics, 47 from Universities and 6 from Colleges of Education.

AGM

The AGM for the HERDSA NZ Branch was held on 1 December 1998 and members of the HERDSA NZ Committee for 1999 are:

Chairperson: Mary Melrose: *Auckland Institute of Technology*

Secretary: Stanley Frielick: *University of Auckland*

Treasurer: Colleen McMurchy-Pilkington: *Auckland College of Education*

Mark Barrow: *UNITEC Institute of Technology*

Pip Bruce Ferguson: *Waikato Polytechnic*

Nancy de Freitas: *Auckland Institute of Technology*

Ruth Ethell: *Otago University*

Jane Gunn-Lewis: *UNITEC Institute of Technology*

Neil Haigh: *University of Waikato*

Phil Ker: *Auckland Institute of Technology*

Shona Little: *Auckland Institute of Technology*

Reynold Macpherson: *University of Auckland*

Helen Matthews: *Christchurch Polytechnic*

John Melrose: *Manukau Institute of Technology*

Eileen Piggot-Irvine: *Massey University*

Maureen Reid: *Auckland Institute of Technology*

Gary Russell: *Auckland Institute of Technology*

Gordon Suddaby: *Massey University*

Alison Viskovic: *Wellington Polytechnic*

Mary Melrose is organising a draft of a NZ indemnity insurance policy which will be checked by the main office. Australian members have had indemnity, when they hold meetings, for some time.

Mark Barrow and Mary Melrose are editing the selected papers for the refereed proceedings of the 1998 HERDSA conference in Auckland: *Transformation of Higher Education* (Vol 21, *Research and Development in Higher Education*). Approximately 26 papers were accepted after committee review followed by double blind refereeing. All 86 of those who asked to be considered as authors for this volume should by now have received a letter of acceptance or correspondence that regretfully declined the paper for this publication.

Mark Barrow is convening a subcommittee of the HERDSA NZ Committee to develop a process for making submissions from HERDSA NZ to government and other bodies on matters relating to HERDSA objectives. HERDSA executive will then be asked to approve this process.

Mary Melrose (Dr)

Centre for Staff and Educational Development

Auckland Institute of Technology

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New Zealand

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Facsimile: 64-9-307 9792

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DEVELOPMENTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

The Centre for Professional Development (CPD) at the UoA was heavily engaged in 1998 the campaign for research-led improvements to the quality of teaching, papers and courses. A new system has been widely promoted and linked into continuation and promotion processes, especially the use of Fast Feedback and Peer Review data. The SEEQ has been successfully trialed to enable academic staff to make detailed analyses of the quality of their teaching. Using North American research, a new standardised method of monitoring the quality of taught papers has also been devised - the LISQ.

It has recently been trialed in Cyprus to check for cross cultural reliability. The Course Evaluation Questionnaire and the Postgraduate Research Experience

Questionnaires are also being trialed. In 1999 the focus will move to using quality data to make continuous improvements, and building the research-teaching nexus.

Other highlights for the CPD in 1998 included very positive feedback from the external Audit Report, boosting support for flexible learning and graduate research, reconfiguring computer and tutor/demonstrator training, helping with organisational research, facilitating policy development and departmental planning, and mounting a very successful General Staff Development Conference.

A number of CPDers plan to attend the HERDSA 1999 Conference and look forward to sharing their research and teaching. Given the growing stress on research-led professional development, the CPD's Director, Professor Reynold Macpherson, is particularly keen to host Australian staff development colleagues visiting New Zealand, and may be contacted at

r.macpherson@auckland.ac.nz

Professor Reynold Macpherson

Director, Centre for Professional Development

QUEENSLAND

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA

In 1998 the SA Branch was keen to preserve the collaborative relationships that had developed in organising the 1997 HERDSA conference. The organising group represents discipline-based academics, professional/academic developers, and student/study skills advisers. The South Australian branch has taken a leaf out of the book of WA Branch who seemed to have a very lively and collaborative network of shared responsibilities for keeping the organisation going. Our planning meetings occur in restaurants over lunch!

The organising group has conducted several activities in 1998, each making sure that they add a significant dimension of social activity. Early 1998 we had Associate Professor Shirley Alexander talk to a HERDSA Forum about the uptake and contributions of Information Technologies in Higher Education. When Tom Angelo was in Adelaide in June 1998 we added a wine and cheese launch for the first HERDSA CD rom conference proceedings (1997) and then booked a restaurant for "Dinner with TOM".

Taking social time out in busy schedules provides valuable unstructured opportunities to discuss the teaching and research ideas and shape them with input from colleagues. It also provides opportunities to form teaching and research alliances across discipline, campus and institutional barriers. In December we were lucky to have Professor David Boud give a seminar on Work-Based Learning and we included the opportunity for



"Lunch with David"

In 1999 we plan to hold a local mini-conference on research on teaching and learning. We have realised that while most of us exit the state to give research papers at international conferences we rarely hear what one another is doing. Even if we attend the same conference as a colleague from SA we mistakenly often don't go to their paper presentation because "we can catch up with them back home". Of course we often don't because we are so busy! So we are going to provide colleagues with the chance to brush the dust off a recent conference presentation and give it again for all of us. The time, place and restaurant have yet to be chosen!

The organising group include:

Margaret Hicks UniSA
Helen Johnston UniSA
Penny Westhope UniSA
Chris Ingleton Adelaide University
Ray Peterson Adelaide University
Mary Brownlee Adelaide University
Alison Russell Flinders University
Janice Orrell Flinders University

Dr Janice Orrell

Academic Co-ordinator
Staff Development and Training Unit
Flinders University of SA
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WESTERN AUSTRALIA

We held our AGM on 3 February during the Teaching and Learning Forum (see report of the Forum in this issue).

There was a good turnout of members, (26), including Owen Hicks, the President of HERDSA. Among the matters discussed was ideas for 1999 seminars and also the need to encourage wider membership of HERDSA.

The AGM was followed by a very successful HERDSA (WA) Branch dinner which is traditionally held during the Forum and is open to all Forum participants, HERDSA members or not and this year was a buffet at University House, University of Western Australia. 22 people attended the dinner with about a third being HERDSA

members and the rest, hopefully, members-to-be! There were also two interstate and four overseas Forum participants amongst the diners which added a cosmopolitan touch to the gathering.

Associate Professor Alex Radloff

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www.acs.uwa.edu.au/csd/HERDSA/wabrdsa.htm

VICTORIA

The Victoria branch is working very hard at present preparing for the annual HERDSA conference, (see separate report), hence there are no other activities to report.

Di Thompson

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<http://sunsite.anu.edu.au/education/herdsa/vic/>
Membership: jlyons@florence.nu.rmit.edu.au

Conference Report

Re-working the University at Griffith University, December 1998

The impact of revolutionary change on the work and lives of university staff in Australian universities was the focus of 'Re-working the University', a conference held at Griffith University on December 10-11, 1998. Participants considered such issues as collegiality and managerialism, globalisation and markets in higher education, professional development and performance management, diversity and equity, academics' experiences of change, and the impact of changing university systems on academic roles.

Keynote speakers included Prof Peter Coaldrake, Deputy Vice-chancellor of the Queensland University of Technology; Dr Carolyn Allport, President of the National Tertiary Education Union; and Assoc Prof Simon Marginson of Monash University. The conference was sponsored by the Griffith Institute for Higher Education at Griffith University, with the Faculty of Education at Monash University. Over 25 papers were presented from representatives of 19 universities in Australia and New Zealand. A subset of the papers will be published in Higher Education Policy and Management in a special issue with guest editors Prof. Paul Ramsden of the Griffith Institute for Higher Education, Griffith University, and Simon Marginson.

Allport, the President of NTEU, in her keynote 'Thinking globally, acting locally: Life long learning and the implications for university staff' called for a new language to speak to Government as well as a rethinking of the way we define public interest. She suggested, citing Michael Gallagher, the current Head of the Higher Education Division, 'that the government sees its chief

role as simply to provide market information to guide student choice and drive institutional decision making to reflect student choice'. This, she noted, has led many observers to maintain that Australia has now moved into a policy-free zone.

Allport raised the question of whether the government has other potentially critical roles to which universities contribute - such as what Simon Marginson has called nation-building' and research for innovation at a time when investment in research and development has fallen in both government and business. She also expressed deep concern about the likely lack of independent policy advice to the government, given that the future of the Australian Research Council and the Higher Education Council is in doubt.

The budget decision to cut operating grants by 6% over four years', she said, is a conscious attempt by the Government to ensure that whatever growth in student numbers takes place is achieved at minimal cost, with staff shouldering additional burdens in order to teach the extra students.' The decision of the government to refuse to adequately index operating grants to take account of movements in salary levels and non-salary operating expenses', she said, is causing enormous stress to the system.'

Allport also suggested that the commercial interests of higher education institutions, and the identification of universities with the corporate world in order to generate private funding challenge academic freedom.

Coaldrake, author of *On the Brink: Australia's Universities Confronting their Future* (1998), subtitled his presentation 'I'm

Dreaming of a White Paper'. Although Coaldrake observed a general tendency for government try to ensure that the higher education sector operates in accordance with good market practice, like Allport, he observed a lack of policy: at this stage the government has not yet decided what the main problems of the sector are, or where and how it wishes to intervene in the workings of the sector, either in broad philosophical terms or in specific policy detail.'

Perhaps the most critical of the pressing issues facing universities, Coaldrake said, is the question of the balance between research and teaching and other academic functions as well as the availability of staff time to pursue innovation and improvement. He observed a strong tension between the view that prevails in universities - that research and teaching should be every academic's inextricably linked activities - and the public view that teaching is the *raison d'être* of universities. He argued that the allocation of academic workloads is arguably of far greater importance to universities than whether or not government funding is allocated by vouchers or by block grants.'

Coaldrake suggested that universities need to take the initiative to address the major issues facing them, rather than waiting for decisions by government. Universities need to overcome poor communication, he said, enabling them to become communities of scholars capable of concerted action rather than territorial tribes.

Linda Conrad, Deputy Director, Griffith Institute of Higher Education.



Innovations in Psychology Teaching

Edited by John Radford, Darren Van Laar and David Rose. Published by SEDA.

Price 14 pounds sterling including post and packing in UK. See website www.seda.demon.co.uk for details.

Review by Dr. Liz Jones

This book forms part of a series published by the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) in the UK on innovations in teaching. The book consists of 18 case studies of innovative teaching practices occurring in Psychology departments throughout the UK. While directed towards people teaching in the Psychology discipline, many of the ideas presented would be equally applicable to those teaching within other disciplines, particularly the social sciences. The book presents a very diverse group of case studies including changes in the use of handouts, workplace assignments, different uses for technology and the development of transferable skills. The chapters focus both on how subjects are delivered as well as how they are assessed. Those not familiar with the use of the Internet in their teaching and, perhaps, not sure of the value of the Internet will find the chapter on 'Supporting Psychology teaching using the Internet' an interesting and honest assessment of the uses of the Internet.

Indeed, a characteristic of this book is the honesty shown by the different

authors. Most of the authors provide a frank assessment of the strengths and limitations of the ideas that they had trialed. Many also include feedback from the students involved in the case study (it would have been useful in other chapters to have had this information). The majority of the ideas presented are simple and easy for most academics to implement. The chapters are written in a very personal, readable style. The chapters focus mostly on describing and evaluating the changes made rather than discussing the theoretical underpinnings of the changes.

However, there is a lot of variability in how new or innovative the ideas presented are. For example, I found the changes described in the chapter on 'Using an action research paradigm to improve teaching...' fairly typical of the normal changes made in any subject, and hardly a good example of action research. On the whole, few of the changes described in the book could be labelled as radical. While some may find this disappointing, the changes suggested may be more realistic for many academics.

The book provides a useful summary for each case study of the transferable skills and competencies developed, the problems tackled, and characteristics of the teaching and learning strategy. It would have been helpful for this reader (who has not read any of the other books in the series) to have had some explanation at the start of the book of the role of these summaries and how the summaries were developed.

In summary, this book provides a range of ideas for changing teaching practices in Psychology that are simple and mostly inexpensive. A good resource for academics and libraries and a useful gift for those new to teaching.

Liz Jones is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Organisational Behaviour and Human Resource Management at Griffith University

Teaching and Learning Forum

in Perth, February 1999

The 8th annual Teaching and Learning Forum, a co-operative effort by Curtin University, Edith Cowan University, Murdoch University, Notre Dame University and the University of Western Australia, was held in February 1999 at the University of Western Australia. Since 1992, Teaching and Learning Forums have provided a unique opportunity for teaching staff to share teaching and learning methods, problems, projects and research with their colleagues.

The 1999 Forum addressed the theme 'Teaching in the Disciplines/Learning in Context'. Members of teaching staff from the

participating universities explored teaching and learning issues through a variety of interactive sessions, including demonstration sessions, 'dilemma' sessions and research vignettes.

Associate Professor Shirley Alexander, Director of the Institute for Interactive Multimedia at University of Technology, Sydney, addressed the Forum with highlights of "An Evaluation of Information Technology Projects for University Learning". This was a 2 year, national study to determine how the use of information technologies in university learning and teaching benefits student learning.

WA HERDSA members were part of over 175 participants attending the Forum over the two days. Forum proceedings are available at <http://cleo.murdoch.edu.au/asu/pubs/tlff/> or email csdoffice@csd.uwa.edu.au to purchase a print copy. Next year's Forum will be hosted by Curtin University.

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HERDSA

Annual International Conference

Melbourne, July 12-15, 1999

Members are reminded that the 1999 HERDSA Annual International Conference will be held from July 12 to 15 in Melbourne. This year's conference is hosted by the Victorian Branch of HERDSA and provides what we hope will be an outstanding forum for dissemination of research, techniques and knowledge in higher education.

The annual international conference is an important event for HERDSA. You may be aware that it is unlikely that a similar conference will be held in 2000 and we are hoping that as many of our members as possible, as well as new members, will be able to support this major HERDSA event. You will note that registration fees have been set at a low level (\$300 for early-bird HERDSA members) and to assist those who have difficulties meeting the deadline for proposals (March 26, 1999) the review committee will consider late applications with a final date advised on the web-site.

The theme of the conference is

CORNERSTONES: what do we value in Higher Education? The four sub-themes are:

The student learning experience

The new curriculum

The recreated university

The redefined profession.

The organisers are pleased to present a new and diverse style of academic program. Each day of the conference will include keynotes, special 'lighthouse' and 'showcase' research papers, and theme discussions. Drawing each day to a close will be specially chosen 'provocateurs' who will reflect on the day's proceedings and challenge your thinking. The Special Interest Groups will have an enhanced role and other groups, such as postgraduate students and new researchers, are being especially considered. Then, of course, there is the HERDSA AGM where all members can contribute to the development of the Society.

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS

We have been able to bring three outstanding scholars to the Conference to present the keynote addresses.

PETER COALDRAKE is the Deputy Vice Chancellor at QUT and has recently published "On the Brink" about the future of universities in Australia. He has also been working with the Britain equivalent of the AVCC on the developments in Higher Education in the UK.

VERONICA BRADY is a well-known and highly regarded scholar, having held senior academic positions teaching Australian literature. She is known for her strong views on the "instrumentalisation" of academic work and the role of universities, and we hope she will provide a suitable complement and contrast to Peter Coaldrake's perspectives.

FERENCE MARTON is a Professor of Education at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. One of the most widely cited researchers in the area of student learning, he has an international reputation and has recently drawn on that research in a co-authored monograph 'The University of Learning: Beyond quality and competence' which explores the nature of university.

Information about the conference is regularly updated on the Cornerstones website:

<http://sunsite.anu.edu.au/education/herdsa/vic/html/cornerstones.html>. For presenters, a room location display that includes photographs of the space as well as details such as seating and facilities will be provided.

We hope you will be able to join us.

For further information please contact Probat Milton, Convention Professionals.

Email: conprof@netspace.net.au

Telephone: (+61 3) 9899 2996

Fax: (+61 3) 9899 0368

PRE-CONFERENCE WORKSHOP

In conjunction with the conference there is a pre-conference workshop in Ballarat which will be led by a distinguished panel including Professors Phil Candy and David James from the University of Ballarat. Further information is available from BJ Hamilton,

Email: B.Hamilton@aquinas.acu.edu.au Telephone: (+61 3) 5336 5375 Fax: (+61 3) 5336 5310

Diane J. Thompson

Forthcoming Conferences

Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education (STLHE) (Canada) Annual Conference

PLACE	The University of Calgary
DATE	16 -19 June, 1999
INFORMATION	http://www.acs.ucalgary.ca/~stlhe99/

EDUCATION 2000 CONFERENCE: The Australian College of Education conference

THEME	Priorities for the New Millennium
PLACE	Leura NSW
DATE	2- 5 July 1999
INFORMATION	
EMAIL	confact@conferenceaction.com.au
TEL	+61 2 9956 8333

24th Improving University Learning and Teaching Conference

THEME	"Learner-Centred Universities for the New Millennium"
PLACE	Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia,
DATE	5-8 July 1999.
INFORMATION	www.iult.org

The 4th Northumbria Assessment Conference

THEME	Assessment for the Learning Society
PLACE	University of Northumbria, Newcastle upon Tyne, UK
DATE	1st - 3rd September, 1999
INFORMATION	

CONFERENCE ADMINISTRATOR E mail ED.NAC@UNN.AC.UK
or by contacting

gwen.marples@unn.ac.uk

liz.mcdowell@unn.ac.uk

Alternatively, details can be found at

<http://hswe.unn.ac.uk/4thConf.htm>

Open and Distance Learning Association of Australia Biennial Forum 1999

THEME	Open, Distance, and Flexible Learning: The Challenges of the New Millennium
PLACE	Deakin University Woolstores Campus in Geelong, Australia
DATE	27 September to 30 September, 1999
INFORMATION	Mrs C Wilde ODLAA Forum Faculty of Education Deakin University WAURN PONDS VIC 3217 email_ripvet@deakin.edu.au