

# HERDSA connect

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## Inside

Tim Flannery on global warming and the curriculum; Patrick Blessinger's higher ideal for higher education; Marcia Devlin on performance measures and funding; HERDSA conference highlights; Students as partners; A university teaching MOOC



## From the Editor Maureen Bell

What's in a name? asks Shakespeare's Juliet. HERDSA NEWS is now *HERDSA CONNECT*. I think this new title more closely reflects what our magazine is all about – connecting the HERDSA community with each other and to ideas and practices in higher education policy and practice, as well as offering ideas to interested readers around the world.

The annual HERDSA Conference is a wonderful opportunity to meet new enthusiastic colleagues and encounter the scholarly energy that makes HERDSA such a worthwhile organisation. From the opening Welcome to Country from Koorana woman Katrina Karlapina Power, to the final keynote speech from Emeritus Professor Ronald Barnett of University College, London; the Adelaide Conference was buzzing with exciting ideas and friendly discussion. And of course HERDSA has to be one of the friendliest conferences for first-time delegates. So it is appropriate that this edition

includes a section offering some conference highlights including comment from keynote speaker and former Australian of the Year Professor Tim Flannery.

Reflections from some of our new HERDSA members will give you a flavour of the conference. Bill Flanik from Monash University for example was pleased to encounter an “unpretentious, collegial, and inclusive community” while Franziska Lessky from Vienna University of Economics and Business found a “great and open-minded community”. Angela Ziebell from Monash University and Janine Senekal from the University of the Western Cape networked through the conference ‘Buddy program’ that links up first-time conference goers at the new members breakfast. Thanks to conference photographer Declan Wall we have a fine photographic record of that energy.

Our second feature article from internationally well-known writer on higher education Patrick Blessinger, founder of the International Higher Education Teaching and Learning Association. Some of you will know his *Higher Education Tomorrow* academic blog on issues affecting global higher education and its future.

Professor Marcia Devlin is a well-known commentator on higher education policy and issues. It is a pleasure to welcome Marcia to our great ‘team’ of regular columnists.

Supporting and sustaining ongoing research and development to improve the quality of higher education is HERDSA's mission. Please email me with your ideas for articles in future editions of HERDSA CONNECT.

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2019 conference organisers. Photo  
Declan Wall.

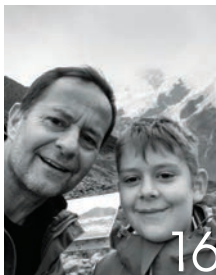
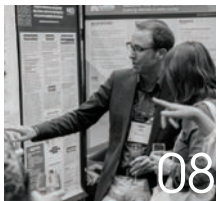
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## From the President

In the past two months I attended the HERDSA conference in Adelaide and the ICED (International Consortium for Educational Development) conference in Atlanta. Both conferences themes included values in, and the (re)valuing of, higher education and the voices, identities and power in a changing higher education environment. The presentations and discussion gave rise to serious reflection about the work we do, the outcomes of that work and how we – and we in the broadest sense – work together and unfortunately at times, against each other.

For me, the one thing that ran through both conferences was the ethic of care. Care is something that, in these “chaotic but hopeful” times as described by Ron Barnett in his keynote address at the HERDSA conference, I have witnessed particularly towards students. On the other hand, far too often I see a lack of care towards and between staff.

In her thoughtful, provocative and moving keynote address at the HERDSA conference, Barbara Grant painted a troubling scenario of the potential harm to staff of job cuts and other forms of change in the academy and encouraged better, more caring approaches to dealing with these issues. Tim Flannery urged us to see teaching about climate change across the curriculum as a responsibility of the academy. If we

take that ‘responsibility’ further, we should be addressing a range of issues in the curriculum that have value for our communities including, for example, the plight of displaced citizens across the world, homelessness, privilege and exclusion.

These calls for different thinking and approaches speak to the ethic of care, yet we generally don’t make a purposeful effort to bring values such as the caring into the consciousness of our students. While colleagues will argue that the attributes we do incorporate into our curriculum are inextricably intertwined with values (such as caring), I wonder whether we gloss over these values because they are too hard to quantify and teach and assess?

Even if we do focus on these values for our students we need to broaden our own thinking beyond disciplinary content to make our institutions, and ourselves, more responsive and demonstrate the caring that makes our world a little better. Jan Orrell facilitated a workshop at the HERDSA conference on *Re-valuing otherness and caring in universities* (I never stop learning from Jan). It was an opportunity to explore how our institutions currently demonstrate the ethic of care and what we do in our work that exhibits a practice of caring. Jan asked us to re-imagine the university that practices an ethic of

care and cited the work of Joan C. Tronto (2013, 1993) as a good starting point for further discussion.

Of course, students often consider these values themselves which to me demonstrates a maturity and knowing of the outcomes they want from their education. Mollie Dollinger, in her award winning HERDSA paper *Higher education’s value: in the experience itself* suggests that we don’t communicate, or accommodate, the nature of “value within the higher education experience” to our students. She highlights the range of values that students are seeking. Thoughts about values in higher education at the very least suggest that institutions should not be locked into confining structures that leave no room for fostering these values such as care.

Turning to academic development and the ICED conference, the ethic of care and inclusion was evident throughout. As part of a thought-provoking keynote panel that addressed the conference themes, Mary Deane Sorcinelli proposed that “educational development is characterized by joy, trust, courage, connectedness, openness, collaboration and community. And what fosters or is an outcome of these characteristics? Caring!

And so we turn to hope, a topic which I have addressed in a previous column. Peter Felton closed his excellent keynote address at the ICED conference by adding hope as another characteristic of educational development to Mary Deane Sorcinelli’s list. He left us on a positive note for these chaotic times quoting Solnit (2016). “To hope is to gamble. It’s to bet on the future, on your desires, on the possibility that an open heart and uncertainty is better than gloom and safety. Hope calls for action.” I would add that hope requires an ethic of care to sustain and carry that hope into action.

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# Across the curriculum Across the globe

Tim Flannery

With the permission of Professor Tim Flannery, HERDSA CONNECT provides a summary of some of the themes from his keynote address at the Adelaide conference, 2018.

There is one particular aspect of societal challenge that is very deep and broad and also extremely challenging for higher education and that is climate change. By the 2030s there will be globally disastrous shifts if we don't act. Carbon negative technologies are going to underpin our economy in the future and these technologies will be greatest employment sector. But higher education not just skilling people up for their future careers. We also help deliver inspiration. How many of you have met students who said "I remember that course" or "I remember that lecture, it changed my life, changed my view". We are dealing with people who are in that very plastic frame of mind, quite often they are just entering the adult world, seeking something to dedicate their lives to even though they may not think of it in those terms. So when we offer them higher education we offer them inspiration as well as a straightforward didactic education.

We are moving into a new era of the relationship between humans and the planet and indeed between humans and humans. Climate change impacts have now been documented across every ecosystem on earth. We are in a period of momentous change and a big aspect of that change deals with the way we are affecting our climate. Are we going to have to step in and start regulating our activities globally? We are out of carbon budget and we are committed to 2 degrees of warming. That is a tough message to give to students. What do we do as a society with this reality? We need to work together to solve the problem. We need to work together to get the solutions.

One cause for optimism is the clean energy revolution. Here is the potential and opportunity for student to feel they are doing something good for society and the planet. Can we inspire them to study and work within the pathways related to re-forestation, soil carbon, seaweed farming, silicate rocks, food security, wind, solar, electric vehicles, green energy, or building and design?

But these are not just the problems of science, engineering and technology. The solutions will come from a broader base including geography, IT, sociology and psychology, so cross-disciplinary teams are needed to solve the planet's problems. Climate change is such a significant global challenge that I would love to see climate change integrated across the curriculum.

More broadly within the higher education sector universities need to be up to scratch in their responsibilities. A university should act as a demonstration of how the world should be in all its practices. They should be models for what we think the world should look like and the way we treat each other. Universities owe it to our children to do research on these potentials.

People ask me what I do to inspire learners. In my own personal life I try to do the right thing. Students have great sensitivity to "do as I do" not "do as I say". I talk to students about my own experiences in early start-ups, to bridge the gap between academia and those out there trying to develop solutions. I like to ask my students to consider the changes that have taken place over the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Imagine the 1918 geography map of the world based on political entities that seemed so fixed at the time. How could people have imagined the changes in medicine, technology, geography and society that would come so quickly? As educators we can give them optimism that they can change world events and inspiration to act.

Professor Tim Flannery, Australian of the year (2007) is a scientist, environmentalist and conservationist. Tim's former roles include Director of the South Australian Museum, Advisor on climate change to the former labour government SA and Chief Climate Commissioner. Tim is founder and head of the Australian Climate Council.

## Links

Climate Change  
World in the 21st Century

More on sustainable development  
history of sustainable development  
unimelb.edu.au/home





## A high education at the beginning

## higher

Higher education is in the midst of a revolution. The number of students participating in higher education worldwide is expected to grow from 28 million in 1970 to 262 million by 2025. This growth rate represents an immense increase in the global demand for higher education. This demand has been fueled by far-reaching political, economic, social, and technological changes, including legal reforms, economic competition, social movements, and technological innovations.

The increasing demand for higher education suggests that as nations become more globalised and democratised, more people participate in higher education of all types to equip themselves with the knowledge and skills needed to better function and compete in an increasingly globalised and complex world. Governments and higher education institutions have responded to these changes by implementing new models to provision and delivery education, creating new academic programs and student services, developing internationalisation strategies and global research partnerships, and

forging new inter-institutional teaching and learning collaborations.

As a result, higher education has moved, over the last century, from an elitist to a mass to a universal model of access and the playing field for many colleges and universities is now a global one. In an increasingly hyperconnected global knowledge society, it is important for those working in higher education to not only understand the antecedents and consequences of these changes but also to use that knowledge to steer the on-going development of higher education in the right direction. This implies that higher education leaders, professors, students, and other stakeholders should embrace a humanistic vision of higher education.

Humanism can be many things to many people – it can be defined as a philosophy, a paradigm, a value system, a model, a conceptual framework, a pedagogical approach, and a learning theory. Furthermore, humanism is an umbrella term encompassing several different types of humanism (for instance, cultural, secular, religious, literary, naturalistic), each with its

own worldview. Humanism has a long history stretching over many years, from the Ancient Period (circa 3600 BCE to 500 CE) with the Greek and Roman philosophers, to the Medieval Period (circa 500 CE to 1450 CE) with the Scholastic and Renaissance movements, to the Modern Era (circa 1450 CE to present) with the Reformation, the Scientific Revolution, and the Enlightenment, among other developments. As such, humanism tended to reflect the particular characteristics of the era.

Notwithstanding the varied and intersecting meanings of humanism, its central focus has been on human nature – that is, what does it mean to be human – and the world that humans occupy. Initially, humanism was a mode of inquiry that focused on increasing one's self-awareness but as societies became more democratic and interconnected it gradually evolved into a broader understanding of human rights, global humanity, and one's role in humanity.

As a consequence, the modern notion of humanism centers on those core qualities in all humans: agency, dignity, and development. Humanism today is primarily concerned with addressing contemporary human needs, concerns, and problems. Therefore, one of the great challenges for humanity is to continually strengthen the democratic social contract by making societies more inclusive, equitable, and just.

The more we learn about the world and the more interconnected the world becomes, the smaller it becomes, and as the world becomes smaller, societies become more interdependent. In this brave new world, humanity is confronted with extraordinary challenges such as nuclear proliferation, destructive climate change, and economic and humanitarian catastrophes that must be addressed collectively.

These challenges imply the necessity of a human rights-based approach to human affairs that is focused on improving political and social relations, global sustainable development, and lifelong learning for all. Higher education plays a vital role in shaping this brave new world. Therefore, creating a renewed

vision of humanistic higher education has never been more important. Three major paradigm shifts have occurred as a result of recent changes taking place in higher education.

The first paradigm shift is the necessity of lifelong learning. With the rapid pace of change in knowledge production and dissemination, the shelf-life of knowledge and skills continues to decrease. Thus lifelong learning, including lifewide learning, has become so important in the lives of people that it is now recognised and treated as a basic human right. The diversification of institutional types and the vast range of program offerings in higher education makes it best positioned to address the lifelong learning needs of people.

The democratization of knowledge is another key paradigm shift. In the modern era, widening access to knowledge started with the printing revolution in Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and continues to be fuelled by the growing demand for knowledge and skills. Access to knowledge includes traditional credit-based college and university programs as well as open education resources. A comprehensive diversity of educational resources allows people to access much of the world's knowledge with just a smartphone or computer.

The development of the global knowledge society is the third shift. The degree of political, economic, social, and technological development of a nation depends largely on the quality of lifelong education available. Supranational organizations like the United Nations and World Trade Organisation were created to implement universal declarations and protocols needed for common areas of concern including world affairs, global communication, and international trade. These have further fuelled the rise of the global knowledge society. In the higher education space, global organizations like UNESCO, the International Association of Universities, and the Higher Education Teaching and Learning Association provide a mechanism to help educators move higher education in the right direction.

As with any system that experiences rapid change, the changes associated with these paradigm shifts have compelled higher education leaders, professors, students, and others to rethink higher education in ways that go beyond purely utilitarian views of education. In a rapidly evolving world, higher education must continually renew itself to address the changing contemporary needs of democratic societies. And given the importance of higher education to the on-going development and strength of democratic societies, higher education must renew itself with a renewed vision of humanistic higher education.

Humanistic higher education takes the idea of the Humboldtian model of education, that is, the integration of teaching, learning, and research, and integrates it with service to humanity. So, humanistic higher education is an approach or mode of inquiry for all academic disciplines. Science, engineering, and medicine, for instance, are as much concerned with applying knowledge to address human needs, concerns, and problems as other disciplines. Contemporary humanistic higher education is increasingly interdisciplinary and focused on the development of human capacity at all levels (individual, local, national, and international) and in all areas (politically, economically, socially, technologically, and ecologically) – an aim that higher education is well suited for.

Based on a long tradition of human inquiry and manifested in such documents as the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, humanistic higher education is based on core principles of our shared humanity: equity, inclusion, justice, responsibility, and sustainable development. Humanistic higher education respects the diversity of multiple knowledge systems and strives to go beyond nice sounding platitudes by putting knowledge into practical action for the benefit of

humanity and for the common good. As such, higher education that is based on humanistic principles strives for inclusive policy-making and meaningful lifelong learning opportunities for all.

With the gradual universalization of education at all levels, education has done more to lift people out of poverty in the past century than at any other point in human history. Education at all levels has done more to strengthen democracy than perhaps any other factor. Education is the engine that drives every form of development which is why it must be supported and expanded. Future higher education will require

*In a rapidly evolving world, higher education must continually renew itself to address the changing contemporary needs of democratic societies.*

a more fluid approach to learning that includes integrating formal, non-formal, and informal modes of learning and integrating different modes of disciplinary inquiry for a more holistic approach to solving complex global problems.

Learning is both a process and an outcome and it involves continually progressing to higher levels of critical and creative thinking which requires a collaborative environment of academic freedom. To this end, human creativity and critical thinking has become the most versatile renewable resource but it must be developed over the course of a lifetime. Education policy must therefore be visionary in its approach and inclusive in its implementation.

Dr. Patrick Blessinger is an adjunct associate professor of education at St. John's University, a math and science teacher with the New York State Education Department, and chief research scientist of the International Higher Education Teaching and Learning Association (in consultative status with the United Nations).

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## We m e c a n t r y

K t a n d p h o r

Koorina woman Katrina Karlapina Power spoke about the importance of higher education at the HERDSA 2018 conference. Here is an extract from the transcript of her powerful Welcome to Country.

I know plenty of professors that have never been to university. We need to find more ways to bring Aboriginal people into the University – that knowledge, wisdom, calmness, knowing – that's what we need amid that concrete.

Aboriginal males aged 25 – 29 have the highest suicide rate in Australia. We're seeing lots of women graduate through university but we need more men. So reflect, look around and see how many Aboriginal people sit with you, because exclusion is a form of discrimination. We have the same hopes and dreams for our babies that you have for yours. We have a long history of taking care of the planet, taking

care of each other, and teaching one another – recognising that we are born apprentices and we die apprentices.

In an Aboriginal child's life one of the most critical strengthening factors is that they have positive contact with an outside person, somebody outside of our own little camp that tells them that we matter and that we are more than just elite athletes and cultural entertainment. We stand in our own power and you mob have got a lot to learn from us.

Let us sit and talk together, let us eat and drink together, let us sing and dance together, and let us laugh and cry together; so that our children and their children's children can feel the wind and the breeze, find shelter in the storm and sunshine in the rain. But most especially that they can feel the warmth of a new campfire which we today have created for them.

## F's + HERDSA Conference Was it tw h it?





**Bill Flanik** is a Senior Lecturer of International Relations at Monash University.

My first HERDSA conference was both an affirmation and a challenge. The affirmation: teachers, and those who help them, are a lovely lot. I've worked a bit in teaching support and attended conferences in sister organisations in North America. In Adelaide I expected to find an unpretentious, collegial, and inclusive community, something I seldom encounter at academic conferences. And I did. What I *didn't* expect from HERDSA was to experience two very talented DJs amongst its members—colour me impressed.

But even the expertly-chosen tunes didn't quiet my troubled mind. I spent the conference mulling over David Graeber's recent piece in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, entitled, *Are You in a BS Job? In Academe, You're Hardly Alone*. Graeber argues that faculty and administrators spend increasing amounts of time performing work that they believe to be entirely pointless. One session in particular put this problem into stark relief. A presenter described her struggles to reconcile three sets of standards that governed her work. Those standards were conflicted and constantly in flux. I sat through the session in empathetic horror, and dashed off a one-word sentence in my notes: "Resistance?" But quite understandably the session didn't address the underlying causes of the problem, it was about managing it. That's what we do.

To be sure, what Graeber calls the 'bullshitization' of academic labour stems from many factors beyond our direct control: creeping managerialism, accountability regimes, and neo-liberalism more broadly (to name but a few). But if educators and educational developers don't call our institutions and governments on this "bullshit," who will? I left the conference inspired to at least try, in some small way.

**Franziska Lessky** is a Research and Teaching Associate at Vienna University of Economics and Business.

I had to travel around the globe to attend HERDSA, because Austria – where I am currently doing my PhD – and Australia are separated by more than 14,000 kilometers. While separated geographically, the names of both countries are only differentiated by one letter and perhaps this explains why I immediately felt a kind of affinity with Australia. In fact, I have never been part of such a great and open-minded community, in which all participants shared the same passion: contributing to (re)valuing higher education.

The pre-conference workshop of A/Prof Sarah O'Shea on First-in-Family students was a highlight. The value of this was the way in which she encouraged all participants to get involved and enabled a lot of enriching discussions to emerge during those three hours.

The keynotes of Professor Tim Flannery, A/Professor Barbara Grant and Professor Ronald Barnett were very interesting, covering so many different aspects of (re)valuing higher education. The wide range of current research and emerging initiatives presented during the sessions, was astonishing. On top of all that, the city of Adelaide was just breathtaking and an unplanned trip to Glenelg made the whole experience even more valuable.

So, I hope that this was maybe the first, but definitely not the last time I join HERDSA and its lovely community.

**Janine Senekal** is a researcher with the Human Sciences Research Council and a Masters student at the University of the Western Cape.

I was a first-time attendee of the HERDSA conference and found the professional buddy program to be beneficial. Firstly, this meant that I had personal contact with two people who would be attending the conference before it even started. This meant that arriving there on my own was less daunting, knowing that there were two

people I could connect with. The new members breakfast was a good way to ease into the conference, connecting with my buddies. It was reassuring to have familiar faces to greet every day, and to have a contact point for meeting other attendees.

Both my buddies had existing networks at the conference, so it was a helpful point of contact in terms of being introduced to various attendees. I thought that the buddy program was a great personal touch to the conference, and helps to integrate new members and first time attendees into the conference networks.

**Angela Ziebell** is an education developer with the School of Chemistry Monash University.

Like Janine this was my first HERDSA conference. Having been to a lot of conferences I know there is nothing better than having a network of people to connect into who can then introduce you to their network. The buddy program allowed me to do that, and as such I met a range of people I probably would not have if I didn't have a buddy as a starting point. It also gave the conference a very good feel for first timers.

Being able to meet buddies of buddies, made it feel a bit like an extended family, and I could see if I was to attend a few HERDSA conferences in a row I would be able to get to know most people. This is very beneficial in general, but particularly useful to anyone looking to move institutes or needing to find their next position. I'd highly recommend the program to attendees no matter what stage they are in their career.

#### Links

Grab a few theanarchistliba ry.org/liba ry/d vid ga eber-bullshit-jb s#to 1)

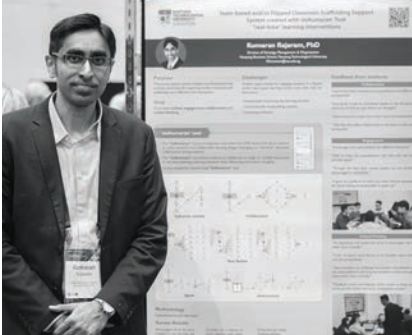
Photos:

1. Bill Flanik.
2. Franziska Lessky (l) with the Wollongong University contingent
3. Conference buddies (l to r) Suneeta Rekhari, Angela Ziebell, Janine Senekal, Kathryn Sutherland

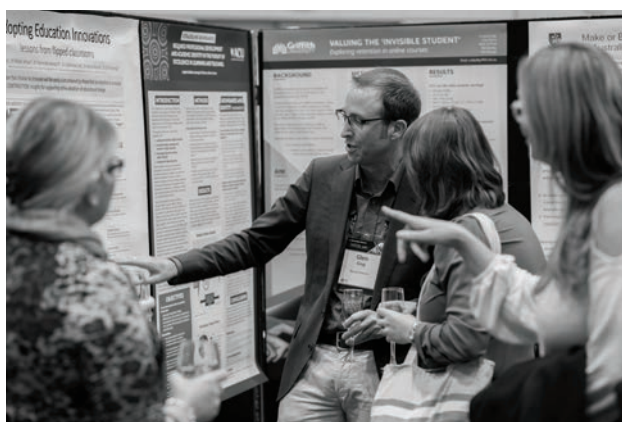


Declan Wall

Conference  
Debrief

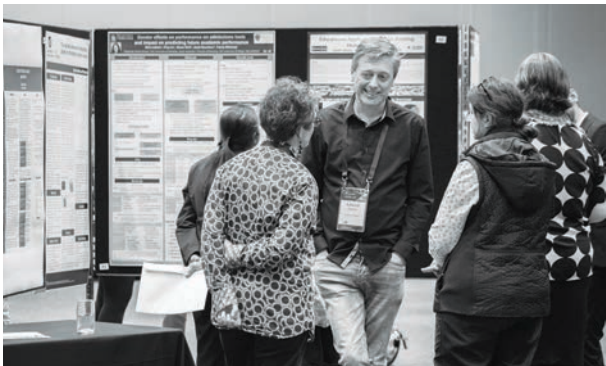








**Student Panel** Student Panel members with conference convenor Sharron King



**2019 HERDSA Conference**



**Next Generation, Higher Education:  
Challenges, Changes and  
Opportunities**

HERDSA Annual Conference  
2–5 July, 2019

Science Centre, University of Auckland  
Auckland, New Zealand

Please check the conference web site:  
[conference.hersa.org.au/2019](http://conference.hersa.org.au/2019)

# Prizes and Awards



## HERDSA Best Scholarly Paper

*Trudi Cooper*, Edith Cowan University-Student choice and skill shortages: some effects of demand-driven funding.

The paper provides timely and critical insights into the effects of demand-driven funding on specialist social professional courses and focuses on student choice and the responsiveness of universities to skill shortages in these fields. The implications of demand-driven policy and the capacity of higher education to meet the needs of employers and of society are analysed and recommendations made.

reflect on the value of higher education, the values stakeholders bring to this enterprise, and what it means to re-value higher education now and in the future'. Mollie Dollinger proposes a reconceptualization of the student experience.

## HERDSA Travel grant

*Tatum Adiningrum*, University of Auckland

## TAYLOR AND FRANCIS Travel grant

*Ursula Edgington*, Consultant

*Mollie Dollinger*, University of Melbourne

*Irena White*, Flinders University, Adelaide

## TAYLOR AND FRANCIS Best Paper by a New Researcher Prize

*Mollie Dollinger*, University of Melbourne - Higher Education's Value: In the Experience Itself.

The paper most powerfully addresses the conference theme, 'to consider and

## Best poster

*Ghaith Zakaria et al*, Victoria University

## Roger Landbeck HERDSA Professional Development Award

*Nehemiah Akia*, University of Papua New Guinea

1. Trudi Cooper
2. Mollie Dollinger
3. Tatum Adiningrum
4. Ursula Edgington
5. Irena White
6. Ghaith Zakaria
7. Nehemiah Akia



## Around the branches



Across Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong our branches offer added value to HERDSA members. HERDSA Branch Chairs are shown above, from left to right: Karin Oerlemans (ACT), Anna Siu Fong Kwan (HK), Sara Hammer (QLD), Joy McEntee and Andrea Duff (SA), Tracy Douglas (TAS), Theda Thomas (VIC), Melissa Davis (WA).

### ACT

Chair: Karin Oerlemans

ACT Branch is active and planning future events. TATAL is a focus for this branch.

[herdsa.act@gmail.com](mailto:herdsa.act@gmail.com)

### Hong Kong

Chair: Anna Siu Fong Kwan

To celebrate our Branch Secretary Dr. Peter LAU's conferment of his doctorate degree recently, HERDSA HK Branch ExCo designed a self-directed and 'sweet' learning experience for Peter. He can decide on *what* types of ice-cream, *how* and *when* to enjoy this experience. Branch Treasurer Dr. Theresa KWONG was invited to accompany Peter in this experience and deliver some encouraging and empowering remarks during the process. The e-publication related to the project for celebrating the 20th Anniversary of our Branch in 2017, Redesigning Student Learning Experience in Higher Education will be completed soon. We are planning the second round this project to be launched at the end of 2018.

HERDSA members working and visiting Hong Kong are most welcome to our activities. Please visit the website or contact Anna for the most up to date information.

<http://herdsahk.edublogs.org>

an hkw @a thw on

### Queensland

Chair: Sara Hammer

Queensland HERDSA is funding the keynote speaker, Professor Sally Kift for the *Queensland University Educators Showcase*, 27-28 September at the University of Sunshine Coast. With the retirement of the current branch Chair and movement of one other member to Western Australia, the Queensland Branch will shortly be calling for expressions of interest from HERDSA members to become part of the HERDSA Queensland executive. HERDSA Queensland recently established a LinkedIn group to share news and events with members and provide a platform for sharing learning and teaching scholarship and research opportunities. Please follow the LinkedIn address to join.

[www.linkedin.com/company/herdsa-queensland-branch/](http://www.linkedin.com/company/herdsa-queensland-branch/)

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### South Australia

Chair: Joy McEntee and Andrea Duff

The South Australian Branch has seen a very busy year. The HERDSA (Re)Valuing Higher Education Conference held at Adelaide Convention Centre in July welcomed over 370 national and international delegates. Highlights included keynote addresses from Professor Tim Flannery, A/Professor Barbara Grant and Professor Ron Barnett who reflected on climate change and 'academy change' in our dynamic -- and sometimes volatile -- sector. At the branch level, we enjoyed hosting Dawn Bennett from Curtin (EmployABILITY) and Jeannie Rea from the NTEU (Casualisation of staff).

As we said our wistful goodbyes to chair and deputy chair Sharron King (UniSA) and Ann Luzeckyj (Flinders) we saw Joy McEntee (Adelaide University) and Andrea Duff (UniSA) appointed co-chairs.

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### Tasmania

Chair: Tracy Douglas

HERDSA Tasmania members, Associate Professor Leonie Ellis and Dr Jo-Anne Kelder were recently appointed to the Tasmanian Institute of Learning and Teaching (TILT) at the University of Tasmania, Hobart. Leonie was appointed Associate Professor Curriculum Innovation and Design and Jo-Anne was appointed Senior Lecturer, Curriculum Innovation and Development. Working with Tracy Douglas, Jo is leading a SoTL professional learning circle at UTAS to develop a collaborative and collegial culture that supports and promotes SoT. Associate Professor Raj Eri was recently appointed Associate Head (Learning and Teaching) in the School of Health Sciences, University of Tasmania, Launceston. Raj is a successful scientific researcher and is also interested in SoTL research.

A number of new Tasmanian members attended the HERDSA conference in Adelaide which has significantly increased branch membership. Members developed connections with colleagues from other institutions which is a wonderful outcome. In August the branch held an event with presentations from the conference. Raj Eri and Tracy Douglas presented a seminar to the School of Health Sciences covering key themes from the HERDSA conference and the





benefits of being a HERDSA member.

t.douglas@utaas.edu.au

## Victoria

Chair: Theda Thomas

The Victoria Branch has held two events since March. The first was for Professor Dawn Bennett's *Developing Employability* roadshow in mid-April and the second was called *Enhancing student wellbeing: evidence-based strategies and support for students and educators*. The Keynote address was by Associate Professor Chi Baik from the Melbourne Centre for the Study of Higher Education at the University of Melbourne and highlighted the role of academics in enhancing student wellbeing. More details of her project can be found at: <https://melbourne-cshe.unimelb.edu.au/research/research-projects/experience/enhancing-student-wellbeing>. Talks ranged from research into student wellbeing in business and biomedicine by Associate Professor Colin Jevons and Dr Julia Choate; supporting students on clinical placements by Associate Professors Eleanor Flynn and Robyn Woodward-Kron; and supporting and encouraging resilience in students by Dr Margi Gibb. Future planned events include our annual *HERDSA/ACEN Snapshots* event and one on Academic Identity.

Theda Thomas

## Western Australia

Chair: Melissa Davis

Western Australia branch is active and planning future events.

m.davis@exchange.curtin.edu.au



# HERDSA New Zealand

HERDSA 2018 conference highlights from members of the NZ branch committee

## Kath Sutherland

I attended my first ever HERDSA conference in Auckland in 1998 as a PhD student. I'm a bit older and hopefully a bit wiser, but HERDSA always offers opportunities to reconnect with old friends and colleagues. A special shout out to Margaret Landbeck! It was fabulous getting to know my new conference buddies from South Africa and Australia - Hi Janine, Angela and Laura. HERDSA provides wonderful moments to enliven and engage, especially when one takes the opportunities offered, like the buddies scheme.

## Jennie Billot

Barbara Grant's plenary session *A thousand tiny universities* provided much food for thought. Linking her own experience to the changing context for higher education exposed the complex challenges faced by those of us who have been in the sector for a longer time. I was left with concern for the "ruthlessness of the present", optimism for the "good that must happen in the struggle" and

anticipation that my "tiny personal university photograph" can sustain my ongoing academic practice.

## Rob Wasse

The highlights of the conference were the keynote speakers. Tim Flannery gave an inspirational presentation on ways to engage our young folk with critical issues such as climate change. Barbara Grant spoke passionately about being an academic and how we need to live the University that we value. Finally, Ron Barnett reminded us of how the University is primarily a place of thought and, therefore, what values promote thinking.

## Barbara Kensington-Miller

The student panel was thought-provoking. One student in particular shared her story of realising the importance of education while in prison. She made the decision to attend university on release to become a role model to other incarcerated women. Her university journey was fraught with difficulties and challenges however the support and guidance she received carried her through. She emphasised the importance of this message to academics.

Photo: Barbara Kensington-Miller



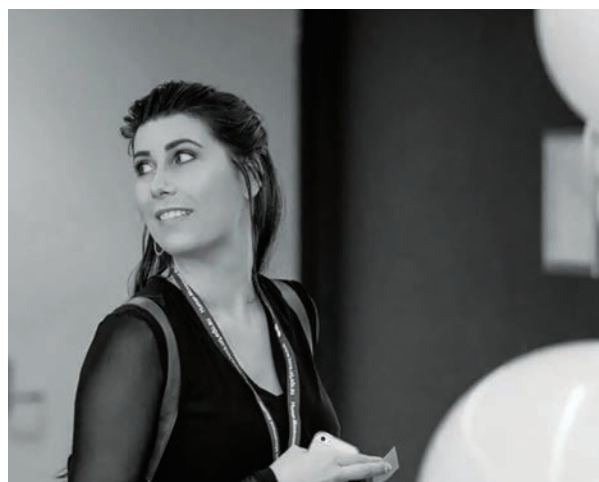
## Science enhancing learning to help all achieve = STEM Sally M. B.

July was higher education conference season in Australasia. The HERDSA and STARS (Students Transitions Achievement Retention and Success) conferences were excellent examples of events likely to inspire research impact. Delegates buzzed with enthusiasm for ways to implement initiatives and for new findings, methods, and theories. Delegates included not only researchers but also university leaders and importantly, practitioners who were supporting students and academics – people with power to make decisions. Others are in roles where they can adopt and adapt approaches or implement recommendations.

On the final days of the HERDSA Conference and the (STARS) Conference, special interest groups (SIGs) met. At the STEM SIG meetings I was intrigued by the complexity, and the strength of the diversity among participants.

The brave souls who volunteer to lead meetings of SIGs at conferences must be applauded. Who will turn up? Will they be different from the previous year? Will they have common interests and how will momentum be maintained between conferences? STEM SIG meeting participants included: science teachers now in professional or teaching intensive roles; academics in science disciplines who were seeking evidence-based approaches; academics with science backgrounds who were dabbling in education research; academics with science backgrounds and experience in education research. The SIG leaders helped us learn from each other.

Development of these Special Interest Groups provides new opportunities to support experienced higher education researchers and to provide much-needed mentoring for eager, capable STEM academics to understand and undertake education research.



## STUDENT Catherine Sherwood

Students as Partners is an innovative, collaborative approach to teaching and learning. Students as Partners initiatives challenge traditional hierarchical relations between teachers and students by recognising students as active participants in, and co-creators of, their own learning. As a result, educational practice is re-visioned, not as an activity that is conducted by teachers and passively absorbed by students, but as a shared endeavour that is shaped and produced by all stakeholders.

In 2017, I became involved in a partnership project that sought to co-create a whole of university, student-staff partnership strategy. My team of three students and two academics was tasked with designing the teaching consultancy stream of the strategy and worked in partnership over six months. Ultimately, we co-created step-by-step guidelines for students and staff who are keen to engage collaboratively in the exploration and enhancement of pedagogical practice.

For each of us, the experience presented unique challenges. In the beginning, for example, I grappled with the fluid nature of my identity in the group, which was recognised on paper as 'student' but manifested during our meetings as 'student', 'staff', 'learner', 'teacher', and 'partner'. Navigating such challenges is a normal, and, I would argue, necessary part of engaging in student-staff partnerships.

The benefits I accrued from deep and extended collaboration with other students and staff on this project were profound and enduring. The dialogic, reciprocal nature of our partnership gave me a newfound appreciation of the importance and complexity of 'voice' in higher education settings. As an emerging teacher and researcher, my Students as Partners experience has and will continue to inform and shape my own teaching and learning processes.

Catherine Sherwood is a University of Queensland student who has played a significant role in ensuring students' voices inform pedagogical practice at her university.



## HERDSA Special Interest Groups

The Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia is a scholarly society for people committed to the advancement of higher and tertiary education. HERDSA encourages and disseminates research on teaching and learning and higher education development. It also works to build strong academic communities.

HERDSA Special Interest Groups (SIG) offer members and non-members a network of like-minded colleagues with whom you can talk about shared research interests as well as potentially undertake some collaborative research.

Three HERDSA SIGs are active. In this issue we highlight the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Education (STEM) Special Interest Group.

### STEM Education Special Interest Group

Members and non-members are invited to join the STEM SIG and collaborate on planning to lead a *Special Issue* of the prestigious Higher Education Research & Development journal for 2021.

The STEM Education Special Interest Group was created in 2016 to promote teaching, learning and research in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics education in higher education institutions. The SIG aims to build a network of researchers interested in STEM education and stimulate debate and discussion and

pursue opportunities for advancing STEM education.

The SIG also encourages and supports postgraduates and early career researchers in STEM education and develops collaborations leading to research in STEM education. An activity is in development to support STEM educators in higher education in their Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

At the 2018 HERDSA Conference members met to share their areas of research and brainstorm future activity. The *Slack* workspace will be used to collaborate on our projects.

Slack workspace: [herdsasystems.sig.slack.com](https://herdsasystems.sig.slack.com)

Contact: Dr Susan Blackley [susan.blackley@cut.ac.uk](mailto:susan.blackley@cut.ac.uk)

At the HERDSA conference, members met to share their areas of research and brainstorm future activity. The Slack workspace will be used to collaborate on our projects.

**STEM Education Special Interest Group** [susan.blackley@cut.ac.uk](mailto:susan.blackley@cut.ac.uk)

**Academic Development Special Interest Group** [elrg@cut.ac.uk](mailto:elrg@cut.ac.uk)

**Assessment Quality Special Interest Group** [te.ns@cut.ac.uk](mailto:te.ns@cut.ac.uk)

## HERDSA

The Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia is a scholarly society for people committed to the advancement of higher and tertiary education.

HERDSA promotes the development of higher education policy, practice and the study of teaching and learning.

HERDSA encourages and disseminates research on teaching and learning and higher education development. It also works to build strong academic communities.

[www.herdsa.org.au](http://www.herdsa.org.au)

## Scholarship of Teaching and Learning

Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) Modules are self-paced, online modules designed to commence new scholars, and those leading new scholars, on their SoTL journey. The modules include videos of prominent Australian and New Zealand HERDSA members.

## HERDSA Branches and Special Interest Groups

Funds are available for local networking activities. To apply for funding such as colloquia, fora, post-conference presentations, network meetings, or speakers contact the HERDSA President or your local branch contact.





## Who is on HERDSA

### Rob Wass

**I am** a Lecturer in the Higher Education Development Centre (HEDC) down in the deep South, at the University of Otago, Dunedin, NZ. My current research interests are in two broad areas - peer learning and assessment. I am interested in supporting the academic development of sessional tutors using video stimulated recall. I am currently building on this work through an Ako Aotearoa grant where I research an inter-disciplinary peer mentoring and observation programme for tutors. My assessment research focusses on student emotional responses to assessment, with the aim of ensuring that assessment has a positive impact on learning.

**I have been involved** with HERDSA for a number of years now. I have been the secretary of the HERDSA (NZ) branch since 2013 and I am now the Deputy Chair. The New Zealand branch hosts the Tertiary Education Research New Zealand (TERNZ) annual conference which I convened in 2016. I am on the HERDSA executive with the Networking Portfolio, with responsibility for Branches and SIGs. This is a shared responsibility and I am incredibly grateful for the mentoring of Jennie Billot and Liz Levin. I want to grow in my role on the Executive and make a positive contribution to the Networks portfolio. While we have

the capacity to develop more, I want to ensure that all SIG members feel supported by HERDSA and that will be my focus for the upcoming term.

**To me, HERDSA membership** is about being and staying connected through personal and professional networks. At a HERDSA conference, my Supervisor once said to me 'these are your people' and to this day I have felt this to be true. The HERDSA community is one that I feel I can go to for advice, support and ideas and I am always happy to give back where I am able.

**I am making an effort to get more comfortable with Twitter** and I check my account daily. I enjoy hearing snippets of news from colleagues in the Higher Education community and it really does help you feel better connected.

**I enjoy reading horror novels** as an escape from reading academia. For some reason, the more macabre and farfetched the story, the better I sleep. However, I also try to read widely and my next book queued up on my kindle is the autobiography 'Life Without Limits' by Nick Vujicic. Nick, born without limbs, is an inspirational motivator and speaker and I can't wait to settle down to what I am sure will be a great read.

**I love my job** as I am blessed to work in an environment which is both challenging and rewarding. I am acutely aware of the influence that we, as educators, have in the lives of our students. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than working with a student and seeing that in some small way I have helped them, or enabled them see something in a different way. I think it is important to celebrate success – and not just your own, but the success of others as well.

**I am a passionate squash player**, and although I don't claim any expertise, it is a game that I love. It can get cold here in Dunedin, but being an indoor sport I can play all year round. I play competitively, but the tournaments are very social (your opponent shouts you a beer if they win) and the friendly banter is a big part of why I play.

**One thing that might surprise** people is that I kayaked the Franklin River (in Tasmania) with my brother and three of his mates. The Franklin can be quite technically demanding because of log jams. In addition, the water is very cold and dark and if you run into difficulty there are only a limited number of places that you can walk out. It took about five days of paddling and it was an amazing adventure – but for the reasons above, also one we said we would never repeat.

**People I admire** are those who manage to bring the best out of others. Not in a manipulative way, but in a way that makes people feel good about what they are doing and why they are doing it.

**If I could turn back time** I would not have sold my Kawasaki Z750 when I was a student to buy a computer.

#### Links

Findings and outputs: <https://www.otago.ac.nz/herdsa/>



## The HERD SA Feb hp

Five new HERDSA Fellows were granted their Fellowships at the HERDSA conference. We welcome Kathie Ardejevska, Stuart Schonnell, Raj Shekhawat, Kate Thomson, and Geoff Treloar to the Fellowship community. Our new Fellows have completed an in-depth reflection on philosophy and practice over an extended period leading to the development of a significant teaching portfolio. We will profile the Fellows over the next few editions beginning with Dr Kate Thomson. Photo: HERDSA Fellows Kathie Ardejevska, Geoff Treloar, Stuart Schonnell, Raj Shekhawat



**Dr Kate Thomson** is a Lecturer in Work Integrated Learning (WIL) at the Faculty of Health Sciences, the University of Sydney. She teaches health sciences students and clinical educators before, during, and after WIL placements.

As a teacher, Kate supports learners through interactions with peers, colleagues, and teachers and through experiences including placements. She likes teaching because of the opportunities to connect meaningfully

with learners to understand how to guide them and then, to witness the joy of discovery.

Kate has worked to develop student surveys for the WIL portfolio and support colleagues to interpret and use the results to improve teaching and learning. With the university's central teaching and learning unit, she co-designed and piloted a WIL version of one of the surveys and identified the need for a survey that collected additional information relevant to WIL quality improvement purposes. She chaired a WIL committee with representatives from all eight health sciences disciplines to create a 10 question survey. Since implementation in mid-2014, they have collected more than 4300 student responses across eight disciplines and 62 Units of Study subjects. She has met with members of the WIL portfolio collectively and individually to discuss and interpret results, consider how they might

act on the feedback, and review the questions.

Given the range of the responses to student feedback by academics, part of the role she has taken on is to share her data, and their data with permission; to show colleagues how they can filter results for example by date completed or enrolled degree; and invite them to offer suggestions. Collectively, WIL have begun to reflect on the results to enhance the quality of the learning experiences they offer students. For example, the results have been used to identify placement sites that are supporting students well, in addition to those sites where students have consistently not had good learning experiences. These data are key to ensuring consistency across different placement sites, and alignment between classroom and WIL experiences.

Information at the website:  
[www.herdsa.org.au](http://www.herdsa.org.au)





and policies that include teaching effectiveness as a criterion for teaching academics and systematic student evaluation of teaching and subjects – the results of which must inform probation and promotion decisions for these academics.

Once these hurdle requirements were met, funding allocations were made on the basis of a set of performance indicators derived from: the Graduate Destination Survey (GDS) which considered employment status, the type of work graduates are undertaking and any further study undertaken; the Course Experience Questionnaire (CEQ) which recorded graduate level of satisfaction with their generic skills and with teaching as well as overall graduate satisfaction; and DEST's annual collection of university statistics on student progress rates.

My view then, when I was an academic developer and a PhD student was that overall, the LTPF was a good thing because it focused attention on learning and teaching at a sectorial and institutional level in a way not previously seen in Australia. My keynote paper at a Vice-Chancellor's Colloquium 2007 explained that view. My view now is less naïve, having had the opportunity to better understand the complexity and challenges of the higher education landscape in Australia. These include the degree of difficulty in offering quality higher education in a highly competitive mass education context with ever increasing student diversity, and the pace and scale of change in a digital context. Add to that some unintended consequences of federal higher education policies that have cost reduction intentions and a primary focus on the economic contributions of graduates. Performance measures now make me very nervous.

Marcia Devlin is Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Senior Vice President and Professor of Learning Enhancement at Victoria University, Australia.

### Links

Marcia Devlin  
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Devlin, M. (2007) The scholarship of teaching: [www.usc.edu.au/media/3220/KeynotePaper\\_June07.pdf](http://www.usc.edu.au/media/3220/KeynotePaper_June07.pdf)

## teaching performance Marcia Devlin

The Australian federal government has indicated its intention to introduce partial funding based on yet to be defined performance measures. The Mid-Year Economic and Fiscal Outlook (MYEFO) by the Australian government updates the economic and fiscal outlook from the previous budgetary position and revises the budget aggregates. The 2017-2018 MYEFO papers state that the Government intends to “proceed with reforms to the higher education [HE] sector to improve transparency, accountability, affordability and responsiveness to the aspirations of students and future workforce needs” (see links below). Among these reforms are performance targets for universities to determine the growth in their Commonwealth Grant Scheme funding for bachelor degrees from 2020, to be capped at the growth rate in the 18-64 year old population, and from 1 January 2019 “...based on institutional outcomes and industry needs for sub-bachelor and postgraduate Commonwealth Supported Places”.

The MYEFO papers contain no information about these performance targets or institutional outcomes. Department of Education and Training (DET) webpages provide some

additional detail, including that “From 2020, access to growth in CGS funding for bachelor degree courses will be performance based” and that “... performance indicators and performance targets will be agreed in 2018”. The website further indicates that data gathered in 2019 on 2018 performance will be used to determine the funding available in 2020. The information indicates that performance outcomes will only affect CGS funding for bachelor degree courses at public universities that previously had access to demand-driven funding. Access to growth will be based on each university's achievement of performance objectives “such as attrition, low SES participation and workforce preparedness of graduates” (DET, 2018). Finally, the website states that indicators will be subjected to consultation with the sector.

I'm reminded of a scheme many HERDSA CONNECT readers will remember - the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTPF). The LTPF was set up to reward institutions that demonstrate excellence in learning and teaching. Funding allocations would be determined once institutions met specific teaching-related requirements, including probation and promotion practices





## Word fi He Sw d

Writing expert Professor Helen Sword answers readers' questions about academic writing, productivity and wordcraft.

*How can we engage our students in readerly and writerly practices that encourage creativity, pleasure and play?*

Perhaps we could start by taking such practices more seriously. Academic writers are taught to privilege intellect over emotion, logos over pathos, the life of the mind over the sentiments of the heart. Yet academic research – yes, *serious* research! – has demonstrated again and again that creativity, pleasure and play are central to student learning and engagement.

As a lecturer in an English department, I coax my students over the hump

between “serious” and playful academic writing by devising low-stakes writing assignments that foster stylistic experimentation. Each week, the undergraduates in my modern poetry class upload a pre-lecture task demonstrating that they have spent at least ninety minutes reading and responding to the week’s readings. This task is mandatory but not graded. I skim through the submissions before lecture and select a few to comment on in class; the students’ writing becomes more adventurous from week to week as they pick up on each other’s ideas, respond to my promptings and develop the courage to step outside their comfort zone.

Their growing confidence as creative/critical thinkers in turn spills over into their marked assignments; the websites,

podcasts, poetry anthologies and ‘zines that they submit at the end of the semester are every bit as intellectually rigorous as the standard academic essays I used to assign (if not more so), and they are certainly much more fun to read!

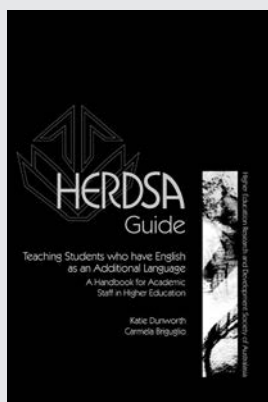
Similar techniques can be used to encourage creativity, pleasure and play in the sciences and social sciences. The first step is to establish a culture of intellectual risk taking and trust amongst your students through weekly low-stakes writing. Next, you can integrate various kinds of writing tasks – reflective, analytical, transactional – into your marked assignments. For best results, devise authentic assessments that mimic real-world situations, such as case studies, debates, interviews, poster presentations and group design projects. When your students’ imaginations are engaged creatively as well as critically, you will find that they work harder, spend more time on task and produce higher quality assignments. Writing with pleasure turns out to be serious work indeed.

Professor Helen Sword directs the Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education at the University of Auckland, is a scholar, poet and prize-winning teacher who has published widely on academic writing and writers.

*Do you have a burning question about academic writing that you would like to see answered in this column? Send it to Helen Sword ([h.sword@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:h.sword@auckland.ac.nz)) with the one-word subject line Wordcraft.*

### Links

[w](#) [b](#) [s](#) [d](#) [n](#)

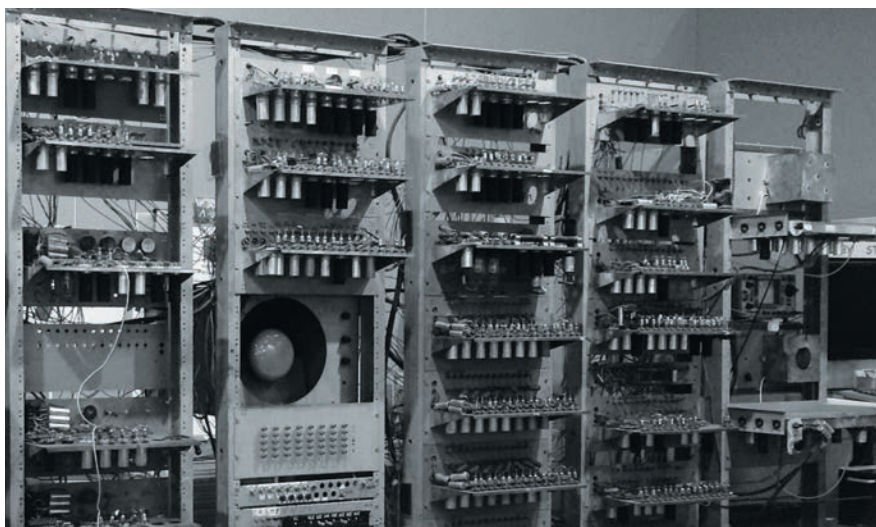


### Teaching students who have English as an additional language

Katie Dunworth and Carmela Briguglio

Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia, 2011. \$35.00 AUD

This HERDSA Guide provides practical advice and strategies for academic teaching staff who work with students who have English as an additional language (EAL). Its primary focus is on identifying ways in which students can be encouraged to develop their English language skills and knowledge within the context of their disciplinary studies. The ideas within the Guide are intended to be accessible to staff from any academic discipline and require no specialised knowledge. Many of the suggested activities, once implemented, may reduce staff workloads as they will lead to a greater level of clarity for students about the requirements of their courses, higher levels of student autonomy and increased student facility with the language of their discipline. [www.HERDSA.org.au](http://www.HERDSA.org.au)



## Reflections on English

### Susan Babb

It is summer holiday time in the UK. First day back at work. On the cusp between academic years I reflect on past, present and future. Graduations have been celebrated, new programmes approved, staff still need to be appointed, students need to be registered and new curriculum resources must be developed.

My thoughts drift back to my summer holiday. Last Monday I visited the Museum of Science and Industry in Manchester. I was fascinated by the pivotal role Manchester played in the industrial and technological revolutions. Manchester is well known for its cotton mills which transformed cotton into cloth and changed the world of work. Manchester is less known for its role in creating the 'world's first stored-program computer' nicknamed Baby (see photo).

Baby came to life on 21 June 1948, measuring 17 feet in length, standing 7.4 feet tall and weighing about a ton. Its first program consisted of 17 instructions and it could complete 3.5 million calculations in 53 minutes.

Today, 70 years after the birth of Baby, technology enhanced learning is integral to higher education. A glance at the HERDSA website and I see that my thoughts are very much in line with the theme of the HERDSA Conference,

2019: Next generation, higher education: challenges, changes and opportunities.

Recently, the University of Liverpool's Academy and Centre for Innovation and Excellence in Education convened its 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Learning and Teaching Conference. I was pleased to host the first day of the conference and introduce the University of Liverpool's Vice Chancellor Professor Dame Janet Beer who reiterated the University mission statement 'for the advancement of learning and ennoblement of life' and Strategy 2026. The Vice Chancellor went on to acknowledge the good work being done by those involved in learning and teaching at the University and shared an extract from a postgraduate student's graduation speech which highlighted the impact of teaching on students' lives. The Pro Vice Chancellor, Professor Gavin Brown, then elaborated on Strategy 2026 with particular reference to Curriculum 2021. Dr Sam Smidt from University College London spoke on The Why and How of the Connected Curriculum. Over 40 presentations were given by colleagues and students. One of the highlights for me was a one-hour workshop on Virtual Reality in Education: developing flexible learning resources to support access to restrictive environments, presented by Dr Vidhi Taylor-Jones and Mr Paul Duvall

from the School of Medicine. They demonstrated the use of 360-degree videos of simulated clinical practice in medical education. The second day of the conference showcased technology in practice.

As I return to work, I am eager to embrace the challenges, changes and opportunities that now confront me in relation to the development of curriculum resources for the newly approved Postgraduate Certificate Academic Practice (PGCAP) which will be delivered by the Academic Development team in the Academy. The PGCAP is aligned the UK Professional Standards Framework (UKPSF) and the Level 7 Academic Professional Apprenticeship Standard and accredited by Advance HE, enabling graduates to be recognised as Fellows of the Higher Education Academy. The University, like many universities in the UK, is yet to decide whether or not it will offer the APA. The Academy is developing a paper on workforce development to present to senior management in consideration of a range of apprenticeship options.

The PGCAP is a Masters level qualification linked to probation for colleagues who are new to learning and teaching in higher education. The program aims to support staff to develop the knowledge, skills, expertise and values necessary to sustain effective academic practice and support student learning in line with the University of Liverpool's Strategic Educational objectives. The program will be delivered using a flipped classroom blended learning approach aligned with Curriculum 2021 which includes the Liverpool Hallmarks of research-connected teaching, active learning, authentic assessment to provide students with opportunities to develop graduate attributes of confidence, digital literacy and global citizenship.

#### Links

Baby museum  
University of Liverpool  
Manchester  
digital learning

HEA <https://www.he.ac.uk/academic-practice/>  
academic practice



## ESSENTIAL READING

HERD Co-Editor, Associate Professor Ly Tran, has chosen an article by Hans Agné & Ulf Mörkenstam: *Should first-year doctoral students be supervised collectively or individually? Effects on thesis completion and time to completion*. HERD (2018) 7:4, 669-682.

I often wonder whether our doctoral candidates benefit more from individual or collective supervision. Practices, models, possibilities and tensions in doctoral supervision are recurring and often-debated issues in higher education. While individual supervision represents a traditional and most frequently used supervision model, collective supervision has emerged as an alternative, in which several students working on related but different research projects are supervised by one or several supervisors.

Drawing on combined statistical tools including Group means, Cox regressions, Kaplan–Meir curves and Ordinary Least Square regressions to analyse the time to thesis completion (TTC) and the probability of thesis completion of 145 doctoral students, the study found that collective supervision reduced the TTC and increased the probability of thesis completion.

The article challenges previous work that proposed various reasons for negative effects of collective supervision on timely thesis completion. The article left me wondering about the potential of a combined model of individual and collective supervision and how different models of supervision – individual, collective, combined or alternative – work for not only traditional doctoral supervision but also international supervision, which is a fast-growing phenomenon in our time of transnational academic mobility.

## From the Herd Editor's Desk

### Craig Whitsed and Wengre

The theme of the HERDSA 2018 Conference was re-valuing higher education. Now is an opportune time to reflect on some of the conference highlights. As editors of *Higher Education Research & Development* we were particularly delighted that the previous executive editor of the journal, Associate Professor Barbara Grant presented one of the keynotes at the conference. Barbara invited us to imagine with her 'a thousand tiny universities'. This, she suggested, might be one powerful response to our universities' relentless pursuit of sameness – the ubiquitous vision statements of 'global excellence' for example - regardless of a university's context and history. And, while she acknowledged her own moments of grief at the loss of traditional work practices rooted in values of collegiality and academic freedom during her decades of working in higher education, Barbara concluded on a note of optimism. Quoting Pussy Riot's Nadezhda Tolokonnikova, she declared: "the future is now and we are not crying".

Judging from the flow of tweets during and following Barbara's keynote, her words resonated deeply with many conference participants. For us, Barbara's reflections recalled our own thoughts as we took over the editorial reins from Barbara and her team in January 2017. In our first editorial

column in HERDSA News, we reflected on the importance of working in hope. Drawing on the Marxist philosopher Ernst Bloch we envisaged 'hope' as an emotional and cognitive act of creation: the production of a 'where-to': a direction in which something is intended and must be experimented for. HERD's Special Issue for 2020, edited by Sharon King, Ann Luzeckyj and Susan Blackly will provide further opportunities to explore the theme of re-valuing higher education – as outlined in our call for papers.

The HERDSA conference gave us the opportunity to meet face to face with our invaluable Associate Editors. The conference allowed us to realise one of our key goals to contribute to the development of higher education as a field of research and scholarly practice. Together with our book editor, Deanne Gannaway, we conducted a workshop on peer reviewing for journals. Offering such workshops is a real conference highlight for us, and we welcome suggestions for future workshops.

At the conference we received news of sharp rise in the journal's Impact Factor from 0.896 in 2015 to 2.006. For this tremendous achievement we thank not only our current editorial team, associate editors and reviewers, but also the previous editorial team headed by Barbara Grant.

c.whitsed@murdoch.edu.au  
w.j.green@utas.edu.au





## Malcolm Robert Cannon

HERDSA CONNECT has replaced HERDSA News. Vale HERDSA News!

HERDSA News has been with us since 1978. Previously it was HERDSA Newsletter, first published in 1973. From 1978 it was my task to locate and abstract articles relating to higher education in Australia and New Zealand for a page or two in the Newsletter.

Diligently undertaken three times each year, the abstracting work was not too difficult nor time-consuming initially. There were only a handful of journals focusing specifically on higher education. However, because of the steadily growing volume of published work, and the diversification of sources, the task of abstracting became overwhelming.

Malcolm Tight's excellent article on higher education journals in *Higher Education Research and Development*, 37, 3, 2018 examines journals in some detail. Tight's research identifies 86 higher education journal titles in existence now. He acknowledges the volatility of publication data as new journals are created, others cease publication and others merge. Tight has grouped journals into four categories. There are generic journals such as our own *Higher Education Research and Development*, topic-specific journals, the largest category, such as *Teaching*

in *Higher Education and Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education*, discipline-specific journals of which the *Journal of Geography in Higher Education* and *Medical Education* are examples, and finally nation-specific journals such as the *Australian Universities Review* and the *Canadian Journal of Higher Education*.

How realistic is it to keep up to date with 86 journals plus numerous other publications? Unrealistic? Yet there is an expectation that university teachers keep up in both their academic discipline as well as in teaching and learning, and also with developments in the institution we call 'higher education'.

There are ideas and sound strategies to help here. One very appealing tool is called PubCrawler. Now, do not get too excited about this; the 'pub' is short for publication, not the other kind! PubCrawler is a free alerting service reporting daily updates to medical sciences databases. Oh, for one in educational development. If there is one, please share! There are excellent technical resources on the web, one of which is *Staying Current: Keep your research up-to-date* prepared by the Library at the University of Melbourne.

Dedicated university teachers seeking examples of good practice from the published literature to inform their

teaching are overwhelmed by a huge range of professional issues. Overlays of complexity arise from digital technologies, student development, work-based learning, sustainability, equity, and ethics, among others. Each has the potential to present more effective and fairer approaches to learning and teaching.

Yet this is only one side of the challenges of so much information. The other challenge is accessing it through libraries or other methods. Writing in the November 6, 2017 edition of *The Conversation*, Patrick Burns, Dean of Libraries at Colorado State University, discusses how research libraries cannot afford all the journal subscriptions needed by their academic clients. Burns contends that the economic model for academic journals is broken. "The state of academic publishing is in such crisis that a variety of strategies may need to be adopted" he claims. Possible solutions canvassed include taking collective action with publishers to obtain lower pricing, open access journals that do not employ paywalls, and capturing many more preprints of journal articles in a citable fashion. These are all good ideas.

Another approach to assist us and these can be summarised in one word – synthesis – a process through which research studies are assessed with the objective of summarising evidence about a particular question. Whole journals reflect this idea. *The Review of Educational Research* is one such journal. A paper reviewing learning research and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in the November 2017 edition illustrates this kind of work. Synthesis articles appear in other journals too, for example, the synthesis of the literature on research methods education published in *Teaching in Higher Education*, 19, 3, 2014.

An admirable example of synthesis is provided by the New Zealand practice of preparing iterative best evidence syntheses (BES). The website tells us that "BES is a collaborative knowledge building strategy designed to strengthen the evidence base that informs education policy and practice in New Zealand ... The series of BESs is designed to be

a catalyst for systemic and ongoing improvement in education.” Syntheses around mathematics education are current exemplars of this valuable work.

A key concept in BES is iteration. Iteration aims to progressively build and strengthen the evidence base that informs educational policy and practice. Strategies for further iterative development include reporting work-in-progress to encourage critical, formative comment, for example.

Iteration is a central concept in the Building State Capability (BSC) program of the Center for International Development at Harvard. The program researches and teaches analytical strategies and tactics to build the capability of organisations to implement policies and programs. It is being applied in education as well as a range of other development domains.

The program uses the Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA) approach. This rests on core principles including analysis and development of local solutions for local problems, testing solutions, learning, iterating, adapting, and diffusing workable solutions to achieve scale. Their free text, *Building State Capability: Evidence, Analysis, Action*, available from the Center’s website, demonstrates the concept of synthesis in the PDIA approach to difficult development issues.

PDIA is a promising new concept in support of development and change. One of the reasons for making that claim is that, among other attributes, it begins with local realities and local challenges rather than text-book, evidence-from-elsewhere, top-down imposed solutions that have a poor track-record of success.

This focus on the local is central to another major and recent work of interest to educational developers, *Classroom change in developing countries: from progressive cage to formalistic frame*, by Gerard Guthrie, Routledge, 2018. Classroom Change is an excellent example of synthesis too, in this case, a synthesis of the literature on teaching and learning in developing countries.

Anchored in local cultural contexts, the substantial body of evidence

Guthrie presents shows that progressive educational reforms have struck difficulties and the literature sustaining the progressive paradigm has widespread methodological limitations. Guthrie’s analysis leads him to a rejection of the progressive paradigm. He provides evidence that presents formalism, the rather unfashionable idea of teacher-centred practices and didactic teaching, as a legitimate cultural paradigm and a foundation for change, rather than an obstacle. The persistence of formalism in so many countries’ approaches to education is because of formalism’s foundation in traditional, revelatory epistemologies.

*Classroom change* is not a gentle breath of fresh air – more like a hurricane of powerful evidence and academic argument. To illustrate the positions Guthrie takes, there is this dry comment on pp.156-7 about researchers: “Perhaps the research focus should turn from teachers and students in developing country schools to progressive reformers and evaluators from developed country universities, and to their failures to understand the depths of the formalistic paradigm and the lack of necessity to fundamentally change it... The purpose is to encourage a corrective to complacency, including the history-free cultural myopia that pervades aspects of classroom reform in developing countries.”

Yet, in the end, does any of this concern about research quantities, accessibility, synthesis, and iteration matter? We know of many examples close to our interests in teaching where evidence is frequently ignored by those in authority, whether by universities with their long history of ignoring evidence about learning and teaching or by governments about the negative consequences of high stakes testing regimes.

We have the sobering work of John Ioannidis in *PLOS Medicine*, titled “Why most published research findings are false”. His argument is that a research finding is less likely to be true when the studies conducted in a field are smaller; when effect sizes are smaller; when there is a greater number and lesser preselection of tested relationships; where there is greater flexibility in designs, definitions,

outcomes, and analytical models; when there is greater financial and other interest and prejudice; and when more teams are involved in a scientific field in chase of statistical significance.

More recently in a *PLOS Medicine* editorial (3 May 2018), “All science should inform policy and regulation”, Ioannidis points out that the credibility of research depends on how large and rigorous studies are, how well researchers have contained conflicts of interest, how successfully biases have been limited and whether researchers have accounted for the complexity inherent in each scientific question.

Of course, concerns about research quantities, synthesis, and iteration matter, but the key is quality. Quality is entirely missing in an item in the *Jakarta Post* of 11 June 2018 which breathlessly reports that in the race to beat Singapore and Malaysia in academic paper quantity, Indonesia is pushing scholars to write more and needs about 6,000 more journals to publish the hoped-for output! Indonesia may achieve this goal as scholars who do not produce are being threatened with cuts to their allowances.

Clearly, the policy makers behind this scheme were not aware of Marcus Tullius Cicero’s admonition: “Non enim numero haec iudicantur, sed pondere”. Translation: The number does not matter, the quality does.

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### Links

Steph Curat: Kē p r  
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## The Banking Royal Commission and the academic publishing Rg

Well, not necessarily the price of everything, but the Banking Royal Commission is likely to prompt more intense scrutiny of prices and possible ‘rip offs’, for many kinds of goods and services, in all sectors of our economy. If the big banks and others in financial services have been getting away with ‘Money for nothing’, as evidenced in a recent *ABC 4 Corners* program, could we find similar bad behaviour in other industries? In particular, should information technology (IT) in higher education and academic publishing be included in such scrutiny of prices? Of course, the answer has to be ‘yes’, because inquiring into everything is an academic trait, even though IT in higher education and academic publishing is only a small part of the world’s IT and publishing industries. But it is complicated, as the rest of this musing attempts to illustrate. We can identify instances where ‘Money for nothing’ occurs in IT in higher education and academic publishing, and more broadly, instances of over-pricing. However, unlike banking, in IT and publishing we frequently obtain ‘Something for no money’, that is we do not pay for a service we use, an important distinction drawn in concluding this musing.

Firstly, ‘Money for nothing’, where one prominent example is ‘predatory open access journals’. Typically, such journals ask authors to pay a modest charge for open access, online only publication, and promise a fast path through peer review and publication processes. However, the ‘nothing’ provided part is usually no peer review and no copy editing, which may enable a fast path, but very often leads to poor quality articles and little attention from readers. Related to ‘Money for nothing’ is a much larger problem which could be characterised as ‘Much money for not much’, or simply, over-pricing. Though matters may be improving with software prices, headlines such as these will seem familiar to many readers:

‘Software is officially a rip-off in Australia – so what can you do?’

‘Two years after IT Pricing Inquiry, Australians are still being sluggish up to 30% more for goods’

‘Adobe Has Raised Creative Cloud Prices In Australia By Almost 250% Since 2014’

‘Subscription Software Is Death By A Thousand Cuts’

To investigate over-pricing in journal publishing, consider a specific example, *Review of Educational Research* (RER), which is a well-known, prestigious journal, able to characterise itself in a

2017 Editorial with the sentence, ‘RER remains the premier review journal internationally’. There are a number of RER prices to consider, including prices for subscriptions (individual about US\$52; institutional, e-access only, including all previous issues, about US\$485), obtaining an individual article if not a subscriber (US\$36), and obtaining open access publishing if not an author (US\$1000). How can we evaluate these prices, and form an opinion, is this ‘over-pricing’, or ‘reasonable pricing’? That is a rather large research question, so all I can do in a brief musing is pick out some of the most interesting aspects of the context, which can point towards some potential research designs and possible findings. Taking a few liberties with the Royal Commission way of investigating, we can imagine some lines of ‘attack’, and the corresponding lines of ‘defence’.

To illustrate, imagine some days of witness statements on the prices of subscriptions. Counsel leading for the ‘attack’ may present graphical data showing steep rises in subscription prices during previous decades, and seek to demonstrate that the rises represent an unreasonable exploitation of a quasi-monopoly, and that production expenses have fallen, not risen, as the publishing industry has benefited from incredible cost reductions due to advances in information and communications technologies. Counsel may argue that the publisher should give back, via lower subscription prices, to the authors and peer reviewers who are not paid for their work, noting also that in getting publication, authors gave away their intellectual property rights. In response, counsel leading for the ‘defence’ may seek to show that subscription prices are in accord with industry standards for a highly successful and influential journal, and represent an appropriate return on investment for the society that founded RER in 1931, the American Educational Research Association (AERA). The AERA members who were authors and peer reviewers for very many decades built a premier review journal, and the flow of subscription income which (presumably) they receive via the publisher SAGE helps to advance the Association’s objectives



for promoting educational research. AERA members can select RER as one of their complimentary benefits of membership, and RER also provides to others, whether individuals or libraries, a number of kinds of discounting of subscription prices.

Moving on to this imaginary commission's session on open access publishing, counsel for the 'attack' side may lead with evidence about OA's ever-growing influence and seek to show that RER is a poor contributor, always in an 'Arrière du peloton' position. Counsel may cite RER Editorial 87(1), 2017, which makes no mention of open access, though in that issue the editorial and all 7 articles are open access, thereby contributing one half of the total number of open access articles now available in RER's archives, from inception in 1931 to end 2017. The same editorial has one paragraph under the heading 'Accessibility', but it does not mention the greatest possible contribution to accessibility, open access. It refers mainly to dissemination 'to the broader communities through *Twitter*, *Facebook*, and other social media outlets'. However, counsel for the 'defence' may respond vigorously, showing that RER offers open access for an APC (article publishing or processing charge) which is lower than APCs for most journals, excepting those that may be characterised as 'predatory journals', and that RER authors' right to not opt for open access must be respected. Counsel will show that both publisher SAGE and AERA can evidence extensive and important support for open access options being provided by RER's sister journals and related others. Counsel could point out that authors seeking open access with a cheaper APC could choose RER competitors, such as Taylor & Francis' *Open Review of Educational Research*, APC US\$900, compared with RER's US\$1000.

On the matter of 'pay per view', obtaining an individual article if not a subscriber, counsel for the 'attack' side may claim that RER's charge of US\$36 per article is a relic from earlier times, when clerical workers had to locate a hardcopy original, photocopy the article, package it, post it, invoice for

it, and process a payment. Such labour intensive work has been eliminated by technological advances, and these days computer programs and networks automate the delivery of a PDF file for screen reading, almost infinitely faster and cheaper. However, 'defence' counsel will maintain that 'pay per view' has to contribute an appropriate share of a journal's income stream, and not undermine subscription income; also, \$36 is similar to charges made by many other journals in the high prestige ranks.

Leaving the drama of this imaginary commission, we should turn briefly to my second main topic, 'Something for no money'. The world's IT and publishing industries have made remarkable contributions of free services. We are not charged for our use of the Internet protocol suite, HTTP for web pages, SMTP for email, and very many other protocols, though of course we pay for our use of transmission media and routers, and sometimes for the content that is delivered to us. The pricing for open educational resources ('OER') is brilliant: free, though we may have paid indirectly through taxes and other ways for funding the creation of OER. Free ('open source') software is abundant, with perhaps the most notable example for HERDSA members being the *Mailman* software used for our weekly Notices, and another notable being *Moodle*, the learning management system used worldwide. We have free use of Google, Google Scholar and other search engines and free databases; there are many free platforms or services that can be used for academic purposes, such as *Second Life*, *Facebook*, *Instagram*, *Twitter*, *Skype*; and free email (Hotmail/Outlook.com, Gmail, Yahoo, etc.).

However, some of these 'Somethings for nothing' may incur non-monetary costs that are now attracting increased scrutiny, as we can see for example in recent media attention to Facebook's selling of user data to dubious third parties. As some commentators have pointed out, 'With Facebook you are the product, not the customer'. Could such scrutiny, at present mostly at the level of parliamentary inquiries, may eventually reach the higher level of a Royal Commission, or threaten to do so?

Roger Atkinson retired from Murdoch University in 2001. His current activities include honorary work on the TL Forum conference series and *Issues in Educational Research*. Website: <http://www.roger-atkinson.id.au/> Contact: [rjatkinson@bigpond.com](mailto:rjatkinson@bigpond.com)

### Links

See [www.HERDSA.org.au/pubs/herdsa\\_new/4-0-2.html](http://www.HERDSA.org.au/pubs/herdsa_new/4-0-2.html) this to be in HTML.h could g h k to time a s r e r e c e t h s t p c .



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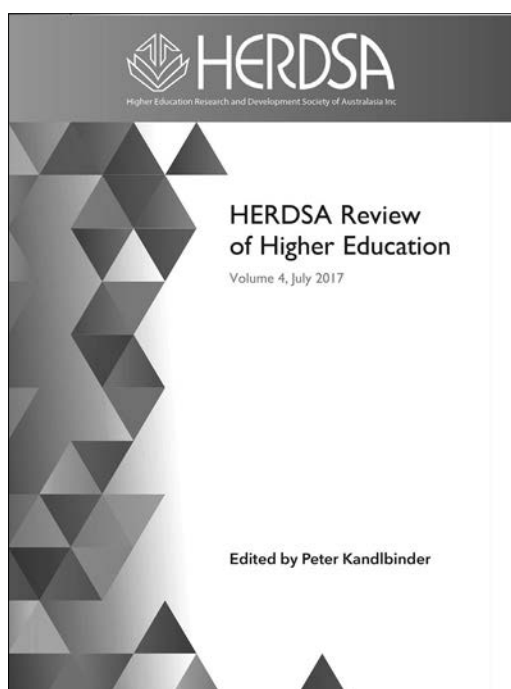
HERDSA's magazine formerly HERDSA NEWS. Topical issues, activities, programs and action research.

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*HERDSA Review of Higher Education* is an online journal that provides expert commentary on the latest developments in higher education research and development. The journal aims to contribute to the field of higher education by synthesising existing research into an accessible resource for academics, developers and policy makers. The themes are selected from a review of current topics submitted to HERDSA conferences and journals to identify challenges that have a high level of significance for teaching and learning in Australasia. One persistent theme since the first volume in 2014 has been student experiences of higher education.

The idea that has gained the greatest traction in thinking about our students' experiences is the idea of supporting students in making the transition to university. Sally Kift (2015) reviewed ten years of research on the first year experience since she and Karen Nelson coined the term "transition pedagogy". Kift concluded that this idea helped shift our thinking away from supporting individual students to making the first year at university a whole-of-institution responsibility. By locating the challenge of student transition at the level of the university, Kift regards the student experience of first-year as a test of university leadership. Karen Nelson and John Clarke (2014) used the generational

## Research report on student experience of higher education

by Peter Kandlbinder

change in the thinking around supporting the first year to present a maturity model as the means by which institutions can evaluate their commitment to student engagement. They concluded that enhancing the first-year experience requires a framework that provides an assessment of how capable an institution is in delivering support practices so that the gaps between the institutional directions and priorities can be identified and addressed.

While the first-year experience has been the focus of institutional programs for many years, there remain particular challenges faced by different cohorts of students. Sarah O'Shea (2016) identified first-in-family students as having specific challenges when they transitioned to university; particularly when they came from rural and remote areas, which cut them off from the established support networks that can be vital for success at university. Many first-in-family students carry with them the aspirations of their whole family, something Page, Trudgett and Corrinne (2016) argue can also influence Indigenous students. Page *et al.* recognise that adopting a whole-of-institution approach has led to some progress and they look forward to the day when there is parity of experience between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students.

Sophie Arkoudis and Chi Baik (2014) identified International students as having particular needs which could be relatively easily addressed by having greater meaningful interactions between international and domestic students. Judith Rochecouste and Rhonda Oliver (2014) recognised that International students sometimes have significant English language needs and English language provision is increasingly

becoming embedded within units of study. They found that International students informal learning strategies mostly enhanced both their language acquisition and their academic achievement although there is still a need for English language instruction for a small number of students.

Each of these reviews has the common agenda of celebrating difference and supporting students as they make the transition to university. By welcoming diversity and a whole-of-institution approach, higher education is creating the challenge of placing the student experience as central to any question of what we should do, regardless of our position in the university.

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### The reviewer

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## A reflective approach to teaching practicum debriefing

Mark Minott

- in particular reflection of action - with student teachers practicum debriefing". The work reflects earlier theories of reflection such *espoused theory* as posited by Schon and further expanded by Zeichner and Liston. The starting point is quite useful to student teachers and their supervisors and provides a clear understanding that the development of cognitive skills will lead to improved practice. An added benefit that can be

of critical thinking, self-direction and self-awareness does prove advantageous to those who will use this tool.

Along with the benefits presented in his work, several challenges were cited by Minott which do not negate the positive benefits of RATPD, but rather provide an opportunity to improve on the process. One such challenge is the reluctance of student teachers to share perception, feelings and what they encountered. The second challenge is the teachers confronting the uncertainty of their teaching competence.

HERDSA member Mark Minott's work *A Reflective Approach to Teaching Practicum Debriefing (RATPD)* is a timely piece of research-based work that provides a framework for reflection by early career teaching academics, participants in university staff development teaching programs, and in teaching practicum debriefing. This standard approach does add value to the teaching profession, in particular, the practicum debriefing that in the past was somewhat problematic. The monograph documents the benefits of such an approach to be: critical thinking, self-direction and self-awareness. The RATPD provides a seemingly fresh yet organic approach that provides an opportunity to use deep and enduring reflective techniques, to provide solutions to the obstacles encountered in the classroom. Reflection on action gives these teachers and their mentors a solution engineered by proper thought and deep and enduring consideration to address tough issues that might ultimately lead to learning frustration on the student's part. Minott's work provides a positive yet methodical approach in carrying out debriefing in a consistent and logical manner to reap the benefits of critical thinking, self-direction, and self-awareness.

The monograph defines RATPD as a combination of "elements of teaching

exploited is that reflective practice tends to be self-directed and involving critical thinking not imposed administratively. Additionally, the willingness to question, take risks in learning, and try new strategies does lead to improvement in future classroom encounters, which I believe is relevant to the diverse learner context that will be faced by the student teachers. The identification of personal meaning as a means of disclosure and examination of personal feelings is part of the theory behind RATPD as posited by Minott. Reflective practice also requires the use of the affective skills that will subsequently lead to improved practice. Finally, the reflective approach involves personal risks, that of sharing perceptions and beliefs with others.

Prior to developing the RATPD, Minott posed three research questions to student teachers in the Caribbean and the United Kingdom. These covered what participants had learned about teaching, changes in beliefs, values, and assumptions about teaching; and what was learned about the self as teacher. The synthesis of responses offered valuable insights that led to the proposed RATPD tool that Minott suggests will aid school-based mentors and university teacher educators to resolve problems that are presented by the changing educational environment, whether in the Caribbean or the UK. The universality of the benefits

I have found the benefits outweigh the challenges of RATPD. This tool presents a solid, grounded approach that will provide school-based mentors and their protégés with ways to negotiate the ever-changing landscape of teacher education. RATPD offers an opportunity to develop the transferable skills that are needed in the ever changing teaching environment of the student protégé. Minott's work provides sweeping benefits to those involved in teaching practicum debriefing, and I fully recommend the work. I wish I were exposed to this methodical approach to debriefing when I was trained as a teacher, or, better yet, when I mentored my own students.

Minott, M. (2017). *A Reflective Approach to Teaching Practicum Debriefing*. (RATPD). North Carolina, South Carolina, Connecticut, Pennsylvania, and British Columbia.

### The reviewer

By Dr. Allan E. Young is Professor of Business and formerly Chair of Teacher Education at the University College of the Cayman Islands. He has taught extensively in the Caribbean and the USA and was instrumental in developing the first teacher education program in the Cayman Islands where he served as Dean of Academic Affairs for five years. His research interests include topics such as distance learning and preservice teachers, reflective learning, and hybrid delivery.

Photo: Quiet Reflection. Patrick Halloran



## Teaching and Learning University of Technology Kym Fraser

Do you remember how you felt in that first semester of university teaching? When I ask academics that question, common responses include: 'terrified'; 'excited'; 'challenged'; and 'exhausted'. I clearly remember all of those feelings, especially being exhausted. Nothing was automatic. I had to think about everything all of the time. As new teaching staff have said to me, "It's like being thrown in at the deep end".

We expect so much of our new teachers; they need to be familiar with the university's learning and teaching policies, understand active learning pedagogies, assessment strategies, feedback, academic literacies, first-year transition pedagogies, group work, curriculum design, blended learning, use of different technologies, and of course, they need to know about their specific student cohort and learning management system - and then, teach accordingly. This is not an exhaustive list.

On the basis of the evidence available, thousands of new sessional, contract and full-time staff are appointed to teach in the Australian higher education sector annually and many of those staff are new to teaching. From 2002 to 2015 in Australia, approximately 25 percent of universities provide no more than one

day of teaching induction for their staff.

I wanted to provide a teaching induction resource for the sector to support those who want to be better teachers. I won a National Teaching Fellowship to do so. The Fellowship was funded by both the Australian Government Department of Education and Training and the Council of Australasian University Leaders in Learning and Teaching (CAULLT, previously known as CADAD). Partners and colleagues who worked with my Fellowship are listed at the CAULLT website in the links at the end of this article. Thirty-four colleagues, including myself, from 20 different Australian universities and one UK university, developed the MOOC content. Thirty-three colleagues reviewed the content, bringing the number of Australian universities involved to 25. The MOOC was piloted and refined and in January 2018 *Contemporary approaches to university teaching* was launched.

The MOOC was designed by experts to provide introductory concepts, strategies and activities on key higher education teaching topics, such as feedback, online learning, and assessment. There are eleven introductory modules, three specialty modules (e.g. teaching mathematics) and resources (e.g. a

document for sessional staff). Each module is expected to take two hours of engagement. While designed for a staff member to engage with one module a week across a semester, staff can engage with the modules that meet their needs and experience. It is a 'just in time, just for me' MOOC with enrolments accepted anytime up until December 31 this year (please refer to the link at the end of the article to enrol).

We have been particularly heartened by the response to the MOOC. Within ten days of launching, just under 500 colleagues had enrolled from 11 different countries. These included lecturers, librarians, sessional staff, learning technologists, academic developers and an education project manager. By the end of the first semester with over 1000 enrolments, 694 colleagues from 27 countries had participated in the MOOC. Nine universities are now using the MOOC. Many have taken some or all of the content and incorporated it into their learning management system. Others encourage their staff to participate in the MOOC and complete an assessment task generated and marked by their university.

Those who responded to the pilot MOOC evaluation repeatedly highlighted the aspects they found most valuable. Resources, ideas, strategies and activities that can be used immediately in teaching were considered extremely useful. They found the planning, design and assessment frameworks and templates valuable, along with the tips for engagement, feedback and evaluation strategies. Participants appreciated the opportunity to affirm their practice and gain confidence through engaging with relevant examples and sharing ideas with others who were also starting their teaching career. They also valued being able to gain a deeper understanding of teaching as a discipline, and of the scholarly work that informs practice.

We are keen to continue to develop the MOOC and would love to hear from you if you would like to contribute a resource or specialty module or would like to suggest topics for same.

Kym Fraser is Associate Professor Higher Education at RMIT University and Adjunct Associate Professor at Swinburne University of Technology.





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