



Reflections by Ian Chubb

Vice Chancellor, Flinders University and President of the AVCC

Recently Professor Chubb kindly agreed to respond to a number of questions relating to the current situation facing universities in Australia put to him by Jan Orrell on behalf of HERDSA News. Here are his reflections on the questions.

JAN: *What do you think is the likely impact on universities of some of the recent new directions for higher education that have come from DETYA?*

IAN: For the short term, the most significant issue that the federal government has produced is the White Paper on research and the second one is the quality agency.

The White Paper on research lacks detail so what I say is necessarily speculative. Until we know what they intend by some of the comments that are made, it's a bit hard to assess what the impact will be on the university sector as a whole – or on any individual university. A disappointing feature of the White Paper is that it has less detail in it than the Green Paper, so there is that uncertainty. But overall I think that what they've done is to head in the right direction. In principle I think that the White Paper is something that we should get behind and try to make work, but of course how vigorously we do that would depend on the detail which is only now beginning to emerge.

JAN: *Are there any particular aspects of the White Paper that you would like to see us get behind and get working?*

IAN: It's crystal clear that our universities have different levels of research performance. So, I don't think it's at all unreasonable for a government to say that it will somehow try to match higher degree research load with that

performance. It seems to me that we do need to provide the best possible research training environment for the higher degree research students we enrol, both in order for them to reach their potential, but also for us to be able to provide the basic, or more than the basic, support for them.

There has also been a shift in the way in which performance will be viewed. Higher degree load could drop because your university performed very well for its size and does not have the capacity to improve its performance quantitatively at quite the same rate some others, and yet the performance might be very good qualitatively. The AVCC argued that there had to be a qualitative measure, not just the pure quantitative one that was in the Green Paper. The government took note and the minister has the publication index back in as an indicator of the quality of research performed in an institution. I think that change was important.

We have to recognise that a proportion of the operating grant that currently comes to us with some discretion will probably have less discretion attached to it in the future. This might well mean that research, research training, and management plans will result in higher degree research load allocated to us in the future in ways over which we have some control though not total. The end result will be a redistribution of the research student profile between fields and between universities. I suspect we will end up with some fields of study that are biased heavily towards teaching and some that are much more heavily oriented towards research. That has significant implications for the way we regard and indeed evaluate academic performance because some staff will clearly have more opportunities for research, research activities and supervisory activities.

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Issue Dates: April, August,
November

Contributions for the next issue must reach the editor by Friday 21 July 2000.

They should be sent to Roger Landbeck at the above address.

Advertising rates. Full page \$300, half page \$150, quarter page \$75. Inserts \$80.

Views expressed in HERDSA News are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of HERDSA. Written material from HERDSA News may be reproduced, providing its source is acknowledged.

Designed by Liz Wilson.

Printed by Instant Colour Press, Canberra.

From the Editor

'You don't know anything about teaching biology,' a Professor at USP once told me, 'so don't talk to me about teaching.' This is a problem that staff developers have faced as they have organised workshops for staff based on research into teaching and learning generally. However recent research into teaching and learning has begun to explore the nature of specific disciplines and how the general results from research can be applied.

At the same time Alan Jenkins, who came to staff development from teaching geography, has started to encourage his colleagues to develop activities for staff that recognise the particular features of academic disciplines and how these features should affect the teaching of that discipline.

It is therefore timely to present articles in this issue that explore teaching and learning in the disciplines. Mike Prosser and Elaine Martin offer a discussion paper to stimulate debate on differences in knowing and teaching in the different disciplines. Alan Jenkins, aided by his colleague in geography, Mick Healey, extend their ideas on staff development activities with particular reference to geography. They use their experience in Australia to provide local application.

Kathleen Quinlan reports on a departmental based model of staff development which could be a useful one to follow.

We are pleased to include an article from one of the 1999 National Teaching Award winners, Jeff Giddings, who writes inspiringly about teaching and offers some useful practical advice to colleagues.

This issue contains no less than ten reviews of books, which cover a range of topics from several aspects of teaching to policy making to guides for students.

The HERDSA News editorial committee is planning three issues devoted to the theme, Academic Life Today, starting with the August 2000 edition and further details can be found on the back cover.

Finally we are privileged to publish an interview with Professor Ian Chubb, current chair of the AVCC, conducted by a member of the HERDSA executive, Jan Orrell. We gratefully acknowledge the time given to us by Professor Chubb and thank him for his analysis of the current situation facing universities in Australia.

Roger Landbeck

Reflections by Ian Chubb

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JAN: *With that redistribution, do you see a risk of some fields, because they are less apparently useful in the here and now, struggling more so than areas where it's much more apparent about the salience of its research?*

IAN: It is something that we have to be alert to. The drivers will send us towards areas where we can be certain that the students can be well supervised, that is obviously acceptable and should be current practice, and where there are resources including financial for support the students so they can complete in the time that is set by the government. If that

is not done then the university will ultimately suffer – and lose operating grant. My guess would be that a university, or any Pro-Vice Chancellor of research that's on the ball and alert to what will happen, will be taking certain steps right now to ensure that the higher degree research students go into areas that meet the stipulated criteria: the right environment, the capacity, the basic infrastructure and the supervisors.

I think that the new approach doesn't really get down to, "what is research?" In a sense the new policy leaves that to us. Where government does have some control relates to the fact that it is not just student completion, not just the scholarship the student has, but also the EFTSU equivalent of that student and its funding that is moveable. It is available for possible redistribution once a student finishes. To get it back again you've got



to be able to show that you can meet the criteria that they stipulate. Load could be easily lost, but could be won too, although obviously not everybody can win if the pool is not made bigger.

“ I think it is broadly accepted that we have to have some sort of ‘quality agency’ within the higher education sector, partly for international purposes, partly for local purposes. ”

JAN: *So we move on now to the quality agency, what are your thoughts about that? How do you actually see that being implemented?*

IAN: I think it is broadly accepted that we have to have some sort of ‘quality agency’ within the higher education sector, partly for international purposes, partly for local purposes. I think being able to say that we are a ‘self accrediting, government funded university’ was once enough. Other countries are now developing agencies like this and I think that it is inevitable that Australia will go down this path.

I suspect this agency may be different from the previous experience in Australia, though it could well start at a similar point. What was done last time was to get universities to describe their objectives and then to assess whether the processes of the university stood a chance of enabling them to be achieved. My guess is that a similar sort of approach will form a basis for the operation of this new agency.

The previous approach found great difficulty in evaluating the differences between the various objectives (or missions) of universities. They were not sufficiently distinctive to evaluate whether the objective or mission was worth having; and to show how processes were different, one from the other, but valuable because they underpinned different missions. I hope that the same flaw is not a part of this attempt.

JAN: *The assessment movement in the US (I guess it's their quality movement) has been struggling with the tensions in*

their evaluation systems. Do you see any parallels in what we're trying to achieve or lessons we can learn from what's happened in the United States and their quality movement?

IAN: In one form or another the issue of quality of education is under scrutiny in many parts of the world. To evaluate (especially to measure) the quality of education systems is a hard thing to do, because it's not something that you can just put on a scale and get a weight or a number. It does require judgement and involves an evaluation that is sometimes subjective. The composition or membership of the Board of the Agency is therefore important. Given that we are a national system within a federation, we've got to have a Board that balances the forces that impinge on us. The aim of the AVCC has been to ensure that there are enough people from the higher education sector on the Board so that there is some understanding of what the universities are trying to achieve, how they go about it and, importantly, what makes them different from a chain of fish shops. It must also be understood that a diverse system will have diverse approaches to ensuring the quality of the education the universities provide – and it is not by definition wrong, or bad, to be different.

JAN: *One of the tensions that I see in the American assessment debate is that in trying to account for quality there is a tendency to head more towards the safe, established traditional practices rather than take risks around innovation. Therefore, if you're going to have this outside body inspecting and measuring the quality, the tendency will be to engage in more conservative traditional practices. Do you believe that this is a tension?*

IAN: Well certainly, I think it is. I think any assessment exercise of this sort has the in-built danger of convergence to a common point or approach; the notion of best practice surely means that we aim to be there with the best. So if some university is regarded as being top drawer because it does things in a particular way, it is only a question of time before other universities try to get into that same drawer, by doing what they do or a close approximation. Of all things that are certain to force convergence and diminished diversity it is to have an evaluative system that signals in an unsophisticated way that one institution does something better than others.

It's an old cliché, but we've got to ‘work smarter’ than ever before and there

must be room to enable some people to let their imagination run. Let them discover ways to work smarter that are maybe even more effective than the traditional ways. There must therefore be scope within any evaluative processes of ‘quality’ to encourage us to do that

JAN: *Academics are under even greater pressure now to undertake research. Hitherto there were people that were the key researchers and others were able to focus on their teaching, innovate, engage in scholarship of teaching. But now the pressure is that we all must be engaged in research to increase the University's research quantum. What do you see as the impact on teaching?*

IAN: Well, if we're talking about today, I think you're probably right – that pressure does exist in the form you described it. If you're talking about after the White Paper is fully implemented, I think the ground shifts again. Because, what it means, is that we will have to nominate a group of people, literally by name, who are researchers in the institution and provide the evidence that shows that they are. The natural follow-on from that is that the areas they come from are those that will be expected to get the higher degree research places that come into the institution. There may therefore be a group of people, who for whatever reason, are not ‘research active’, or less

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so, but who are still incredibly important to the function of the institution. We have to find a way to encourage them too.

JAN: *So would that mean encouraging them either in teaching excellence or getting research into their teaching and, if it was research into their teaching, would scholarship in teaching count?*



IAN: Well it would count, because I think that what you want is staff who are really dedicated to the education of students and their learning and the way that those staff go about their task in a very practical, as well as conceptual sense, will be very important. I think the importance of those staff in the new environment will probably increase in lots of ways. I think that academics, whether they are personally conducting research or not, will be telling students, certainly in later years in their courses, where knowledge is in that field, and where it is heading. There will be staff who spend a good bit of their time on research and there will be staff who spend most of their time teaching students, even learning from them. And there will be a group of staff who do both. I think that the scope for that development is increased by the White Paper.

I suspect that what will develop, more obviously and more uniformly than now, over time, is a couple of parallel strands in academic careers. It's up to us to ensure that it's self evident that each is equally valuable. It will be up to us to accommodate staff crossing from one to the other.

Jan: *What it sounds to me like you're saying is, by and large universities are going to have to take much more planned approach towards both teaching and research, and how that gets acted out by the teachers and the researchers.*

Ian: I suspect that's right. I think that we must ensure that the staff who are getting the research grants and supervising the students and writing the publications are rewarded. In addition, we must reward the people who are running good courses and creating a good environment for the education of the students without such an emphasis on research.

JAN: *What role do Academic Development Units, or Staff Development Units, have in this current climate,*

and how can they serve this new agenda?

IAN: Change has been with us for a long time now, some dramatic and some incremental. But what we are about to see, I think, is another fairly fundamental shift: this time we see a partial separation, at the very least, of teaching and research. There are other substantial issues on the agenda, such as deregulation whatever

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that means, but they are less immediate than this one.

As a consequence of the changes mooted for research, research training and Commonwealth funding, we can foresee a substantial shift in academic career paths and options. Preparing our staff for the changes will be important and a key function of Staff Development Units. We have a responsibility to our staff and it will be those Units that will help us meet those obligations. As an example, it will be important that staff know what the changes to research training mean for them and for the university as a whole. And if they are supervising graduate students, it will be important that they understand that the implications from now on, are quite different from what they used to be. If they are less active in research, it will be important that they know about career planning and development that has a different form from what was once more common.

We will need to work even harder to show the importance to the

university of those staff who have traditionally spent a considerable amount of their time developing new ways of teaching and assessing. These staff are substantial participants in student learning. They must not feel somehow that they are less important because their research performance is lower than others qualitatively or quantitatively. Their role will be critical to the learning environment that we will create in our universities.

The inevitability of the change to the culture is buried away in the White Paper. The Staff Development Units have a real part to play in shifting that culture and in enhancing what is good in our existing culture.

JAN: *In summarizing, while there are weaknesses, gaps and silences in this White Paper, you actually see it as a good opportunity for universities to take stock of their particular direction. It also means we have to be more planned and explicit in our approach, than we were in the past and have a defensible rationale for what we're doing. We also need good mechanisms to allow us to critically scrutinize what we're actually doing so that then we can report back to the quality agencies. This means that there will be shifts in the nature of what an academic career looks like over time.*

IAN: Yes. One of the pressures for people to do research I feel has been the fact that the sector has traditionally valued it highly. Unless you think you're going to stay where you are for the rest of your working life, then you actually have to prepare yourself for the fact that you might want to go where they will look at different criteria from your present institution. So for some of these things to work well (valuing teaching for example) I think they have to be accepted by the sector as a whole or at least enough of the sector for people still to be able to move around should that be their wish or need.

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Assisting Learning in the Disciplines by Highlighting How and What is Taught

Michael Prosser and Elaine Martin

Introduction

Our intention here is to open a debate on differences in knowing and in teaching in the different disciplines. The issue of knowing differently in the disciplines has a well established and respected literature (see for instance, Kim Thomas, 1990 and Tony Becher, 1989). We, however, focus on the teaching of the discipline and we represent the humanities and science as contrasting extremes in order to make an argument. Our intention is to open up debate, not to present a rounded and complete argument. We consequently present a short position paper below and encourage you, our colleagues, to engage in this debate. We suggest you send your views and comments to the editor of HERDSA News and that this debate be developed over two or three editions of the News.

We argue that when teachers make decisions about what is to be taught and how it will be taught they do so in line with an explicit or implicit theory of how knowledge in their subject is structured and what teaching and learning in the subject involves.

We argue that the structure of the discipline strongly influences the way teachers see the learning of their subject matter and consequently the theory of teaching and learning that teachers work from. Perhaps the major difference in discipline structure is between the humanities on one hand and the sciences on the other hand and it is this major divide on which we focus.

There is compelling argument presented through the student learning literature (Marton and Booth, 1996; Ramsden, 1992, Prosser and Trigwell, 1999) that students engage with issues and problems by being helped to see distinctions and differences and variation in a topic or area.

In their book *Learning and Awareness*, Marton and Booth argue that learning occurs by bringing about a meeting of awarenesses of the teacher and the learner. The bringing about of this meeting of awarenesses in teaching and learning situations depends on two key principles. They are:

“ There is compelling argument presented through the student learning literature that students engage with issues and problems by being helped to see distinctions and differences and variation in a topic or area. ”

- Building a relevance structure; and
- The architecture of variation.

The building of a relevance structure involves making explicit in the *experience* of the students what is being

aimed at in the learning of the subjects matter, where the subject matter comes from and where it will lead. The relevance structure relates to how the student experiences and understands the aims of the subject matter, not how well or how clear the aims are presented or stated.

The architecture of variation refers to the opening up of a variation for the students in how they *experience* and understand the subject matter being presented. A key aspect of their argument, and ours, is that students learn by experiencing the variation in what it is they are to learn. They learn by experiencing how things differ – seeing the key aspects of a variation.

This variation has been opened up for us by writers such as Becher, 1989. The table below, which draws on distinctions made by Becher (1989) and Thomas (1990) shows the sciences and the humanities occupying the extremes at either end of a number of continuums, for instance, the humanities are represented as holistic whilst the sciences are represented as atomistic. Clearly, much work in the humanities and sciences might be positioned in the middle ground. The table is used, however, to help to make the argument for disciplinary variation.

Table 1: Discipline Culture in Humanities and Sciences

	Humanities	Sciences
Knowledge:	Holistic	Atomistic
	Qualitative	Quantitative
	Seeks complexity	Seeks simplification
	Reiterative	Cumulative
	Loosely structured	Tightly structured
Research:	Broad research topics	Narrow research topics
	Highly individualistic	Collaborative teams
	Not competitive	Highly competitive
	High task uncertainty	Low task uncertainty
	Paradigm uncertainty	Based on paradigms



Teaching and Learning in the Humanities and the Sciences

In the teaching and learning in the humanities variation is typically opened up for students through an analysis and critiquing of the topic under study itself. A study of King Lear, for instance, becomes the study of a range of interpretations of the text as well as the text itself. Such attention to variation becomes what the subject is. The subject matter, as presented and experienced carries a variation with it.

For example, in one of our recent research interviews, a teacher of English literature talking about his subject relating to gender in early 17th century English literature stated:

I want to get the students thinking about the contrasts between certain things, about preconceptions of gender, present them with material that that will let them feel they are getting in touch with early 17th century ideas as they were expressed at the time.

...

To get the students to really think about the social context of certain ideas and especially to get them to think how the 17th century thought differently from the way that we think.

Here we see the teacher talking about presenting different perspectives of the subject matter to the students. The subject matter itself carries a substantial variation.

In the sciences, however, there can be much less varied interpretation of the topic because scientific and technological phenomenon are tightly defined and described and closely linked to empirical outcomes. The modelling of DNA for instance, at university student level, at least, offers little room for critiquing, rethinking and restructuring.

Whilst in science and technology there is typically only one way of making sense of a phenomenon which carries scientific credence, at any one time, within any classroom there will be a range of ways in which the phenomenon is seen and understood by students. Often the range will follow the

historical evolution of thinking in the field, the development from an Aristotelian to a Newtonian view of the world, in physics, for instance.

This idea that there is variation in how students make sense of a phenomenon is the basis of the scientific misconception literature of science education. Whilst there is little room for critiquing accepted scientific theories (the what) of learning, there is considerable opportunity for introducing

“ The humanities needs to ensure that students are aware of and discuss the various arguments, while the sciences need to ensure that students are made aware of their current understandings and compare those with the scientists. ”

the study of variation in science by helping students to see how their own understanding and that of their peers varies from that which holds scientific credence.

Again in one of our recent interviews with a teacher of first year physics, he says:

One way of saying what we're trying to achieve in learning physics, is for people to shift their view from the laypersons view of the world, to what we would call a scientific/physicist's view of the world I think, that's what I'm on about.

Here we see the physics teacher setting out to confront students with a variation between what they presently understand and what the scientist presently understands. He is not setting out to provide a variation in the subject matter itself.

Conclusion

So what does this mean for teaching and learning in the disciplines? If our

speculation is reasonable, and the principle of the architecture of variation is accepted then it suggests that there is a fundamental difference in the how and what of teaching between the humanities and the sciences. Teaching in the humanities needs to focus on helping students see and experience the various arguments, positions, perspectives etc. While in the sciences, teaching needs to help students see and experience differences between the way they understand the phenomenon under discussion and the way the sciences think about it. The humanities needs to ensure that students are aware of and discuss the various arguments, while the sciences need to ensure that students are made aware of their current understandings and compare those with the scientists. From this perspective, variation between the disciplines is fundamental to the nature of teaching and learning within the disciplines.

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HERDSA Visiting Scholar 2000

Dr Charles Glassick, Senior Associate of the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, has agreed to visit Australia and New Zealand as the 2000 Visiting Scholar. He will be accompanied by his wife Mary.

Dr Glassick collaborated with Ernest Boyer and Gene Rice in the preparation of "Scholarship Reconsidered" and then co-authored "Scholarship Assessed". While at Carnegie he also assisted in "Campus Life - In Search of Community" as well as "Reinventing Undergraduate Education". His present role includes speaking worldwide on "Scholarship Reconsidered" and "Scholarship Assessed".

Charles received a PhD in Chemistry from Princeton University. He taught organic chemistry for many years and was an award-winning teacher. Later he became President of Gettysburg College and was named "one of the nation's most outstanding presidents." He has received many honors including Phi Beta Kappa. In recognition of his scholarly work, he has been awarded several honorary doctorates.

His topics for presentation include:

Scholarship Reconsidered and Assessed - Recent Trends and Progress

This topic includes a quick review of the concepts (Boyer; Glassick et al) and then explains how these concepts are prospering at US universities. Several interpretations have developed to suit various types of institutions.

Trends in Faculty Scholarship with Emphasis on Developments in the Scholarship of Teaching and the Scholarship of Engagement

There has been an emphasis on the definition of the Scholarship of Teaching and a recognition of the difference between scholarly teaching and the scholarship of teaching. Both are

important and both can be rewarded but differences must be kept clear. The Scholarship of Engagement also is playing an important role in many universities. Definitions and documentation of quality are difficult. Recent developments are discussed.

Scholarship Reconsidered and Assessed - An Overview

Faculty and administrators need to be thoroughly familiar with the concepts and vocabulary if these definitions of scholarship are to become policy. Frequently an overview is needed to before campus discussions can prosper.

Reinventing Undergraduate Education

This report focuses on bringing faculty

scholarship into undergraduate education. Examples and techniques of incorporating some scholarly work into the experience of the undergraduate are presented.

Campus Life in Search of Community

Taken from the report of the same title, this presentation lays out a value system for strengthening the sense of community on campus and gives examples of successful incorporation of these concepts.

All presentations include the most recent developments from the work for AAHE and Carnegie as well as reports at national meetings.

The draft itinerary is:

July 10

Fly from Brisbane to Perth, WA

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Making a Difference Through Department-Based, Collaborative Academic Development

Kathleen Quinlan

Introduction

Most literature on instructional development has focused on cross-disciplinary, centrally provided programs, such as those available through university academic development units. However, the potential of department-based instructional development and, more specifically, academic peer collaboration about learning and teaching within departments has been receiving increasing attention over the last decade (McDaniel, 1987; Zuber-Skerritt, 1991; Shulman, 1993; Keig and Waggoner, 1994; Cox, 1996; Hutchings, 1996; Quinlan, 1998; Jenkins, 1996). Even Eidos (1999, November) has, in this newsletter, argued that "a department is one place a developer might be able to REALLY make a difference!" Programs of department-based peer collaboration as a form of instructional development have significant potential advantages over institutional-level programs.

Academics, particularly those at research-oriented universities, tend to identify first with their fields of study (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 1989; Clark, 1987; Shulman, 1993; Diamond & Adam, 1995; Jenkins, 1996). Teaching activities that are contextualized in the discipline or profession are likely to be seen by individual academics as more relevant, interesting and directly transferable to their teaching practice (Smith & Geis, 1996; Jenkins, 1996). Connecting teaching development with disciplinary discussions also offers opportunities to enhance teaching as scholarship. The richness of the field of medical education is an example of the power of approaches that are rooted in

the particular concerns of a profession and its related disciplines.

Departments are typically the local manifestation of disciplinary communities in a university. Situating academic development programs in departments can also be used to effect change in the context of teaching – the departmental culture itself – thus potentially increasing support for individuals who are experimenting with new approaches.

These advantages are particularly pertinent when the aim is to change academics' beliefs about teaching and learning, rather than simply addressing

" Collaborative approaches to departmental instructional development rest on a view of teachers as "reflective practitioners" (Schön, 1983) who learn best when given the opportunity to collaboratively construct knowledge with peers about problems that are related to their own experience "

teaching skills and strategies. Collaborative approaches to departmental instructional development rest on a view of teachers as "reflective practitioners" (Schön, 1983) who learn best when given the opportunity to collaboratively construct knowledge with peers about problems that are related to their own experience (Belenky, et al., 1986; Freire 1971). These ideas have underpinned recent thinking about teaching improvement in secondary schools, in which teachers become engaged in collaborative inquiry about aspects of their teaching practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999), particularly within departments (Stodolsky & Grossman, 1996; Talbert, 1991). This is also the philosophy

underlying action research in higher education. In Lee Shulman's (1993) words, department-based teaching collaboration and review has the potential to make teaching "community property" and, in so doing, integrate it into scholarly, valued channels of discourse.

Given the potential advantages of department-based peer collaboration in the development of academics' teaching philosophy and practice, there is a need to examine the factors that affect such activities. In a recent study (Quinlan & Akerlind, in press; Quinlan, 1996), I examined two departments (history; mechanical engineering) that were each part of a national project in the United States to experiment with forms of peer collaboration or peer review of teaching (see Quinlan, 1996-1997 for a summary of the national project). I studied the differences and similarities between those two projects to better understand some of the factors that may affect the process and outcomes of collaborative, departmentally based teaching improvement activities. I offer a brief synopsis of each project and highlight some key features that affected the process and outcomes. Although I illustrate here some of the features of good practice that facilitators may be able to control, readers are referred to Quinlan & Akerlind (in press) for a full discussion of a variety of other contextual factors that seemed to affect the process and outcomes.

Summary of Cases

In the mechanical engineering department, the project was initiated and led by two academics that were experienced leaders of educational reform activities who wanted to extend previous work. The project, a grassroots initiative, involved a group of seven academics who developed a framework and activities for peer review of teaching. Using those frameworks, the group tried various experiments with



peer assessment of courses, including reading memos describing the rationale for courses, interviewing each others' students, and critiquing sample student assignments. Colleagues wrote peer reviews of the courses, which were then discussed among the group.

In the history department, the university's provost committed to participate in the national project, then worked with the academic development center to recruit department heads to participate. The department head selected the academic leaders for their commitment to teaching, political neutrality and general popularity in the department. The project involved a series of nine discussion hours about various topics about teaching and learning that interested the department. All academics in the department were invited to participate in each of the independent sessions, but enrolments were limited to 12 people.

Results and Discussion

In the history department, the project was highly visible and involved a large percentage of the department, both in the department, and later, across the campus. More than half of the department members participated in one or more of the discussions. The mechanical engineering project had less visibility in the department and involved only a small percentage of the department in its first year.

As a result of both projects, participants were exposed to new ideas and new teaching approaches and techniques. Core beliefs and values were, with a few exceptions, largely unchanged in both cases. However, in both departments, there was a heightened respect and appreciation for the aims and approaches of their colleagues. In the mechanical engineering department, in particular, the collaborative project seemed to build a bridge between two divisions within the department, across which there had historically been a lack of cooperation, tensions and misunderstandings. This outcome may be a particularly important one, which can be facilitated by deliberately involving different subspecialties or subcultures in the department in carefully facilitated, focused discussions.

The discussions in the mechanical engineering department seemed to be more inquiry-oriented and collaborative, with a greater willingness to expose dilemmas and questions, rather than just offer solutions. Discussions in the

history department were less consistently constructive. A committed small group with a well-defined, ongoing task can build the trust required to ask questions and expose vulnerabilities. Such trust is not easily developed through a series of one-off discussions with larger groups of people who don't know each other as well. Furthermore, each of the departments was building on different existing departmental patterns of

“As a result of both projects, participants were exposed to new ideas and new teaching approaches and techniques. ...there was a heightened respect and appreciation for the aims and approaches of their colleagues.”

interaction and communication. The existing model of departmental interaction in the history department was of departmental research seminars, in which a lone scholar gives an expert's account of his or her work. In the engineering department, the process was modeled more like a laboratory research group in which the members conduct collaborative inquiry and problem solve together about works-in-progress. Someone interested in facilitating department-based programs may want to consciously consider what models and experience are already available in the department that they can build on.

In both departments, it was vital that there was an attempt to ensure academics' ownership in the process. In the history department, the faculty suggested ideas for seminar topics, based on perceived needs and interests. In the mechanical engineering department, participating academics developed both the process and the areas on which to focus. In both cases it was also critical that there were academics that took responsibility for coordinating activities and facilitating meetings.

In the mechanical engineering department, where the collaboration was more intense and seemed to have a more significant impact on individual participants, the academic leaders were experienced with educational reform projects and in facilitating collegial discussions on learning and teaching. An educational development specialist also

participated in the meetings and offered literature and expertise as needed. The facilitators in the history department did not have experience with educational leadership and did not have such extensive support from an educational development specialist.

The discussions in the mechanical engineering group were grounded in specific courses, so discussions were about particular examples, cases and situations. Gathering and sharing in the interpretation of student comments was a powerful device in causing academics to re-think practices and beliefs. The most positive and constructive seminars in the history department also focused on particular examples of practice.

Conclusion

The study on which this article is based represents an attempt to better understand what contributes to or inhibits the success of collaborative departmental instructional development programs. Here I have touched on some of the issues and choices that would-be facilitators face in planning and implementing a department-based collaborative program. In addition, my study revealed contextual factors that may constrain or facilitate such a process, including aspects of the university, disciplinary and departmental cultures. Further experiments with and investigations of departmental approaches to instructional development may help pave the way for the next generation of instructional enhancement programs.

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Conference Announcement

HIGHER EDUCATION CLOSE UP (2)

will be held at Lancaster University between July 16-18, 2001. The conference follows the success of the first Higher Education Close Up (HECU) conference held in Preston in 1998. Papers from that conference are available at:
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The current conference web page can be found here: <http://www.massey.ac.nz/~cprichar/hecu2.html>

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Getting Disciplined: Geographic Perspectives

Alan Jenkins and Mick Healey

One of the strengths of the various CAUT/CUSDT projects is that many of them were discipline-based, capitalising on academics' commitment to their subject. Here we offer arguments for this discipline approach to educational development and illustrate them with examples of good practice. We are aware that in Australia, with the ending of CUTSD in December 1999, immediate funding for such projects may seem hard to envisage. We hope that this article may help to argue for their importance, and for such projects and funding to be reinstated.

Our views are largely based on British experience and working in geography. We demonstrate the value of this discipline approach (Jenkins, 1996) by considering three types of activity: institutional and national courses on teaching, national curriculum development projects, and international projects and networks.

Courses on Teaching

World-wide, many institutions are developing courses for new and established staff on teaching. In the UK the focus has been on new teaching staff and developing a national accreditation framework, first through the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) and more recently through the newly established Institute for Learning and Teaching (ILT). These were created largely by educational developers and are mainly concerned with generic aspects of teaching that apply to all disciplines. However, ILT requirements for membership state that members will be expected to have knowledge of "appropriate methods for teaching and learning *in the subject area...* (and) models of how students learn, both generically and *in their subject* (emphasis added).

We agree that there is a need for generic courses for (new) academic staff. However, we consider that this generic perspective needs to be complemented

by discipline-based perspectives. For all disciplines have particular pedagogic concerns that will not immediately be developed from a generic perspective. For example, geographers generally argue that much learning should be in the field or city, and face the challenge of helping students integrate the very different perspectives of the physical and social sciences and humanities (Healey, et al., 2000a).

The generic texts on teaching and course design are generally silent on these and other discipline-based concerns. To recognise this discipline based perspective, at Oxford Brookes the SEDA/ILT accredited course for new staff (www.brookes.ac.uk/services/ocsd/cthe/cthe.html), has added an outcome which requires staff to carry out a small action based research study on the teaching of their discipline and reflect on their experience of teaching that discipline. Tutors face the challenge of working on these projects with staff from many disciplines. This approach is more effective when it is backed by local/department-based expertise and mentoring, and when one can point to national/international curriculum development networks that provide a discipline-based literature and contacts.

National Curriculum Development Projects

In their research and their professional concerns academics are often members of national organisations, such as the Institute of Australian Geographers and the New Zealand Geographical Society. Through these organisations, ideas are developed, challenged and diffused. Too often these discipline networks have only focused on research. Ideas on teaching have rarely strayed outside the department or even the individual academic's classroom.

In British geography, we have been involved for over 25 years in various national organisations and projects to share ideas and improve teaching in the discipline (Healey, 1999; 2000, Jenkins 1997). At first these networks faced the linked problems of lack of credibility in the discipline, initial lack of expertise in

carrying out discipline based development, and the lack of effective and secure funding. Lately the UK funding councils, in part shaped by the CAUT experience have recognised the value of this discipline-based approach. They have funded competitive national curriculum projects through the Fund for the Development of Teaching and Learning (FDTL) (<http://www.ncteam.ac.uk/fdtl.html>), most of which have been discipline-based. Geography was successful in winning seven of these awards, in one of which – the Geography Discipline Network (GDN) – we are both centrally involved. The GDN project assembled a team of geographers and educational developers from nine old and new universities and colleges to develop a set of guides and linked workshops on teaching, learning and assessment, with full reference to discipline-based concerns and strongly featuring examples from geographers and geography departments. Further examples of good practice, and various geographical education books and papers are available on the GDN web site (<http://www.chelt.ac.uk/gdn>). GDN has successfully bid for other development projects (e.g. one on developing 'key' skills in geography courses, and another on providing learning support for disabled students undertaking fieldwork). We also recently obtained funding to run a national workshop for new staff in geography and earth and environmental sciences – the aim of which is to complement the more generic courses in their institutions. This 'experiment' is to be evaluated by the ILT and, if successful, will be repeated in future years and may be used as a model by other disciplines.

Such organisations and projects as GDN and those funded through CUTD, while capitalising on disciplinary allegiances face the evident problems of short term, uncoordinated, and often limited funding. The success of the FDTL projects, such as GDN, and the recognition by the UK Funding Councils of the power of this discipline-based approach to improvement, has now led to the launch this year of some 24 national discipline based Subject Centres with secure funding for 5 years

(<http://www.ilt.ac.uk/itsn/index.htm>). The Funding Councils have established these centres to "become the main points of contact within subject communities for information and advice on good practice and innovations in learning, teaching and assessment" (<http://www.ilt.ac.uk/itsn/index.htm>).

International Disciplinary Networks

We believe that such national discipline-based educational organisations can play a key role in sharing and developing good practice. However, they need to be complemented by international networks and projects. Academic research networks are international, so in using the power of disciplinary social networks, discipline-based educational development needs also to be international. For as Gibbs (1995) has argued one way to raise the status of teaching, is for teaching improvement practices to mimic the way that research operates, including its international perspective. Moreover, the increased power and effectiveness of information technology makes such international networking both more feasible and effective. Also curriculum materials and projects, while respecting local and national contexts, benefit from the economies of scale, and the academic specialisation and co-operation that can be achieved internationally. Again we will demonstrate such generic arguments through examples from geography.

In 1977 a group of British geographers founded the *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*. While recognising that immediately, for organisational reasons, it had to be British-based, they determined to develop it as an international journal (Jenkins, 1997). Now it is effectively that, or more realistically, it carries articles from Australasia, the UK, North America, and, to a less extent, 'elsewhere'. This 'international' perspective is now confirmed and shaped by the editorial organisation. Scholars from Australasia and North America now submit their articles to local editors, who also arrange refereeing, decide acceptance or rejection of articles, and shape overall editorial policy (the Commissioning Editor for Australasia is Dr Iain Hay from Flinders University). There are hard commercial reasons for this international perspective in helping sales. For academics it has the evident 'performance indicator' attraction of publishing in an international journal and thus being better received when

applying for promotion and funding.

A good example of the benefits of international cooperation comes from the National Centre for Geographic Information and Analysis Core Curriculum project in which 35 GIS educators in the US, Canada and the UK developed a comprehensive set of lecture

"...one way to raise the status of teaching, is for teaching improvement practices to mimic the way that research operates, including its international perspective. Moreover, the increased power and effectiveness of information technology makes such international networking both more feasible and effective."

notes for teaching beginning GIS professionals. An updated web-based version of this course is in preparation, which includes 76 lecture topics and 19 section editors from five different countries (<http://www.ncgia.ucsb.edu/pubs/core.html>).

The principle of international cooperation and sharing good practice to avoid recreating wheels also lies behind the initiative to establish the International Network for Learning and Teaching (INLT) Geography in Higher Education. The idea for this grew out of the personal experience of the benefits the three convenors (from Australia, US and UK) believed they had gained from networking nationally and internationally about learning and teaching issues in geography. The INLT was set up in 1999 with its own listserve, Web pages (<http://www.chelt.ac.uk/inlt/inde.htm>) and Newsletter. It is in the process of establishing a database and clearinghouse for educational materials and a number of international projects are planned. Nine papers from the first international symposium are in press (Healey et al., 2000b) and the programme for the second symposium is well advanced.

Conclusion

The intellectual and pedagogic strengths of the disciplines lie in the concentrated and shared focus on a set of

problems, and the social networks through which ideas flow. Welcoming and incorporating this approach strengthens educational development.

We recognise that there are limitations to a discipline-based approach to educational development. In improving teaching in our discipline we need to adopt the same values and practices as we do in our research, where we continually search other (cognate) disciplines for findings and approaches (Healey, 1999). This discipline-based perspective to educational development needs to be complemented by the perspectives of cognate disciplines, including the disciplinary and research based expertise of educational developers. We need to develop structures and languages for us to listen to each other. That we attempted in GDN, by drawing into the project the expertise of educational developers. One of the challenges for the new UK subject centres, will be to ensure that they do not become too inward looking, insular to their disciplines and the wider world.

We conclude though with a problem which affects us all internationally. In the UK we appear to have immediately convinced the fund holders of the value of a national discipline-based approach - though the funding at present in no way matches that for discipline-based research. We believe that despite the recent cutting of CUTSD, the funding agencies in Australia, New Zealand and elsewhere should be interested and hopefully convinced by this approach. What is harder to see is how such discipline-based projects could be funded internationally. We understand that just before its demise there were discussions on creating links between CUTSD and the FDTL and subject centres in the UK. We need to create effective international discipline-based links with significant funding. Nationally and internationally we need to work together to achieve that goal.

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The Mechanic's Car: Do Academic Development Unit's Web Sites Reflect How We Support Academic Staff?

Peter Kandlebinder

Even a casual look at academic development unit's (ADU) web sites reveals that ADUs are undecided about the benefits of the emerging on-line technologies for staff development. Outside of the current fashions for flexible learning and on-line learning management systems, like WebCT, the majority of ADUs have adopted a cautious approach to using these same technologies for their own practice. With technology playing a growing role in the transformation of universities, on-line technologies serve as a significant place to view likely directions for academic staff development. In this review I will describe the use ADUs currently make of the Web before these activities are fully integrated into their day-to-day practice. It is only the start of a conversation about the range of alternatives that needs to take place while there is still some possibility for change. All examples are offered purely as illustrations and it is acknowledged that they normally exist within the broader logic of an entire web site.

Web sites can be seen as a projection of what an ADU does, delivered to the outside world. The common representation across universities remains that ADUs are responsible for improving teaching and learning within their respective institutions. The content of their web sites indicate that this consists of inducting new staff, writing grant applications, conducting courses and workshops, researching student learning and contributing to policy frameworks on good teaching. Where once it was primarily in institutions involved in distance education that ADUs held a responsibility of overseeing educational technology, the increased importance of technology now has each site attempting

to answer the question, "what is flexible learning?" (for one suggestion, see www.itl.usyd.edu.au/newflex).

There is a base authenticity in this idea of using the technology to teach the technology. Other than this uncomplicated pedagogy there have been few attempts to articulate an appropriate design for information technology in academic staff development. It is therefore somewhat surprising that ADU web sites do reveal a high degree of collective agreement on the role they assign on-line technologies. Do not expect web sites to attempt to enhance student learning through the active engagement of academic staff. Instead ADU web sites have an air of administrative responsibility suggesting the main game has moved to university policy development.

Away from the show and tell of flexible learning, ADUs appear to take a naïve approach to their web design. There is no self-consciousness that the Web was commercialised around its value in distribution and publishing. Web site designs rely on a neo-classic simplicity aimed at not turning visitors away rather than the riskier strategy of projecting a strong message. The models most in evidence have been tried and tested as business applications for administration or commerce. The recurring motif of the typical homepage is the organisational chart, clean, functional and structured hierarchically around topics that reflect the tasks of the organisation. In an example of what Baudrillard (1996) describes as search for timelessness through an absence of style, modular components fragment ADU web sites into their various functions to create the uniformity that permits a multiplicity of arrangements.

The absence of style makes the ADU homepage a place of egalitarian values. It is spread broad but shallow, accepting all possible interpretations. An equal weighting is placed on each of its objects to ensure that there is no obligation surrounding the menu of choices. Without a strong sense of which of these objects the represent ADU values, the homepage becomes a symbol of the

fragility in their sense of staff development pedagogy.

Forsaking pedagogy as the basis of design leaves ADUs with little choice but to pursue the administrative advantage offered by new technologies. A look behind the home page reveals decisions that anticipate the most important need of visitors will be to find information. Like the shy boy at a party ADU's web sites talk incessantly about who they are (web.dcu.edu.au/acue/fs_services.html) and what they do (www.adu.latrobe.edu.au/WhatISADU.html). This self-obsessed conversation with ourselves is celebrated in FAQs (www.newcastle.edu.au/services/iesd/learndevelop/faq.html), a formulaic series of questions that fabricate consultation when in all likelihood they stem from a process of self-inquiry rather than the real questions of visitors. The obsession with what ADUs do creates a cascade of documents from up-coming events (www.anu.edu.au/CEDAM/calendar.html) to strategic plans (www.gu.edu.au/centre/strategic_fr.html).

Those with more to say than their position on an organisation chart claim academic value is measured on the ability to publish or perish. In an administrative parody of production ADUs re-edit their work to present a fresh face to their visitors. Anthologies of web sites (www.chepd.mq.edu.au/cpd/highlink/highlink.htm) are linked together into tables of contents, bestowing value by association. On-line technologies monitor site visits to show which are most highly valued in the popularist version of peer review.

The major weakness of most academic publishing is its obscurity. Web-based technologies have removed the financial barriers to publishing by reducing the cost of distribution. Just-in-time publishing (www.tedi.uq.edu.au/Teaching/TertiaryToolbox) ensures the right tools are in the hands of academics should they ever need them. Examples from on-line commerce show that each web site visit presents an opportunity for exchange. By parring down interaction to its most



basic form, a transaction, the barriers to acquiring services like student feedback questionnaires are removed (survey.uow.edu.au/authoring) and can be acquired without any questions asked.

It is not peculiar to on-line forms of publishing that the reduction of cost will not overcome the hurdle of irrelevance. Free on-line discussions (www.pdc.unsw.edu.au/webteachdemo/welcome.html) rarely succeed as developmental activities without the support and extrinsic value provided by a formal course. Opening the conversation to all simply dilutes its purpose, whereas targeted databases (www.csd.uwa.edu.au/altmodes) at least appears to involve senior staff in discussion of which methods served their own staff development.

Few ADUs take the pedagogical high ground in designing their web sites. Educational motives are more commonly buried deep in the microworld of

Graduate Certificates (for an example, (www.adm.monash.edu.au/ched/courses/GCHE/index.html)). Here are all the above elements linked together by an educational function. Sadly, like many forms of traditional teaching it is pedagogy locked away from the public gaze, our strongest contender for a metaphor of the new directions in academic staff development.

On-line learning lies at the frontier of university teaching and the values of the frontier do not align easily with the traditions of academic development. Studies demonstrate that interacting with the Web leads to greater isolation and staff in ADUs are no doubt aware that the history of technology in education demonstrates that it is design not technology that impacts on student learning. Technological changes present traditional staff development with new possibilities, new demands and new

ways of working. The challenge we face is to understand which pursuits should remain with traditional methods and those best delegated to "virtual" ADUs (www.rmit.edu.au/resources/directory). With their web sites already resembling the traditional models of instruction that emphasis a mastery of text-based information, the danger is if ADUs come to take the pedagogy for granted and become unintentionally lured into more didactic modes of teaching and learning.

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In **Changing learning contexts** we will reflect on the ways in which students, teachers, and curricula have changed in terms of aspects such as the impact of new information technologies, location time and the characteristics of students.

Changes in the workplace will look beyond schools and universities to the locations where we, as university teachers and facilitators make a unique contribution to lifelong learning and wellbeing of the nation in a variety of ways,

In a climate of change we need to be aware of ways in which **Supporting change** will benefit all stakeholders. This strand will explore strategies to support change from a personal to the systemic level.

Finally, our decision making should be informed by high quality research that links to theory to practice. This will require new ideas and **Changing research paradigms** that will assist us to reconceptualise practice and develop more effective teaching and learning strategies.

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Working to Become a Truly Reflective Practitioner

Jeff Giddings

This article sets out some of my thoughts on law teaching - what I do, what I enjoy about my work, and what maintains my enthusiasm. The central aim of my teaching is for both my students and I to develop as reflective practitioners. In my experience, student learning is vastly improved by the incorporation of 'learning by doing'. Students are encouraged to take greater responsibility for both their learning and their work. For me, it is also important to show students how dynamic the law can be.

For the past 15 years, I have been committed to clinical legal education (students learning through working on real law cases). This commitment is very personal, stemming from my experience as a clinical legal education student at Monash Law School. Until I was placed at Springvale Legal Service, I had found my law studies to be very dreary and detached from reality. My semester at Springvale Legal Service saw me change from feeling that the legal profession had no place for me to believing that I had a valuable contribution to make to our justice system. I encountered real people with real legal problems and discovered that I had the legal knowledge to assist them. The Monash clinical program set me on the path to a very rewarding career as both a lawyer and law teacher. I owe a great deal to my clinic supervisors, Simon Smith and Jon Faine, who inspired and motivated me. Simon in particular remains a wonderful mentor even after all this time.

Much of my approach to teaching comes from the lessons I learnt during my time as a lawyer in community legal centre practice. Working with an amazing array of clients, police, bureaucrats, politicians, volunteers and the like teaches you many lessons about communicating with other people, working cooperatively and standing up for what you believe in. My legal centre work showed me very clearly the importance of equal access to our legal system.

As a teacher, I am now committed to making a real difference to the lives and careers of the students I work with. At Griffith Law School, I have had the opportunity to develop a group of diverse clinical legal education subjects which effectively combine learning objectives

with the delivery of valuable community services. A key responsibility for the clinical teacher is to assist students to cross what one of my students described as the 'credibility gap' where they feel uncertain about how relevant the law they have learnt will be to the legal problems facing members of our community.

I see quality teaching as a real challenge, in both small and larger groups. I find it very important to actively engage with my students. Whether the student group I'm teaching numbers 6 or 136, I treat my classes as a conversation where I try to engage each and every student to think about how the law in a particular area works or doesn't work. Having this type of conversation with a large group of students can be difficult and requires a lot of 'thinking on your feet' but the results suggest that it works. The students enjoy it and they find the material to be interesting. We discuss current legal developments in detail and I seek to emphasise the central contribution of the legal system and lawyers to the effective workings of our democratic institutions. Lawyers have a vital role to play in improving accountability structures.

I regularly hear from Griffith colleagues about concerns with the pressure we all face to prioritise research over teaching. One suggestion I have offered is for such colleagues to consider whether they can publish material related to their teaching. In 1999, 3 of the journal articles I published related to my teaching in clinical legal education and alternative dispute resolution.

I have serious concerns about universities devaluing the links between teaching and research. I see very strong links between my teaching, research and community service. My research ideas often come directly from my teaching. My community service ideals are pursued through my teaching and I hope that my students will be encouraged to pursue similar ideals in their professional lives. I am lucky that my research interests coincide with my areas of teaching responsibility.

The following are my suggestions for teachers wishing to maintain their enthusiasm:

- You need to keep a clear sense of purpose. Whenever I face major challenges with my teaching, I focus on what it is I want to achieve.

- Seek out people who share your enthusiasm for teaching. I have greatly enjoyed working with law school colleagues on teaching projects. I have also been lucky to receive support and encouragement from staff of the Griffith Institute for Higher Education, in particular Dr Peter Taylor.

- Develop links with colleagues in other institutions. I draw great strength from my peers in clinical legal education, both across Australia and overseas.

- Watch other teachers. I learnt a great deal about teaching (both what to do and what not to do) from watching the senior academics involved in the Masters program at Monash Law School.

- Be prepared to try new approaches. Provided you think carefully about what you want to achieve and explain your approach to your students, taking new approaches helps to keep you on your toes and your students interested.

- You can make the learning fun, for you and your students, while still insisting on high standards of work from your students.

When I joined Griffith Law School, I had a great opportunity to put my ideas on legal education into practice. The new subjects I designed drew heavily on lessons I had learnt as a student, teacher and lawyer. These subjects continue to be refined and improved with substantial input from both students and the lawyers we work with. I have also continued to strengthen the links between my teaching, research and community service. This development process relies heavily on me reflecting on my performance, keeping a clear focus on what I am trying to achieve. These reflective practices are the foundation of my work as a teacher, researcher and community lawyer.

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EIDOS Idea Dossier No. 11

Redeeming the Evil Empire?

Thoughts on the moral perils of Management

Such a long shadow it is that the old screen hack cowboy Ronald Reagan managed to cast over the late 20th century! His influence on world affairs, his virtues and vices, his statesmanship, occupy increasing metres and hours of media attention. Possibly due to him the "Evil Empire" notion became a byword for the enemy we all need so we can demonise it, thereby saving ourselves.

Whether I'm right or wrong about that, the Cold War period did demonstrate how easy it is to mobilise a people around some amorphous, faceless and demonised enemy. And how potent an effect that can have; and how hard it is to break free from – even when the need for it has disappeared.

The phenomenon probably operates beyond national politics (I almost wrote 'mere' politics, but nothing is less mere than the political). Some forms of late C19th class-analysis display it well enough. The history of trade unionism is a rich seam of group demonising and "us" versus "them" constructs.

All that may seem light-years away from Higher Education. But I'm inclined to believe that a kind of "Evil Empire" thinking is alive and well in academe. This article asks the question "Is Management (in the eyes of academia) today's Evil Empire? And if so, what can Managers – or anyone – do about it?"

Characters in a Morality Play

If someone wrote a medieval-style morality-play about life in the late C20th, what kinds of "stock characters" would they use? "Stock" or "Archetype" characters have to be immediately recognisable to an audience. They appear within the action, and simply by being there and doing what everyone knows they have to do, they partially define the possibilities of what can happen. To understand them is to hold a key to interpreting the action.

Everyone knows they are not actual people, not even representations of actual people; they are "everyman" and

"everywoman", every person who has and might ever inhabit that profession, or take on that role in life. "Characters" are social roles, but rather more than just that.

They exercise specific constraints upon the moral personality of the person playing them. "Characters" serve to represent the culture of the time; a mask capturing the way the world of the day sees and understands itself. By their appearance, they instantly legitimate certain modes of moral existence. So ... what would be the dominant "Character Roles" within our play?

One answer (Alistair Macintyre, in *After Virtue*: 1985, Duckworth) is *The Manager* and *The Therapist*. With their appearance on the stage, these two unerringly evoke the audience into responding "I know exactly what this is all about – I know them both well".

They need no badge, no costume, yet we in the audience instantly know them by the stance they adopt towards the rest of the world. We can now more or less successfully predict the plot's direction. Nobody need announce "This is a Manager speaking". What we hear said, and its manner of saying, leaves no doubt about the kind of person we are dealing with!

(Here I'll deal only with *The Manager*, but be warned. I foresee a future essay on *The Therapist*, which bears irresistibly on a critique of the practice of teaching)

The Manager as Character

Remember – we're not talking actual people, but archetypes or "forms of character" here. Also, I'll call my characters "he" because I suspect bureaucracies were a male invention. Here's the gist of the case (following MacIntyre) ...

(i) The Manager's claim to legitimacy is a sham; he is a fraud. He demands the right to manage by claiming that underlying it is a Science, and that he knows the Science of Management. Alas – there is no such thing. Management Science is a confidence trick; it has virtually nothing recognisably scientific about it.

That either may or might not be an empirically correct claim; anyhow, it's not the main thrust of MacIntyre's case. The second part cuts deepest.

(ii) The Character of Manager (as Actor on C20th stage) exhibits a profound moral failure. Everything he does as Manager is terminally tainted by an irremediable moral flaw. By role-definition he is the embodiment of bureaucratic authority, that form of power over others that justifies itself solely in terms of its own effectiveness. If it works, it's right. That is his moral trap.

He cannot avoid acting so as to influence the motives (the intentions and ultimately the actions) of subordinates. That is what management is about. Its *modus operandi* is to ensure that subordinates will not only comply, but will justify their compliance by themselves arguing from premises which will produce agreement with *The Manager's* own prior conclusions. His function is to control human behaviour and to suppress conflict in such a way that his own justification for existence is reinforced.

There's a premise underlying the greater part of 2000 years of moral thought in the West, culminating in Kant. A moral action is one in which persons respect and honour one another's motives, needs and intentions. People in a moral relationship show one another mutual respect as "moral agents", each in their own right.

That may well be a silly, misguided premise; but it is ancient and venerable. By that test, each of us must be allowed – in all imaginable conjunctures and theatres of life – the inalienable prerogative to choose how to act, to accept the consequences of that choice, and on what grounds to justify our actions. Others who honour that in us are in an essentially moral relationships with us.

The Character of Manager (the stage persona, not particular managers inhabiting the role) fails on that single critical test for the quality of moral relationships. He is not and cannot be in an authentically moral relationship with his subordinates. If he tries to be, he



ceases to manage them, since he has no choice as manager but to control them.

The Evil Empire Revisited

Enter Reagan, and a new face for The Evil Empire: not communism, not atheism, not even capitalism. It has to be Managerialism (or, as one correspondent reminded me, Managerialism's breeding ground, the technocratic rationalism underlying all bureaucracy. I'm uncomfortable fighting abstract "isms" however. I'll stick to The Manager as archetype).

Nothing in Macintyre, nor here, seeks to incriminate actual managers as evil people. But The Character (the Great Role) they inhabit, the shoes they step into, the mask they are obliged to wear (on pain of failure) are morally fraught and highly problematic ("there is something about an archetype", my correspondent wrote, "that turns relatively decent people into petty tyrants").

Another colleague pointed out one unexpected situation in which managerial moral dilemmas operate. "The suggestion", he wrote "that supervisors (managers) should become facilitators of (their staff's) learning is highly problematic ... Staff do not trust their supervisors sufficiently to enable the latter to act as facilitators of their learning." You'd have to be off your noodle to trust, as 'teacher', someone whose work-role demanded of them that they be morally compromised.

But my own feeling is that some managers I have known were deeply moral persons. Some I've come to respect (maybe even to love) have certainly understood this moral problem - if only tacitly. I suspect they actually worked hard to try to redeem their parlous situation; and, sensing this, I've wanted to be on their side, certainly not fighting against them. Sensing their own role-dilemma they worked to remain morally intact. But it's a rough passage.

On the other hand, I did come to despise and pity other managers. I suspect they didn't know what was happening. They hadn't a serious thought about the Manager as Character and, even if they had, they neither cared nor knew how to respond to the trap. With nothing to redeem or be redeemed, they went on madly managing, to everyone's pain and peril.

I guess at this point my line of argument commits me to accepting that The Manager probably does represent today's academic Reagonesque "Evil Empire". But I believe strongly that even if The Manager (as Character) is the "enemy we have to have" (and love to hate) we are foolish in the extreme if we mistake our target and fight our actual managers as role-incumbents.

Complicity in What?

Those who inhabit the Managerial office-suites are not our enemy, any more than we are our own enemy. We are all implicated in technocratic rationality. We are together complicit in the structures that created the demon incarnate, the system that then denies all possibility of moral relationships in the workplace.

I must assume there may be managers, or future managers, reading this piece. They will want me to tell them how the insightful, "conscientized" manager, sensitive to the vast chasm of moral turpidity that s/he can slip into at any moment, how that person redeems their fate? How does anyone Manage with moral rectitude?

I think those who succeed may be those who first know the danger. Aware they have chosen (or it chose them) one of the most morally contradictory practices anyone can play (second only to The Teacher?), they are humbled. Seeking a kind of redemption, they want to survive The Role with some moral integrity intact.

We owe them a special kind of help - a self-interested support. In the redemption of their work lies that of ours. The two are inseparable, as long as we tolerate working in a bureaucracy and the indignity of being managed. Was there ever a paradisiacal time when academics managed themselves? I wasn't there, maybe it's a myth. Today we and our managers succeed or fail together, like it or not.

Last year an interesting and disturbing discussion followed comments I wrote on Academic Development. The Manager of a successful "new-style" AD unit described certain imperatives (vis a vis Management) if the AD enterprise is to succeed. It created rumblings. But those centrally concerned seemed unwilling to spend any time continuing the debate or expanding the reasoning behind their positions. "Too busy

managing", they said, and these are days for "action not words".

I may be wrong but think that stance is not good enough for people who work in a university. I hesitate to lightly impugn those who argued that way; but I wish we could talk about it more, and that's Catch 22. It illustrated just one more of the ways the demon Management Role usurps other values. Maybe an important, not yet understood role for academics is to work with managers in a way that managers themselves (most of them?) don't yet know how to ask for.

What Managers Ask For

Whatever managers think they're asking us for (cooperation, reasonableness, dialogue, sharing the vision, productivity ... you know the story better than I), or we think we're being asked to give, it has to be ancillary to what would make the critical difference. What I suggest many don't know how to ask for, because they're not yet ready to face up to it themselves, is insight into their own moral dilemma.

A dear mentor of mine taught me, however, to be wary on this one. Never tell a person anything about their own inner life that they're not ready to admit to themselves. They'll hate you for it, and turn on you with spite.

It's a delicate issue. I'd like to think that at core it's no different from any other problem of moral education. Anyhow, morality can't be taught, can it? Yet there is such a thing as moral growth, and conditions under which it is promoted. Maybe those of us who claim to be good teachers ought to know the way around that one?

How can we educate our managers to understand and face their own moral dilemma? Or, first, develop ourselves into people with the perceptive awareness needed to act as moral trustees for academia's future? And maybe contribute a little to redeeming an Evil Empire?

[Warm thanks to several ADSIG colleagues who generously responded to an earlier version of this piece]

Eidos



Electronic Course Portfolio in a new on-line Graduate Certificate in Flexible Learning

Carol Bowie, Peter Taylor, Craig Zimitat and Brad Young

Assessment by portfolio is commonly used in accreditation courses in higher education for tertiary teachers, particularly at graduate certificate level.

Traditionally, in assessment, the teacher sets (1) the assessment task that defines the assessment criteria and (2) the product or evidence required to demonstrate that the criteria have been met. (3) Then the teacher judges whether the assessment criteria have been met and to what degree and awards a grade, Biggs and Tang, (1997:80).

As Biggs and Tang (1997:80) point out, "Assessment has two roles: the obvious one of seeing how well the objectives have been attained, and reporting the result in an institutionally appropriate way: and less obviously, because "assessment always defines the curriculum" (Ramsden 1992:187), to convey to students what is expected of them."

In the Graduate Certificate in Flexible Learning, we have decided to assess by portfolio at the course level and in an electronic format. Assessment by portfolio will drive the learning process in each of the subjects so as to increase the students participation in level of control of (2) and (3) above.

The selection of materials for inclusion in a portfolio requires the student to become more actively involved in the learning process. The student must use higher level cognitive skills that require analysis and evaluation of their own work against the set criteria to select the best package to present. They need to be sufficiently metacognitive to evaluate and judge the quality of their own work. The process of selection itself is a core element of the learning experience and will generate further triggers for research or activities.

The course portfolio is a document that is dynamic across the course and will provide a resource subsequent to course completion. Participants' progress towards achieving the course and subject objectives is assessed through evaluation of the course portfolio submitted at the end of each semester.

The course portfolio in the Graduate Certificate in Flexible Learning is electronic. There are a number of reasons for this. One advantage of using an electronic format is to facilitate collaborative discussion of work in progress and over time between dispersed groups of learners. On-line interaction between peers, teachers and colleagues can enable and enhance discussion of the nature and quality of the learning processes and outcomes. The participants in the course develop their portfolio continuously. The course portfolio, if accessible to both the teaching team and the course community, gives both the teachers and the learners some indication of progress through the course.

The Graduate Certificate in Higher Education has been designed to be able to be completed remote from campus. In Foundations of Flexible Learning, (the first of the four subjects in the course), two tools have been incorporated into the subject and the course portfolio to enhance flexibility and increase communication and feedback about progress - a critical path and an activity log.

The interactive critical path diagram for the subject indicates the relationships between when elements of the subject were intended to be completed. This diagram helps students to choose how they will construct their path through the subject. There are a minimum set of dates, (presently 3), across the semester for provocations. What is intended to be completed before these provocations is indicated in their positioning on the critical path diagram. All of the rest of the subject activities can be engaged in according to the path the participant chooses.

The provocations form the final stage of each of three major reflective cycles designed into the subject. They consist of an activity with the whole course group that will inform each participant's present version of what is to be submitted in their course portfolio to meet the subject assessment criteria. These criteria are aligned with the subject and course objectives and are explicitly mapped out on the web site.

The activity log documents two things: the participant's physical progress through the subject activities as well as their academic or scholarly progress and development through engagement in the subject activities. The web environment facilitates the second of these tasks easily through enabling complex networking of links to and from documents. For example, participants may indicate that they have completed certain readings, done some classroom research and discussed issues with their learning group as ticks in boxes in the activity log. Then they might make comment about the quality and value of the experience and relevance to their practice and context and link to a piece of their reflective writing. This piece might contain hotlinks to the annotations from the readings, the summary of the classroom research results and the notes or log from their learning group discussion at the appropriate illustrative points.

Participation and Progress: Expectations and Commitments

There are a range of explicit expectations and commitments that have been spelt out for the participants and the teaching staff in this subject. Expectations about communication and interaction frequencies, mode, processes and sets of matching commitments from teaching staff have been articulated or mapped in diagrams. For example the critical path diagram also maps out the type of interactions (peer, individual, learning group, teaching staff etc) expected for each activity and the type of feedback to be expected; each activity log presents information about progress to teaching staff with a commitment for responsive feedback from the teaching team. When these expectations or commitments are not met then negotiation with the teaching team and participant(s) is to occur.

The use of an on-line course portfolio as the major assessment tool in the Graduate Certificate in Flexible Learning is being evaluated and we are researching the following dimensions:

- effectiveness as an assessment tool and as part of the principal learning task in



the course

- value of the on-line nature of the assessment tool to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes
- value as a tool for documenting and demonstrating learning and professional development for the course and the individual
- value as a tool for enabling the learning processes and outcomes for the participants to be more 'visible' and accessible to staff and other participants
- value as a tool to facilitate a collaborative reflective learning process

- as a way of experiencing incorporation of technology in teaching and learning processes from a student perspective

Acknowledgment

This research and evaluation program will be partially supported as part of an ASCILITE / CUTSD NTDG project.

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Research in Higher Education Progress Reports

A study of interns' experience of the transition from medical student to doctor

Sarah Mann and Richard Tarala

There is an abrupt transition between undergraduate medical studies and becoming a medical practitioner. The transition relates to assuming, for the first time, responsibility for direct patient care and confronting issues in communication, time management, and stress. A poor transition can impact both on patient care, and on the subsequent personal and professional development of the junior doctor. A range of issues have been identified as impacting on the experience of the intern year. These include lack of appropriate preparation for the year (Calman & Donaldson, 1991); long working hours (Goldacre et al., 1997); poor communication of educational objectives (Calman, 1992); poor supervision and support (Goldacre et al., op cit); lack of formal education and training opportunities (Goldacre et al., op cit), mistreatment by senior staff (Baldwin & Daugherty, 1997), and poor assessment processes (Wise et al, 1995).

The purpose of this study was therefore to investigate junior doctors' educational experience of the intern year during a period in which increased effort had been put into providing more

structured educational opportunities for interns in order to ease their transition.

The study investigated interns' motivations, self-concepts in transition from medical student to doctor, hopes and fears, learning experiences; and what interns identified as helps and hindrances to their development as doctors.

Data for the study was collected by interviewing and surveying junior doctors at different stages in their first two years of practice at a teaching hospital in Western Australia.

Two groups of respondents were involved: twenty eight interns near the end of their intern (Postgraduate Year 1) year (Group A) and 5 residents, (Postgraduate Year 2) in their second year of practice (Group B).

In-depth interviews were conducted with the five residents in order to inform the development of the survey questionnaire which was used with group A.

The questionnaire was sent out to all interns in this group (n = 58) towards the end of their intern year, with a response rate of 48% (n = 28).

The following is a necessarily brief summary of the picture that emerges from the findings.

Although the interns in this sample may be motivated by the desire to help patients, their primary concern in the intern year is to gain competence as a

doctor within the new context of work rather than study.

They bring to the challenge of becoming competent doctors two quite different starting points. The intern with a more positive self-image is confident in his/her capacity to become competent, realistically acknowledges his/her limitations, believes s/he has a contribution to make, and uses the new role as a means of conferring positive attributes on the intern's position. The intern with a more negative self-image has no real sense of themselves as a doctor, feels unsure and alone, is fearful of the task ahead and sees the new role as conferring on them the status of victim of the system in a dog's body role. The findings also suggest, however, that there is a shift through the year for most interns to a more positive and realistic self-image.

Interns seem to have three main fears - finding themselves alone and responsible for a very sick patient, and thus potentially also responsible for loss of life; working with unfriendly, critical and abusive senior staff; and being over-stressed, exhausted and out of balance as a result of very long and demanding working hours.

They experience a significant shift in the context and processes of their learning from their undergraduate years to the work-based context of their intern year.



The most significant sources of learning for the interns are practical experience and reflection on that experience and discussion with and support from senior staff and other colleagues. Registrars are identified as having the most significant role in supporting the interns' learning. Other less significant resources include reading up on cases in books and journals and attending formal educational sessions.

Although practical experience is a significant source of learning for both interns and undergraduates, reading appears to be one of the most significant sources of learning for undergraduates. Lectures and tutorials, though identified as sources of learning by around 15-20% of respondents, seem to be less significant than either practical experience or reading and self-study. In both the intern learning experience and the undergraduate learning experience, lack of time, tiredness, adverse criticism and indifferent or unapproachable significant others have a negative impact on learning; and practical experience, and support and encouragement from senior colleagues, peers, family and friends all have a positive impact. Greater significance seems to be given, however, to personal motivation and determination in the undergraduate years.

To summarise, interns identify the following as necessary to helping them succeed in the task of developing their competence during the intern year are:

- a developing a sense of their own competence, through regular feedback and success with whatever it is they are doing
- the respect and recognition of significant others, including senior doctors, peers, allied health staff and patients
- increasing responsibility
- good relationships with their colleagues and the team
- support, encouragement and understanding from senior doctors
- the opportunity to talk through issues and decisions with senior doctors and other colleagues and peers
- time

- formal educational and training opportunities

What is interesting from this study is the significance of the registrar in influencing whether the intern has a productive educational experience and is able to work through the transition of the year. It is the registrar who is most closely involved with the intern and who has the knowledge and experience to help the intern turn their experience into a learning experience. It is the registrar who, in the here and now of day-to-day practice on the wards and in the operating theatres, can make the most of the teaching and learning opportunities offered by the intern's engagement with the work environment. The registrar can offer feedback, explanation, be available for discussion, answer questions, think aloud while making a clinical decision, involve interns, encourage them, inform them, orient them, observe them. In short, the registrar can take advantage of 'teachable moments' in the work-based learning environment in order to make explicit what is normally tacit and unspoken. The registrar is also in the best position to offer feedback to interns on their progress towards becoming competent doctors.

The transition from medical student to doctor is a difficult one. Feelings of inadequacy are common. Significant care needs to be taken in order to support interns through this transition and in order to make the most of the work-based learning opportunities it provides. The findings from this study seem to indicate how the work-based learning experience can be significantly enhanced through the constructive support of an expert significant other who can prompt reflection, offer instruction and provide support. One could say that the registrar provides the 'master' or 'coach' role identified as a crucial feature of traditional apprenticeships by Collins, Brown and Newman (1989).

Although the provision of formal educational opportunities contributed positively to the enhancement of the educational experience of the intern year, what is most crucial is the attention that needs to be paid to developing the

significant role of the registrar in enhancing the work-based learning context of the intern year.

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Work in Progress

***JUBILEE: JISC User Behaviour Information seeking; Longitudinal Evaluation of Electronic Information Services (EIS).**

JISC is the Joint Information Systems Committee funded by the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council, the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales and the Department of Education Northern Ireland. Its mission is 'To stimulate and enable the cost effective exploitation of information systems and to provide a high quality national network infrastructure for the UK higher education and research councils communities' (see website at www.jisc.ac.uk)

JUBILEE surveys end users of Electronic Information Services (EIS) and seeks to predict, monitor and characterise users' information seeking behaviour. The project findings will inform future strategic decision making and investment in EIS by the Joint Information Systems Committee, in partnership with Higher Education institutions in the United Kingdom.

EIS stands for electronic information services and includes a number of services including subject gateways (e.g. EEVL), online vendor services, online public access library catalogues, university web sites, mailbase archives, data sets (e.g. Univ. of Virginia Electronic Text Centre, electronic journals, web-based dictionaries & encyclopaedias and CD-Roms, either stand-alone or networked.

Funding is for three academic years, or three cycles. Six HE institution will be studied per cycle and, within each institution, three disciplines will be investigated. For the first cycle, the disciplines are: Health Sciences, Business Studies, English.

*JUBILEE is an acronym for JISC User Behaviour in Information Seeking:

Researchers

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Key words

Information seeking, electronic information;

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Constructing the ESOL Curriculum: a critical ethnography of teacher, student, and institutional negotiation of the second language curriculum

The project is the dissertation component of a doctoral portfolio for Deakin University EdD. This 'insider' ethnography at a NZ Polytechnic involves interviews with management and policymakers, ESL co-teachers (with the author), and a group of self-selected (ESL) student participants on their views of curriculum making and the agendas and expectations they have. Texts of focus group interviews with students generated over a twenty week semester and team-teacher meetings over the same period provide two broad narratives of the teaching and learning experience. These interviews are supplemented by weekly student journal entries and 'other' teacher documents. The aim is to construct a 'grounded' insider ethnography of the texts and discourses participants use to position themselves with respect to others and to investigate the degree to which negotiation is a useful term to describe this. Another significant strand in the work are the subjectivities and reflexive capabilities of the researcher as insider.

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Key words

ESL, Curriculum, Ethnography, Critical, Insider, Negotiation

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Research-as learning-postgraduate students' research styles,

Using action research with a cohort of Israeli PhD students and a UK sample, the project will look at postgraduate students' research and learning styles to identify potential dissonance between research methods/outcomes, and develop supportive programmes

Researchers

Gina Wisker

Key words

Postgraduates, learning, research, support

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Student learning in the disciplines

Working with staff from Law, Social work, English, Womens' Studies, Creative writing and Computer skills for linguists, using questionnaires and focus groups with first and third years the project will look at student learning styles, matching these to learning demands, and outcomes of the subjects-

Researchers

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Key words

disciplines, curriculum, outcomes, learning

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Book Reviews

Designing Courses for Higher Education

By Susan Toohey. Allen & Unwin, 1999 Price AUD\$55

Reviewed by Peter Karuso

Higher education is a complex endeavour fraught with traps and pitfalls for the unwary, uncaring or overworked academic. This book seeks to carve a path through the literature on learning and course design at the tertiary level. It takes a refreshing broad-based approach that is non-judgmental and does not over-emphasize one or other system of education (e.g. traditional/behavioural/cognitive etc.).

One exception is Mager's behavioural objective approach, which is (rightly) criticized. However, the book is not just a list of references to the literature connected by terse prose but an in depth and fascinating account of learning and teaching at tertiary institutions. Key references allow the reader to explore further the books and papers that have contributed particularly to current opinion on educational theory.

The work is supplemented by appropriate case studies, taken mostly from Australia but also a few from overseas (e.g., New Zealand, UK and the USA), although the language used (e.g. "graduate school") indicate the book is targeted at the American market.

The opening chapter paints a gloomy perspective of modern higher education, suffering under ever increasing workloads, reduced resources, and more diverse students and educational objectives. A recurring theme is the reduced public funding of higher education that has pushed the system to its current limits. These conditions are

naturally at odds with the conditions that promote effective learning but provide a challenge to which this book rises. The first chapter also contains a very brief summary of how students learn and the factors that affect the approach taken by them.

The next few chapters examine the belief systems and values in academia and it would be an improvident academic that, while reading this section, would not recognize the many inappropriate ideologies that are present in their own department. In this respect, the book borrows from "managing change" type texts but the fundamental advice of first stepping back and examining the values inherent in the current system is good. This provides the seed for revolution or, more constructively, the pressure for change.

The book then dives into the nuts and bolts of articulating goals; objectives and outcomes by outlining the different types of knowledge and the methods best used to achieve the desired outcomes. Along the way, I learnt a great deal about the structure of knowledge and the various methods that can be used to facilitate learning. Each method is summarized, referenced and advantages and disadvantages clearly indicated. Each chapter concludes with a useful summary.

The penultimate chapter on assessment is important, as assessment is what influences, more than any other factor, the approaches taken by students

to learning. If it is our aim to produce life-long-learners and to facilitate higher order cognition we need to start by looking at the current assessment we use and the messages it sends in terms of the types of knowledge we value. Then, end by redesigning this assessment to reflect the messages we actually want to send.

Perhaps the most useful (at least the most important) chapter is left till last. This covers the implementation of curriculum change and the factors that have, all too often, resulted in the abandonment of change. The keys, as Susan says, are openness and ownership and the application of pressure and reward. It is perhaps unfortunate that the development of truly effective higher education is dependent, like all human endeavours, on politics.

The book is well written, easy to read and contains very few typographical errors. It is definitely a book for the times and one that fills an important niche. At \$55 RRP, it seems a bit expensive for a relatively small paperback but when one considers that this could, and should, become the bible of higher education curriculum design, it is indeed good value.

Peter Karuso is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Chemistry at Macquarie University.

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Teaching for Quality Learning at University

By John Biggs. Buckingham: The Society for Research into Learning and Teaching and Open University Press. AUD 49.95.

Reviewed by Roger Landbeck

John Biggs has combined years of research into student learning with experience as a teacher to produce a book that tackles head on the difficulties of teaching for quality learning in today's university. There is much practical advice that is based on a solid research base and a helpful model of teaching in terms of three levels. Level 1, which focuses on what the student is, Level 2 on what the teacher does and level 3 on what the student does.

Biggs stresses the need to align curriculum objectives with teaching and learning activities and assessment tasks for effective learning by students, a process he calls constructive alignment. It is of interest to learn that he only crystallised these ideas comparatively recently. Having set the stage he then systematically describes these three components, devoting two chapters to assessment. Teaching large classes is

treated to a whole chapter, thus recognising the difficult situations facing those who wish to teach for quality learning despite the adverse circumstances.

There is a very helpful chapter on teaching international students which answers all the usual stereotypical statements about this group of students, such as 'they rote learn and lack critical thinking skills,' and 'progressive Western teaching methods won't work with Asians.' Biggs provides a model for teaching international students which challenges teachers to see teaching as education not as assimilation (international students must become more like local students). 'Teach better and you'll address the problems presented by international students.'

There is a useful final chapter on implementation in which Biggs uses the principles he has been enunciating throughout the book, to look at ways of putting things into practice. Here there is useful discussion which extends the

context from the individual teacher to the department and institutional level and their role in supporting teaching for quality learning.

One topic that is only briefly considered, albeit very usefully, is flexible learning and the difficult question of delivering teaching for quality learning through this mode. Although the book was published in 1999 developments in this area have been so rapid that it is not surprising that the treatment is brief. It is to be hoped that flexible learning and its ramifications can be considered in greater depth in a subsequent edition.

John Biggs' book deserves to become as popular as Paul Ramsden's 'Learning to Teach in Higher Education.' Both should be read and acted upon. John Biggs provides perhaps a greater emphasis on practical teaching which acts as a complement to Paul Ramsden's approach.

Changing Academic Life. Developing the Learning University.

By Elaine Martin. Buckingham: The Society for Research into Learning and Teaching and Open University Press. AUD 49.95.

Reviewed by Roger Landbeck

No-one needs reminding that the academic world is a stressful environment at present, full of fast moving changes and events that threaten to radically change the nature of the academy and life within it. It is therefore encouraging to read an analysis of the present situation in terms of a research model, which is not only able to illuminate, but also offer encouragement and hope to academics. Such an analysis has been provided by Elaine Martin in this book.

Following a description of the major changes in academic life in recent years Elaine Martin skilfully brings together

research findings from learning and teaching with those in organisational change and learning organisations to examine these changes. Having related the experience to the research four sets of tensions or paradoxes which face academics are explored in detail. The description of the changes is provided by a survey and interview data gathered from a small sample (N=161) of academic staff at all levels. This data is used throughout the analysis to provide illustrations and example which adds real interest to the text making it easy to read. We hear about colleagues grappling with changes and enjoy hearing about those who found creative ways of dealing with them.

In the end the readers are challenged

to see that the answer to the difficult situations lies within themselves to help themselves. Great leaders are unlikely to come to provide direction. 'Each of us must look to ourselves and expect that our own contribution, combined with that of others, will be enough to make a difference. To quote Gandhi: 'We must be the change we wish to see in the world,' (Pg 5).

If ever we needed to be reminded of the value of research within a university to provide comment and explanation of the world in which we live this book provides that. May the possibilities Elaine Martin sets before us in it be realised in many institutions.



Managing Your Academic Career: Strategies for Success

by D Royce Sadler. Published by Allen & Unwin, 1999. 209 pp + xiv. AUD 24.95

Reviewed by Mary Keyes

This great little book provides a comprehensive range of career advice to beginning academics. The book takes the form of 33 fairly brief chapters written in the style of informal, friendly correspondence to hypothetical junior colleagues. It aims to explain the context of academic work: the 'values and environment of higher education' (p 199), to encourage academics to excel within that environment, and hence to achieve greater satisfaction in their work. The book deals with many fundamental issues faced by academics, including 'managing your time' (ch 2), 'helping students learn' (ch 17) and 'converting your thesis into a book' (ch 32). Although the chapters are mostly short, and the issues covered are very comprehensive, the advice is not superficial. It encourages a reflective and collegial approach to improving and enjoying academic work.

The primary audience for the book is new academics, although Professor Sadler suggests that it might be a useful reference for academic leaders (p xi). The book responds to the lack of specific direction and support which appears often to attend academic appointments. One of the few faults I found with the book is that it does not critically challenge (nor encourage others to critically consider) the status quo in academia, including the failures of academic leaders clearly to explain expectations and to provide useful career advice and support. The main message of the book is: understand your working environment, and know how strategically to respond to the incentives it offers. While I would not disagree

that this is important advice, it risks perpetuating a system which may be faulty. Indeed the book responds to the urgent needs created by one particularly entrenched fault – the lack of academic definition and support.

Part one on academic life addresses a range of issues, some of which are fundamental to establishing an academic career such as articulating your 'academic focus', as well as specific issues like serving on a selection committee (ch 5) and dealing with bias and discrimination (ch 10). Other chapters might have been placed elsewhere in the book – in particular advice on writing grant proposals and designing a period of research leave might have been located together with other material on research. This part is full of thoughtful observations and thought-provoking suggestions, such as the 'ten tips for establishing priorities', on pp 14-16.

Part two gives comprehensive advice on job and promotion applications, which is practical and helpful. One particularly good feature of this book is that it encourages reflection on lack of success, and provides useful suggestions on how to learn from it. Chapter 16 advises, for example, on how to deal with and learn from non-promotion. Professor Sadler's expertise in learning theory and assessment is clearly evident in part three which addresses issues to do with teaching. Chapter 18 is a splendid, concise discussion of the principles of excellence in teaching. It gives interesting suggestions about curriculum design, application, and evaluation, and emphasises the benefits of collaborative work. Chapter 20 dealing with cultural sensitivity is also outstanding.

Part four is entitled 'Publishing'. The book's coherency might be improved by a minor structural redesign tightening up the discussion of research. This might be achieved by including an introductory part on research focus

(developing the ideas introduced in part one), and renaming the present part four 'Research II: publishing' and the present part five 'Research III: doctorates and beyond'.

I found the style engaging, lively, and very readable. Professor Sadler's advice throughout is pragmatic and honest without being patronising or harsh. The index and structure make the book accessible, so that it could be easily referred to for advice on specific issues. It also reads well from cover to cover, and it would be a valuable resource in staff orientation.

It might have assisted novices who are not acquainted with the university environment to have included an introductory section which gave a general overview of the matters surveyed in the book, and explained the relation between the different issues discussed. The final chapter provides a very concise conclusion, which like the rest of the book is thought-provoking. Professor Sadler lists his attributes of the ideal university environment (pp 200-1), and sends readers on their way with a suggestion that realisation of such conditions is partly our own responsibility.

This book provides a wise, personal, reflective perspective that experienced academics accumulate through their careers, and which is otherwise not readily accessible – certainly not in such an encyclopedic form – to beginners. While the target audience of the book is novices, and to a lesser extent leaders, I'd be surprised if anyone could read this book without learning something from it. I recommend it thoroughly to academics at all stages of their careers.

Mary Keyes is a lecturer in the School of Law at Griffith University. In 1999 Mary won the inaugural award for excellence in teaching, in the category of beginning teacher at Griffith University.



Good Practice in Postgraduate Supervision

Edited by Gina Wisker and Nick Sutcliffe. 1999. Birmingham: Staff and Educational Development Association. ISBN: 1 902435 03 6. (SEDA Paper 106 - 147pp. Order through: office@seda.demon.co.uk)

Reviewed by Leslie Willcoxson

The strength in this collection of papers is implied in its title: it presents detailed descriptions of practical strategies for supervising research degree students in the sciences (chapters 4 and 5), for supervising students who speak English as a second language (chapters 6 and 7), and for supervising students at a distance through the use of technology and face-to-face contact (chapters 7 and 9). Like the several similar books of the 80's & '90s which have preceded it and which form the practice reference base for many of the papers here (e.g. Moses 1985; Phillip & Pugh 1992; Zuber-Skerritt & Ryan 1994), the focus of this book is generally on the supervision of research degree students working at PhD level, although there is passing reference to some Masters degree supervision, and issues in working with students undertaking professional doctorates are sketched (chapter 8). Several chapters allude to staff development issues in postgraduate research supervision and some provide practical institutional or departmental strategies for developing supervision skills (chapters 4, 10 and 11), with the chapter eleven discussion of a formal award course for supervisors effectively highlighting both the benefits and difficulties of this relatively new path.

While this collection of papers will undoubtedly provide some useful 'how to' guidance through its detailed accounts of supervision or supervision development strategies, a little more editorial rigour could perhaps have been used to eliminate typographical errors, author titling discrepancies and inconsequential details such as ambient temperatures in supervision rooms or an author's discovery that a student has three children and her account of what she might have done under circumstances different from those which eventuated. Of more concern, however, are some of the unexamined assumptions which permeate the book, yet these also provide the basis for some interesting implicit point-counterpoint argument.

One might hope that the claim in chapter one that 'because you argue the case [in a thesis], you don't have to believe it' has been modified by the author's subsequent experience as a supervisor, and the evocative dismissal of quality assurance processes as a 'managerial' imposition (discussed in chapter 2) has been questioned as academics have become more acquainted with recent business management literature which conceptualises management as a negotiated, collective process. Nevertheless chapter one, in providing a just-finished student account of supervision provides some useful reflection on potential problems in supervision and chapter two raises some interesting questions about the evaluation of supervision and the relationship between discipline diversity and originality and supervisor reward strategies. In any case, the sparkling, challenging chapter on supervision as an act of scholarship and of re-incarnation

of scholarship (chapter 3) goes some way towards addressing unexamined assumptions, as it makes absolutely clear the importance of integrity and critical reflectivity in scholarship and argues not against 'managerialism' but for scholarship. This sort of argument might provide some clarity for those who, like the writers of chapter four, feel pressured by government agencies to assess research training in terms of value for money. Alternatively several chapters in the book provide discussion of strategies that may assist in more rapid completions (e.g., chapter 5, which discusses departmental initiatives to support progress; chapter 7, which outlines a programme designed to assist overseas distance-education postgraduates).

Overall, with the exception of the original and stimulating critique of supervision and scholarship provided in chapter three, this collection is more notable for its practical suggestions than for original critical reflection on issues affecting supervision. It is likely to be of most interest to those seeking an outline of current practice and issues in supervision and some tested and implementable supervision or supervisor development strategies.

Lesley Willcoxson has just been appointed a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Human Resource Management and Employment Relations at the University of Southern Queensland.



Peer Assessment in Practice

Edited by Sally Brown. Birmingham: Staff and Educational Development Association. (SEDA Paper 102).
Order through office@seda.demon.co.uk

Reviewed by Robyn Zevenbergen

This publication is a collection of writings focused on the use and implementation of peer assessment across a range of disciplines. It is written encompassing a range of genres from reflective and subjective accounts through to more systematic studies of peer assessment. The studies are predominantly from the United Kingdom with one study being conducted in Australia. The compilation represents the diversity in the ways peer assessment can be implemented over a number of disciplines and courses; and various aspects of peer assessment including issues associated with its implementation and as a teaching practice.

As the authors of the chapters in this book attest, there are many aspects of peer assessment that need to be considered. These include the demands of the discipline, the types of stimulus that will be assessed (oral presentations, displays, examinations and so forth), the forms of the peer assessment (whether individual or group), the criteria that will be used in the peer assessment, students' reactions to peer assessment and the principles that should underpin effective peer assessment. Throughout the various chapters in the book, these aspects of peer assessment are addressed in varying ways and degrees. Given that the authors work across a diverse range of disciplines including history, education, construction, business, and engineering the breadth of the projects attest to the wide applicability of peer assessment. Furthermore, there is another chapter that addresses interdisciplinary investigations of peer assessment across the university, further strengthen the case of this innovation. The diversity of approaches, issues and disciplines represents a broad sweep of the area of peer assessment. There is often a conjoint addressing of similar aspects across different chapters so that authors often reinforce points made in other chapters.

The articles vary in forms of research – some are very reflective

accounts of their practices and are not particularly strong from an empirical point of view, whereas others are very powerful in the claims that they offer as they are based on quality data collected throughout the projects. Similarly, some chapters are snapshots of a project, while others are long-term projects that have evolved over a number of implementations. Depending on the reader's persuasion to research, the articles may offer more or less in terms of outcomes. The quality of presentation also varies with some articles being very clear, while others somewhat less focused.

The article by Fullarton and Rafiq is particularly useful for people intending to trial peer assessment within their own courses. The authors raise a number of outcomes from their own work with peer assessment. These are presented as recommendations and provide very constructive suggestions and would be useful for avoiding some of the pitfalls that are inherent in the practice. The points raised by Fullarton and Rafiq are empirically based over a number of cycles of implementation where they have progressively refined their project on peer assessment of groupwork. They present their work as a series of "lessons" that they have learnt in implementing peer assessment. Similar findings are reported by other authors in the text, thereby reinforcing the claims made by Fullarton and Rafiq. This chapter is useful for providing both guidelines and rationale for peer assessment, particularly of group work. Given the increasing demands being made of academic's time, the value of group work and the links that it has to the workplace, the need for ensuring quality and fair assessment in this form of pedagogy is considered in this chapter. Perennial issues associated with group work and assessment are discussed, developed and addressed in this chapter, thus making a substantial contribution to effective practice in this area.

One of the recurring themes with peer assessment is students' concerns about assessing their peers' work. This was raised by a number of authors in their chapters. Sher and Twigg provide

evidence from their evaluations that students can be oppositional to peer assessment with concerns, among other things that students are uneasy at marking their colleagues' work, being unsure of how to make sense of standards required and not wanting to take responsibility for marking. These are common concerns noted by other authors, including Fullarton and Rafiq. However, the latter provide suggestions as to how these concerns can be addressed. Both of these chapters have implemented peer assessment a number of times and have progressively refined the procedures that are used. From the lessons that they have learnt through progressive modification of peer assessment, both chapters provide justifications for the recommendations that they offer.

As many of the chapters in this collection are relatively descriptive accounts and evaluations of the projects, the book makes a contribution to the area by providing a means through which other educators can develop techniques of peer assessment within their teaching contexts. The strengths and pitfalls are noted by most of the authors, thereby indicating to those who are interested and willing to attempt these approaches in their courses what they need to consider when developing their own projects. In this way, the book makes a useful contribution to the discussions and implementation of peer assessment projects in higher education.

Robyn Zevenbergen is a senior lecturer at Griffith University (Gold Coast Campus). She works in the area of mathematics education and has an interest in teaching and learning in higher education. Currently she has been working on a number of approaches to teaching including peer assessment and the use of study groups.

Students Supporting Students

By J. Dolan, and A.J. Castley, 1998. Birmingham: Staff and Educational Development Association. (SEDA) Paper 105. Order through office@seda.demon.co.uk

Reviewed by Sandra Gollin

Having recently been charged with co-ordinating the pilot of an institution-wide student mentoring scheme, and not having had any close connection with such schemes in the past, I have to admit that this collection of case studies was a godsend. The work is highly accessible and a great introduction to the topic of mentoring for the newcomer, while at the same time offering well-considered critical insights for those who have some background, but who may be looking for ideas to improve on existing schemes. Based on the UK experience, this volume is also a good counterpoint to another recent report (Bond, 1999), that is based on mentoring in Australian vocational contexts. Indeed, reading the two provides an excellent mapping of the theoretical and practical issues and the range of approaches one could take.

Dolan and Castley's collection of reports is timely. In Britain as in Australia, student mentoring is rapidly becoming a feature of university life. Why has mentoring become such a hot topic? Reduction of government funding, increased enrolments and the so-called 'dumbing down' of tertiary education have all placed additional demands on resources for assisting students to make it at university. At the same time, the growing emphasis on 'graduate attributes' is being fuelled by the demands from employers for graduates who can work in teams, creatively solve problems, communicate effectively with others and negotiate different perspectives. The publication provides a clear introduction to the global forces that are propelling mentoring to the forefront of educational thinking, for example, the recent large scale reports on post-secondary education in the USA (Kellog, 1996) and UK (Dearing, 1997) and the Rome

Conference (1994) on Lifelong Learning.

The aim of the publication is to acknowledge and publicise the rapidly growing phenomenon that is mentoring and to provide reflections on the design and management of mentoring within the changing context of higher education. It offers a clear view of the wide range of schemes available in British tertiary institutions.

The authors divide their book into two sections. Part One contains several contributions that together map the territory and introduce some theoretical considerations; Part Two is a set of short case studies. This division is useful, as some readers might be more interested in the theory, while other might want to pick up practical tips. I found it more useful to start with the short case studies, to get an idea of the kinds of schemes available, and then to read over the theoretical perspectives in Part One.

In Part One, the authors define mentoring as 'peer assisted learning'. This is a very broad definition, and the concept is not explored at the same depth as in Bond's work. Although the benefits of peer assisted learning to both mentors and mentees are canvassed, Dolan and Castley tend to make a stronger case for the benefits to the mentors. Donelan and Wallace provide a background to the current focus on 'graduateness' stemming from reports such as Kellog, Dearing and the Rome Conference. Fazey provides insights into the value that mentors place on their experience. Boyle's chapter provides cogent arguments for appropriate training, and financial commitment by the institution. In their own section, the authors themselves argue the case for improved student learning via mentoring.

In Part Two, case studies introduce us to a wide variety of schemes. Examples include a school-based induction program at Oxford Brookes University, cross-phase small group peer support in the psychology department at the University of East London and support for part-time students of Birkbeck College, University of London.

Both formal and informal programmes are described. Peer assisted student support (pass) at the University of Lincolnshire and Humberside based on the well-known and popular US developed Supplemental Instruction model which provides accredited training for trainers and a fully developed instructional system. A single school initiative at Nene University College, Northampton is an informal arrangement where all second and third year Art and Design students are matched with an incoming 'fresher'. They write to the student as a contact for the transition stage, offering friendly advice about the college experience and inviting them to respond with any concerns.

The case studies in are written to a formula in response to a set of questions the researchers sent out to institutions. Each brief report covers the purpose of the scheme, participants, a brief outline of how the scheme operates, how students are rewarded, key issues emerging and anticipated developments. The format allows for easy comparison across schemes and also enables a quick overview of each particular issue from a range of perspectives. The case studies are grouped according to either target group or function: peer induction, subject-based peer mentoring, learning skills-based, schemes for students with disabilities and finally some innovative schemes involving peer-supported pedagogy. Interestingly, despite the wide range of target groups and purposes, the kinds of issues that arise are similar. Recurrent themes include the need to motivate students to join, the value of voluntary participation by mentors and mentees and how to enlist the ongoing support of academic departments.

Returning to the issues canvassed in Part One, it is difficult to avoid the thought that in many institutions mentoring may be seized on as a top-up for inadequate teaching, the reduction in tutorial time and excessively large class sizes. The writers tackle this question directly, arguing cogently that mentoring fulfils a totally different though complementary function to traditional



teaching. In spite of the arguments, however, those who are involved in mentoring schemes will be aware of the pressure from financial quarters to argue that mentoring need not be specially funded as it reduces the call on other services such as language, mathematics and literacy support. The truth is that the overall level of student support in most tertiary institutions needs to be increased, not merely maintained, particularly as institutions open their doors to more non-traditional students and those from equity groups who are very often underprepared for tertiary study.

Hard evidence on the effect of mentoring on attrition, perseverance and retention rates would be compelling. However, Stalker (1994) finds that '... definitive empirical evidence about the activity of mentoring-particularly in academic settings is hard to come by', and these authors like so many others have skirted the issue. Undoubtedly the factors involved are complex and interrelated. Perhaps the most compelling evidence comes from mentors and mentees themselves, who report significant personal gains. In her chapter, Fazey provides some evidence regarding the success of Peer Guides, but in the book overall there is little critical comment on the schemes described and no hard evidence.

For those attempting to initiate mentoring schemes options for training programs are sketched out in a chapter by Boyle, 'designing training and reward for peer support schemes.' The chapter leads the reader through a series of practical and philosophical issues which would help planners tailor their scheme to their client group. The three short case studies that conclude the chapter illustrate how apparently successful schemes addressing local needs are organised, co-ordinated, financed and related to curriculum.

One of the major difficulties in getting a mentoring scheme off the ground is motivating mentors and mentees. There is always a keen and willing small core of volunteers, but many more students who would benefit from the experience, for various reasons are not prepared to prioritise this activity. Fazey's chapter, 'Why should students want to support other students?' draws on research on what motivates students to take on mentoring. She identifies three different categories of motivation: global, contextual and situational. According to the research results first year students are motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically.

A vexed topic at many institutions has been that of extrinsic rewards; should mentors be remunerated with payment for services rendered, should they be seduced with offers of t-shirts and bookshop discounts or should the institution simply rely on their altruism and goodwill? The book provides plenty of food for thought in this area, and the consensus seems to be that although students like to be recognized for their efforts, the most successful schemes rely on voluntarism. The intrinsic rewards include satisfaction in helping others and the knowledge that employers will recognize the additional skills including ability to communicate, work in teams and tolerate different points of view.

Overall, 'Students Supporting Students' is an invaluable guide for anyone contemplating setting up a mentoring scheme from scratch or evaluating an existing scheme. There are plenty of good ideas and examples, as well as some recognition of the pitfalls, challenges and dilemmas. As one might expect, all the case studies presented here throw a very positive light on the mentoring experience. From our local perspective, although the development of a mentoring scheme is seen as a step in the right direction, securing adequate funding, finding enough student

volunteers to commit to the scheme and finding staff within academic departments with the time and energy to devote to understanding, promoting and guiding mentoring is an ongoing challenge. It would have been useful to have also read about what was learned from some less than successful schemes or schemes that succeeded against the odds.

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- Sandra Gollin is currently Head of The Learning Centre at UWS Nepean, and Project Leader of the Student Mentoring Program, a tri-level scheme addressing the first year experience, and an integral part of the Nepean Core Program, which has as its basis the development of key graduate attributes.**



STUDYING IN AUSTRALIA. A Guide for International Students

By Teresa De Fazio. Published by Allen & Unwin

Review by Gail Wilson

I have had many opportunities to work with international students in different educational contexts. Often times it has been difficult to find the appropriate resources to support these students particularly in their early years of study at tertiary level. This book certainly fills that gap.

The author, Teresa De Fazio teaches at the Centre for Educational Development and also in the Graduate Diploma in Education at the Victoria University of Technology. The biographical details provided on the cover jacket of the book indicate that Elizabeth has extensive work experience with students from non-English speaking backgrounds and the basis of the book is experience and ideas gained from 15 years teaching experience.

The aim of the text is to assist the adjustment process to the Australian education context for international students in both TAFE and university.

The book is practical, written in clear, informal language, and contains helpful chapters to guide the international student through various aspects of tertiary study. The experience of the author shows in its practical discussion of problems encountered particularly by international students.

Studying in Australia is divided into several chapters: The Australian tertiary education system, Choosing to study in Australia, Participating in classes, Note-taking Skills, Reading at Tertiary Level, Developing Writing Skills, Report Writing, Referencing, Giving Presentations, Organising Study Time, Using the Library, Assessment, Postgraduate Studies, and Using Technology. Helpful appendices address, among others, Australian idioms and commonly used instruction words. A glossary and useful references are also included.

One of the selling points of this book is its use of headings and samples to illustrate particular points. For example,

in the chapter on Developing Writing Skills, the author draws on specific research done on different writing conventions. Students have samples of different writing conventions - Arabic, Asian, Russian and Southern European. Differences between these and English writing traditions are discussed.

While there are other guides on the bookshelf to tempt both international students and lecturers who work with them, this text is well worth purchasing. Its clear style, easy to follow format and wide coverage of important topics clearly make it a highly recommended text for international students in foundation or entry level studies.

Gail Wilson is Dean of Studies, The Blue Mountain International Hotel Management School, Leura NSW. She also lectures in Employment Relations and Planning and Management Change.

Doing Postgraduate Research In Australia

by Kate Stevens and Christine Asmar., Melbourne University Press, 1999.

Review by Melanie Purcell

Postgraduate research has always been an environment fraught with tensions and deliberations that for many, can become a stress filled experience where time seems to speed by at exponential rates and ones own sense of direction can become a challenging catharsis of self revelatory exploration. For some the process is an exciting expansion into the consolidation of ideas that have been the object of ones thoughts for many years. For many, the thesis seems to be a force in itself, a coalescence of an entity that seems to acquire a life of its own as it forms gradually through the lengthy gestation period the we have committed ourselves to. The challenge that many face, is that

the gestation of such a project becomes far more than a process of writing up research results that will contribute to the existing body of knowledge in that chosen field. It inevitably becomes a process of self exploration and maturation that particularly if successful, is potentially the most exhilarating experience that an individual can have, and as Kate Stevens and Christine Asmar suggest, this experience is both the end of an extraordinary process, and the beginning of one's fullness of self, where the future will see the expression of the wisdom that has been born.

Negotiating such a terrain is certainly no easy task. Writing blocks can throw you into self doubt, despair

and procrastination. Self direction can seem to expose the individual to an infinite mesh of possibilities that can cause further consternation and for this very reason, the guidance that is offered in "Doing Postgraduate Research In Australia", is a valuable contribution to educational resources.

Unlike many guides that seem to dryly address the obvious problems that many face when they undertake such research, Stevens and Asmar consider a plethora of issues that make it a valuable resource for candidates that are not only in the early stages of research, but also for those who are, like myself, in their final year. With a humorous and light tone, everything seems to be addressed



in a concise and readable fashion. The information is presented in such a way that, through the use of tables and lists of additional resources added to the end of each chapter, the book also becomes an accessible quick reference guide as well as a checklist.

The authors address topics such as the nature of the University system and resources that are available, organisation of time and material, the refining of ones focus and potential ethical considerations, research techniques, and considerations for presentations and professional activities that involve conferences, seminars, and publishing. With topics concerning time management, traditional and electronic research, the value of teaching, motivation and post degree opportunities, there is little that has not been considered.

The material is presented in a clear and straightforward manner and uses anecdotal quotes that illustrate the dynamics such a project has and ways that individuals have approached various challenges that are inevitably incurred

through such a lengthy process. By humorously dealing with procrastination, general morale, writing blocks and ways of overcoming the seemingly endless drudgery of refining the end product, with a dedication to providing solutions for "when things go wrong" the authors have provided an exceptional and practical guide.

University research is a way of life that extends over a large time period and often effects all who are close to the candidate. With current trends, the average researcher is often engaged in full-time employment and also has family commitments that can cause serious tension. The effect of such an intense focus is profound and can be transformational. To find a guide that approaches these considerations is useful simply in the fact that such problems are recognised and discussed. The sense of alienation that is often felt by a student who is also a mother and constrained by the responsibilities that are constantly in need of attention, and the lack of extended periods of unbroken study time, can be profound and is often seen as a gross disadvantage. Addressing this

situation and providing tools alleviates the sense of isolation.

The book is a source of inspiration and throughout its text there is a motivational tone that resonates a deep sense of support and encouragement. This book has for me become a source of light that I now clearly see approaching me. As I untangle the difficulties of my final process of drafting and consolidation, it has guided me through perhaps the most treacherous of terrains, facing completion, and for this I would like the opportunity to thank them.

Melanie Purcell is a doctoral student in Philosophy at the University of Newcastle. In 1999 she was awarded one of the HERDSA Conference Grants to Postgraduate students.

Managing Quality and Standards

By C. Liston Buckingham: Open University Press, 1999. ISBN 0 335 20208 X (pb). 192pps. RRP Aus\$49.95

Reviewed by Di Adams

This book is written for managers in universities and colleges. It purports to offer action guidelines, and procedures for demonstrating improved performance via the application of standards for post-secondary institutions.

The book is divided into eight chapters, which cover definitions of terms used; a history of the "quality debate"; an international overview; quality improvements in educational environments; quality management and planning; benchmarking and best practice; models; and a summary.

Some of the objectives of this book, as expressed in the preface, are to dispel fear and discomfort and to increase knowledge and understanding of the practice of managing quality and standards. These objectives are not fully attained. I found the sections on accreditation and on evaluation confusing rather than enlightening, as the focus meanders between individual

and institution. There seems to be a jump between quality issues for individual student grading and the quality systems for the institutional processes, which offers an opportunity to explore the tensions between academic or professional judgements and those of the institutional management.

As the concept of quality for post-secondary education is integral to the book, it is a pity that the work on quality, published by Diana Green in the UK, is not used. Some of her work is listed in the bibliography, but Green's multiple definitions of quality are passed over for definitions arising from industrial texts and the World Book Dictionary. It doesn't discuss the role of the quality debate for its symbolic value, as a legitimator of policies, as a mechanism to constrain growth, or as a mechanism to bring together all stakeholders, although the latter mechanism is implied in some parts of the book.

The most useful section of the book

is that which deals with best practice. The key points of leadership; strategy, policy and planning; information and analysis; people; client focus; quality of process, product and service; and organisational performance provide some guiding questions for institutions wishing to establish or refine their quality systems. Chapter 7, Models to Consider, describes models such as Total Quality Management (TQM), Total Service Quality (TSQ), ISO9000, and Cycle Time Reduction (CTR). However this chapter does not provide a convincing argument for the usefulness of any of these models individually, nor for a synthesised model.

There are many assertions made in this book, some of which are unsupported by evidence, eg "governments impose more and more uniformity" (p25); and others have inducted a general principle from a single specific study. For example, the statement about review of health professional education programs:



"Indeed, no significant correlation between individuals' grades and clinical competence has been found." (p35) is based on a single study of physical therapy students in 1988. There is also a statement that "sector-wide performance indicators are being developed" [my emphasis] in response to the objectives enunciated by the Australian government "relevant minister" in 1996 (p45). Such a statement implies that there had been no previous development of performance indicators, such as the Linke document of 1991 for DEET, or the HEC commissioned report #51, or the key learning outcomes from the seven projects on quality management of university teaching and learning from the Eltham Symposium of 1995.

The tension between academic cultural values and those of the managers in higher education is mentioned, but not addressed in any

depth, nor are the lessons from the literature on implementation theory evident in this publication. However, it may be carping to highlight omissions rather than to concentrate on the contents. For a listing of current theories and models of managing quality in generic organisations, this is possibly a useful resource. It provides a different perspective to the specifically higher education models as published by Becher and Kogan on Process and Structure in Higher Education (1992) and by Kogan, Moses and El-Khawas on Staffing Higher Education (1994). The more recent publication by DETYA on Benchmarking may be a useful complement to the section of best practice from this book.

The most serious flaw of this book is the quality of editing. It would have benefitted from the services of a professional editor. Apart from many

basic grammatical mistakes (lack of subject-verb agreement; relative pronouns with ambiguous antecedents; etc), many of the sentences are clumsy and confused, requiring several readings to clarify meaning (eg final paragraph p67). This is just not acceptable for a book on quality and standards.

References

- Becher, T. and Kogan, M. (1992) Process and Structure in Higher Education. London: Routledge (2nd edition)
- Kogan, M., Moses, I., and El-Khawas, E. (1994). Staffing Higher Education: Meeting New Challenges. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Di Adams is a Lecturer in Higher Education at the University of Canberra.

HERDSA News Subscriptions

A subscription service has been introduced, for institutions wishing to purchase *HERDSA News*. This is to meet the demand for *HERDSA News* to be available on library shelves, and is a similar service to the *HERD* journal subscription available to institutions through Taylor and Francis. (Currently *HERDSA News* is a benefit of *HERDSA* membership, which is open to individuals but not to institutions.)

For further details of the *HERDSA News* subscription service see
<http://www.hersda.org.au/newslet.htm>

News of HERDSA Branches

NEW ZEALAND

The HERDSA NZ Committee members for 2000 are:

Mary Melrose

(Chairperson)

Auckland University of Technology

Jane Khull

(Secretary)

Auckland University of Technology

Maureen Reid

(Treasurer)

Auckland University of Technology

Stanley Frielick

(The University of Auckland)

Reynold MacPherson

(The University of Auckland)

Mark Barrow

(UNITEC)

Jane Gunn-Lewis

(UNITEC)

Phil Ker

(Auckland University of Technology)

Shona Little

(Auckland University of Technology)

Lorraine Parker

(Auckland University of Technology)

Garry Russell

(Auckland University of Technology)

John Melrose

(Manukau Institute of Technology)

Colleen McMurchy-Pilkington

(Auckland College of Education)

Gordon Suddaby

(Massey University)

Eileen Piggot-Irvine

(Massey University)

Alison Viskovic

(Massey Wellington)

Helen Matthews

(Christchurch Polytechnic)

Neil Haigh

(Waikato University)

Pip Bruce-Ferguson

(Waikato Polytechnic)

Chris Heath

(Otago University)

The NZ Branch expresses their thanks to Colleen McMurchy-Pilkington (ex-treasurer) and Stanley Frielick (ex-secretary) for their sustained hard work. We welcome Maureen Reid and Jane Khull to these positions. The committee farewells Nancy de Freitas

and Dave Waldron and thanks them for their professional efforts (Nancy as leader of a SIG and Dave as ex-secretary).

HERDSA events for NZ members in 2000 are still in the planning stage.

Arrangements for the 2000 HERDSA visiting scholar, Charles Glassick, to travel to venues around NZ are progressing. A Friday night/Saturday morning seminar in Auckland is being planned around the 2000 Conference theme of Flexible Learning. It is hoped that this might be mirrored in more than one city in NZ, with cooperation between HERDSA committee members and others.

Local workshops on how to plan and present a conference presentation may be held late in the year to encourage beginning researchers to attend the 2001 conference, when the theme for that has been decided.

Last year's series of seminars where politicians presented their views and answered questions on tertiary education policy before the NZ election was very successful. Steve Maharey, the Minister of Tertiary Education in the new Labour Government, will be invited back to Auckland to discuss the implementation of new policies, including the new Tertiary Education Commission. We suggest that groups of members in other NZ Centres organise a similar event. A working title for the event might be - "So now you are in power, given the promises you made and your philosophical position, what changes are occurring in NZ tertiary education?"

Dr Mary Melrose Chairperson.

Email: mary.melrose@aut.ac.nz

HONG KONG

Jonathon Marsh will be leaving Hong Kong shortly to take up a post in the United Arab Emirates so the role of the President has recently passed on to Dr. Aggi Tiwari, in the Department of Nursing at Hong Kong University (afyitiwar@hkuec.hku.hk).

Activities so far this year have been restricted to planning a series of dinner talks. These are planned as regular events throughout the year, each being hosted by one of the ten tertiary institutions in Hong Kong. Our speakers are usually

visiting Hong Kong for other reasons (usually as consultants to one or other of the institutions) and we prevail upon them to give a HERDSA talk at no cost. Most agree. We hosted a very successful one here at Hong Kong University with Dr. Angela Brew, (Topic: Best Practice in Assessment: What We Can Learn from Australian Universities) on January 26. Another one is planned with Dr. Michael Theall, (Director, Center for Teaching and Learning, University of Illinois at Springfield), for March 21 (Topic: The courage of scholarship: where Palmer and Boyer meet). Others are still to be decided.

Two recent publications may be of interest.

Kelly M. and Marsh J. (1999) *Going On-line with Student Evaluation of Teaching, Evaluation of the Student Experience Project Series, Vol. 6, Centre for the Enhancement Of Learning and Teaching, City University of Hong Kong*

James J. (ed.) 1999, *Quality in Teaching and Learning: A collection of refereed papers from the first conference on Quality in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, 10-12 December, 1998, Hong Kong SAR, China, Reprographics Unit, Hong Kong Polytechnic University.*

Jonathon Marsh

QUEENSLAND

At the AGM in November last year Nicola Yelland was elected as President, Carol Bowie as Treasurer and Jo Brownlee as Secretary for the Queensland Branch of HERDSA.

The main activity of the year centres around the organization the 2000ASET/HERDSA international conference. We have received over 200 abstracts for long and short papers, workshops and poster sessions and these are currently being refereed by a team of reviewers. The program committee meet on March 15 to allocate successful presentations to specific timeslots and we are confident of staging an interesting and provocative program for delegates to Toowoomba from July 2 to 5.

Nicola Yelland



Special Interest Groups

HELM

(Higher Education Leadership and Management)

Please note that the convenor of this SIG is now located at the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji. Her email address is clifford_v@usp.ac.fj

Student Learning

At the 1999 HERDSA Conference the Student Learning Group presented a series of papers at one of the sessions. It is hoped to repeat this at the July conference. Those wishing to have their papers scheduled for this special session should indicate this to the organisers when they submit them.

Convenor: Gillian Boulton-Lewis, Queensland University of Technology.

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

UNILEARN (Language and Learning)

On 10 December 1999, a meeting of the Language and Learning Special Interest Group was held at the Learning Centre, The University of Sydney. In the morning, participants shared information about activities in the various learning centres at the Australian Catholic University, the University of NSW, The University of Wollongong, The University of Technology, Sydney, The University of Western Sydney (Nepean), The University of Western Sydney (Macarthur), and The University of Newcastle.

Following a delicious morning tea, various presentations were made:

Sally Humphrey, from The Learning Centre at The University of Sydney, briefly described her current research, which consists of a comparative study of the academic demands of writing in a number of disciplines with particular focus on the transition from school to first year university.

The Position of Academic Language & Learning Skills Advisers in Australian Universities

Erst Carmichael, from the University of Western Sydney (Nepean), discussed the current draft of The

Position of Academic Language & Learning Skills Advisers in Australian Universities. In the ensuing discussion on this position paper, it was noted that the roles and activities of language and learning advisers continue to be dictated primarily by the policies of individual institutions, and that a more consistent national perspective on learning skills advising in universities needs to be achieved.

In order to achieve more clarity, it was suggested that the current position paper be re-drafted into two versions, one of which emphasizes professional values, and the other focussing on industrial aspects relating to the position of academic skills advisers in universities in Australia. These documents will then be presented to HERDSA and to the NTEU later this year. Copy of the re-worked position papers will be circulated through Unilearn or can be obtained from Anita van der Wal (contact details below).

Following the morning meeting, participants enjoyed the end-of-year Christmas lunch off campus. The day confirmed our enthusiasm for our activities, research interests, and collegial collaboration.

Dr. Anita van der Wal

National Convenor, Language and Learning Special Interest Group

The Learning Skills Group

The University of Newcastle

Callaghan NSW 2308

Phone: 02 4921 5890

Fax: 02 4921 6994

Email: alaev@cc.newcastle.edu.au

Meetings of the NSW/ACT HERDSA Language and Learning Special Interest Group will be held:

Friday 14 April 2000

University of Western Sydney (Rydalmere Campus)

Friday 9 June 2000

Australian National University

To be confirmed: September 2000 (Date unknown)

University of New South Wales

For further details of NSW/ACT meetings contact:

John Grierson, (Convenor, NSW/ACT Language and Learning SIG)

Learning Development Centre

University of Western Sydney, Macarthur

PO Box 555, Campbelltown, NSW, Australia

Phone: (02) 9772 6401

Fax: (02) 9773 5543

E-mail: j.grierson@uws.edu.au

National Language and Academic Skills Conference.

The National Language and Academic Skills conference, convened by Language and Learning Services, Monash University, was held in Melbourne, 25 and 26 November, 1999, in the tranquil garden setting of the Corpus Christi College Conference Centre.

Over the two days, delegates considered the conference theme of "Language and Learning, the Learning Dimensions of our Work". Keynote speakers addressed four sub-themes: Graham Webb of Monash University spoke on "Theories of Learning", Lesleyanne Hawthorne of the University of Melbourne on "Cultures of Learning", Gordon Taylor, formerly of Monash University, considered "Generic and Discipline-specific Learning", while Carmel McNaught of RMIT University discussed "Flexible Learning". Papers addressed these themes. Evaluations indicate that the delegates enjoyed the Corpus Christi setting, found the conference stimulating and useful, and appreciated the opportunity to catch up and share stories with fellow "Language and Learners".

Refereed Proceedings, edited by the conference organisers, Glenda Crosling, Tim Moore and Sheila Vance, will be available for a cost of \$30 later this year. Enquiries about the Proceedings can be directed to Bennos Cousins, Language and Learning Services, Monash University, phone (03) 9903 2507, or Bennos.Cousins@celts.monash.edu.au



Notes from the HERDSA Executive

The HERDSA Executive Committee met at the University of Sydney last November. Here are some notes of Executive business not covered by articles elsewhere in this News:

Website developments

HERDSA members are now able to be contacted by their branch secretary or convenor, via an email. This facility has been developed through the new arrangements installed to the member's section on the HERDSA website. In addition, the executive can now exchange information and discussion on the Executive Forum section.

It was also agreed to obtain better information about numbers and source of users of the HERDSA website, as there is an ongoing question of whether HERDSA News items should be published electronically. The Executive thanked Roger Landbeck for his work on the News.

Dividing conference profits

It was agreed that after all accounts had been paid, the surplus generated from a conference was to be split 25% to HERDSA national and 75% retained by branch, to support branch initiatives.

HERD journal

The 2000 special issue (July) will focus on the scholarship of teaching and learning.

HERDSA Green and Gold Guides

As Kym Fraser has tendered her resignation after many years of work, the President, Angela Brew thanked Kym for her valiant and impressive work as Green and Gold Guides editor.

Now to be called HERDSA Occasional Papers, and incorporate the Guides and other publications. Three co-editors were appointed and welcomed: Susan Hayes, Allan Goody and Peter Hodder, with Susan as the convening editor.

(shayes@lucy.cc.swin.edu.au)

The new publications co-editors will explore the direction and purpose of

HERDSA publications. Provide a proposal for the future of HERDSA Occasional Publications at the next meeting.

HERDSA Constitution

The Executive considered changes to the HERDSA constitution required for incorporation in the ACT. The amended constitution is being circulated to all members and your comments and vote are welcomed.

Strengthening bilateral support

In relation to strengthening bilateral support and communication with similar organisations (eg SEDA, POD, SARRDHE) it was agreed to obtain details of where new international members have come from over the past few years and investigate the feasibility and financial implications of strategies such as reduced conference registration rates & provision of newsletter & journal only, for members of overseas organisations, similar to HERDSA.

The executive will also initiate discussion on members rates for conference attendance with such organisations.

The Australian Goods and Services Tax

The introduction of the Australian GST will impact many facets of HERDSA work. The Treasurer, Barbara Black, reported that HERDSA would need to register with the Australian Tax Office (ATO), as then tax credits as well as liabilities are payable.

The Office has started collecting pro-rata GST on membership renewals and fees. While the ATO still has not completed all the guidelines, it would appear from the information available that exact GST costs should be passed on to members rather than rounding off. The price structure on HERDSA membership should clarify that the standard membership fee is still \$95.

HERDSA'S role in responding to government policy

The Executive was asked to consider HERDSA's role and resources for

responding to government policy initiatives. While HERDSA is not primarily a political organisation, it does have a role in debate and discussion on higher education issues. While HERDSA already has the ability to produce papers, being more influential on a political level given current resources, would need a new strategy.

How the Executive works

After much discussion about the work of the Executive it became clear that effective work happens when individuals have a definite task to move forward.

A different structure emerged, linked clearly to HERDSA's strategic plan:

1. A series of Ongoing Activities and Responsibilities (OARs).

- Conference convening
- Conference host identification and liaison -
- Conference guidelines
- President
- Executive Officer (previously called Secretary)
- Treasurer
- HERD editor
- News
- Occasional publications
- Advertising publications
- Conference publications
- Visiting Scholar
- Postgraduate awards
- Research prize
- Liaising with other institutions/ organisations
- Office liaison
- Office management
- Organisation management
- Web development and maintenance
- Branches, SIGs liaison & information folder

2. New Annual Projects (NAPs). These would be proposed and selected within the Executive according to clear criteria based on (i) the extent to which the project would further HERDSA's strategic plan (ii) resource requirements.

Commencing with the August 2000 edition there will be a series of three issues focusing on the theme

Academic Life Today

August 2000

Research in Academic Life

Articles will include

Managing academic life by Royce Sadler. An overview for the series.

The Changing Research Culture by Angela Brew

Research from the institutional viewpoint.

Case Studies from academics about their experiences of getting on the research track.

November 2000

The Academic in Administration

April 2001

Professional Service to the Community

Suggestions of the names of possible contributors to the November 2000 and the April 2001 editions would be gratefully received by the Editor.

Individual Membership Application

Australian members

Membership	HERSDA	Add	TOTAL
Type	fee	10% GST	
Standard	\$95	\$9.50	
Retiree \$75	\$75	\$7.50	\$82.50
Student \$75	\$75	\$7.50	\$82.50

Overseas member AUD\$104.50 or AUD\$82.50

New Zealand members NZ\$104.50 or NZ\$82.50

☐ Standard ☐ Student ☐ Retiree

Title Given Name

Family Name

Address

State..... Postcode

Country

Institution

Tel +.....(.....).....

Fax +.....(.....).....

Email

Payment enclosed

	Standard	Student/Retiree
Australian members	☐ AUD\$104.50	or ☐ AUD\$82.50
Overseas members	☐ AUD\$104.50	or ☐ AUD\$82.50
New Zealand members	☐ NZ \$104.50	or ☐ NZ \$82.50

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