

# HERDSA NEWS

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**MARCH 1984**

# Editorial

*The main focus of this issue of HERDSA News is on affirmative action and developments in teaching.*

*Substantial educational innovation is not frequently found on campuses in 1984, but at the University of Queensland a group of chemical engineers asked some fundamental questions about their curriculum and have found it wanting. Having diagnosed their problems they are attempting to address them through a number of new approaches which fall under the heading of resource-based learning. Bob Newell and some of his colleagues present their analysis of their problems and their solution.*

*A problem for students as much as for teachers is that of plagiarism. Do students plagiarise the work of others deliberately or through ignorance? Pauline Mahalski regards this as sufficiently serious for her to devote part of her psychology course dealing with it. She describes one approach which she uses with her students.*

*A major issue on the tertiary education scene which will eventually have an impact on all of us is that of equal employment provisions. Many Australian governments have decided to take equal opportunity seriously and have instituted legislation which will have an*

*increasing influence over our working lives. Jane Nicholls of FAUSA introduces the issue and examines some of the reasons why legislation has had to be introduced and what initiatives have already been taken in various institutions.*

*It is with regret that I have to announce the departure of the Assistant Editor, Liz deRome. Liz has made an important contribution to HERDSA News in the past two years, has shared my editorial burden and has been a congenial colleague. I wish her well in her new position.*

*The editorial task is made easier when others show an interest. I would welcome offers of assistance in commissioning articles, writing contributions and, most of all, proof reading. I shall be absent overseas on a Special Studies Program in the second half of the year and so help with the July '84 and March '85 issues would be particularly useful.*

*The November issue will be guest edited by Elizabeth Hegarty and Mike Prosser. Their theme is the contribution of research on student learning to higher education. They would welcome articles and ideas on any matters related to this. The address for correspondence is on the back page.*

*Dave Boud*

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## HERDSA AT HAMPSTEAD — Reflections of a Participant

In late November, 12 educational developers gathered on a hilltop overlooking the Yarra valley in a beautiful bush retreat called somewhat enigmatically Hampstead. For two and a half days we lived, worked, ate and relaxed together sharing a unique experience in the history of HERDSA — an event designed for educational developers using experiential learning methods to tackle everyday working problems.

People arrived for the event with various degrees of trepidation. The organisers were wondering whether it would work, the other participants wondering whether it was possible for educational developers to work effectively together and to gain something from the interaction. At the end all were delighted with the process and the outcome.

There was a loose timetable of events which the organisers had planned to allow time for large and small group work, for intense activity, for quiet reflection and for social cohesion. In the main, participants stuck to this and tried a variety of learning methods including role play, role reversal, alter-egoing, self-disclosure and listening, monodrama, guided brainstorming and various mixtures of these. There were also two planned structured events — a "getting to know you" on the evening of arrival and a time management exercise later.

Participants came from Victoria and New South Wales with one overseas visitor. They brought to the event a wide range of experience both of educational development and of facilitating learning. The process was however self-directed. We did not have nor did we want "a leader" or "an expert" — the groups determined their own agenda.

The content of the group work was problems which participants had submitted in advance. These problems

reflected difficulties people face in the role as educational consultant.

Problems included elements of credibility, effectiveness, role conflict, evaluation, methodology, place in the organisation, power, and many more. Participants explored their particular problem area in ways which suited them.

Through these experiences, and through living together in close proximity, sharing bedrooms, helping prepare the communal food, listening to music and quietly sipping wine and telling jokes on a starlit night, participants came closer together as colleagues and as friends. Most came to the event jaded, tired at the end of an academic year and leaving a pile of work behind on the desk. All left refreshed, exhilarated, having shared something of themselves with the group, having learned from the group and group experiences and feeling ready to tackle the educational development role with new strength and insight.

I think the event succeeded because it was carefully planned, because we trusted the processes but above all because participants came openly, honestly and cooperatively. We all gave what we could and took what we needed. All of us got to know our colleagues better and gained a new respect for their problems and achievements.

For the organisers it was a risk which worked. This is summed up in the reflections of one of the participants: "The wonderment at how such an unstructured agenda could be responsible for such a wealth of experience, learning and relationships . . . Although I was not too happy in prospect, I was delighted in retrospect."

Helen Edwards,  
Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences.

# Affirmative Action in the Australian Tertiary Sector<sup>1</sup>

Change, when it does come to tertiary institutions, tends to be in response to external forces. In the early 1980s the impetus for change was restrictions on funding, but in the late 1980s there are signs that other influences will be seen. One of the strongest of these is shown by the commitment of many States and the Federal Government to equality of employment opportunity. New South Wales is the state which has made the first moves in the area of affirmative action and it is likely that in the near future the impact of these policies on recruitment, and more particularly, staff development will be felt. Jane Nicholls has been following these developments and here she provides an introduction to some issues which will change a number of our current practices:

The Federal Government has a stated commitment to the principles of affirmative action for women in public and private employment. The Sex Discrimination Bill, outlawing sex discrimination in employment and education and establishing grievance procedures to deal with individual complaints, was passed by Parliament on 7 March this year. The Government is also considering legislation which would oblige employers, including universities and CAEs, to introduce affirmative action management plans to ensure that women are not discriminated against in appointment, promotion or conditions of employment.

This article will examine briefly the current employment situation of women in the University and college sectors, and the steps which have already been taken to redress the lack of balance between the sexes which is such a striking feature of the staff profiles of higher education institutions.

It has become almost a commonplace to remark that women are seriously under-represented in academic employment, and in most career administrative grades in universities and CAEs.

That this is so can not be denied. Only 9.6% of CAE academics above the level of Senior Lecturer are female (1982 figures).<sup>2</sup> In universities the situation is markedly worse; again using 1982 data, 3.9% in the top two grades (Professor and Associate Professor or Reader) are women.<sup>3</sup> It is in the tutorial ranks that women are concentrated, representing 43.5% of tutors in universities and a similar ratio in the college sector.<sup>4</sup> Detailed statistics on the tenure status of academics are difficult to find. Nevertheless we know that, in 1981, over half of all female university academics — 54.0% — did not hold tenured positions, compared with only 15.8% of males.<sup>5</sup> While the proportion of female academics certainly increased over the period of expansion in the tertiary sector during the seventies, there is some indication that women have been losing ground slightly over the last couple of years, as the funding squeeze has tightened its grip on university and college budgets. Since the majority of women are untenured, there is an obvious explanation for this trend.

Among general staff the situation for women is even worse. In universities it is only in the categories of library services that women enjoy a substantial majority at the professional levels, although slightly more females than males occupy professional positions in the health and counselling areas.<sup>6</sup> Even in these fields, senior positions are rarely held by women. Lower administrative grades are overwhelmingly female in their membership and there are few opportunities within the formal structure for advancement into professional or managerial grades.

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*... there is some evidence that (female academics) have been losing ground slightly over the last couple of years, as the funding squeeze has tightened its grip on university and college budgets.*

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While in 1982 34.4% of general staff in universities were female, women were not represented at all in the chief administrative grade, and made up only 4.4% of those at senior administrative levels. Of clerks and typists, however, 69.8% were women.<sup>7</sup> It is believed that the CAE sector does not present any improvement on the state of affairs in universities.

It is argued by unions representing academic and general staff on campus that the situation outlined above constitutes a demonstration that significant discrimination against women exists in universities and CAEs. In general this may refer to systemic or indirect discrimination, that is the features of a system — in this case the written and unwritten employment practices and traditions of those large and complex structures which are our institutions of higher learning. Direct discrimination, that is overt intentional behaviour stemming from the sexist attitudes of individuals also occurs in institutions of higher education — as many women will attest. The older universities in particular are more modelled on European institutions with hierarchies and tacit orthodoxies historically linked to medieval thought. Subtle, pervasive and unspoken traditional attitudes and practices which discriminate against women can easily prevail unnoticed in such an atmosphere. Those more recently established are often no more than superficially informal and flexible in their structure, and can be equally as discriminatory as they strive to emulate the more "respectable" institutions.

An example of systemic discrimination is the lack of adequate parental leave provisions which, especially in the past, has made it difficult for women to combine childbearing and childrearing with a career. For some categories of academic staff in some institutions — notably contract staff — paid maternity leave is still unavailable. While there are relatively simple solutions to this problem, for example, provision of adequate child care facilities and parental leave provisions, there are other types of indirect discrimination which are more

difficult to redress. This is particularly true of tacit assumptions about employment, such as the paradigm notion of the academic career according to which youthfulness is regarded as an indication of ability and potential: a "bright young thing" (usually a man) is often preferred to an older applicant. This constitutes discrimination against women since women are more likely to enter academic careers later in their lives. Redress here is a matter of uncovering hidden assumptions and establishing a watchdog mechanism to ensure that selection and promotions committees give due weight to relevant, rather than irrelevant, considerations.

Steps which can be taken to reduce the disadvantage experienced by women in tertiary education employment are in fact affirmative action measures. Affirmative action management plans involve the introduction and co-ordination on a comprehensive basis of employment policies designed to counter rules and practices which result in putting women at a disadvantage in their employment.

Affirmative action also involves addressing overt forms of discrimination, such as sexual harassment, by setting up grievance procedures to deal with complaints, and by educating and informing staff of their rights and responsibilities. Professional development courses designed specifically for women also often form part of affirmative action programmes.

Most higher education institutions have already made some progress in the provision of special facilities for the disabled. A wheelchair ramp, for instance, is an example of an affirmative action measure for physically handicapped people. It redresses a disadvantage, and it is a positive measure which enables equal access or opportunity to a group discriminated against by a structure of some sort — in this case the physical structure of a building. It involves some expenditure of money, time and effort in its planning and construction. Affirmative action initiatives which assist and encourage women also have these characteristics.

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*... no legislation currently existing or proposed in Australia contains reference to mandatory quotas for women or for any other group.*

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Positive discrimination is another matter. In the United States legislation which positively discriminates in favour of women and minority groups requires that a quota — a certain percentage of the employee body to be made up of the group in question — be met within a specified number of years. It may be that this is an effective way, or indeed the only way, to achieve a fair representation of women or of certain other groups in particular fields of work. Removing the barriers may not be enough, and attempts to force employers to act fairly may founder on deep-seated prejudices and old habits of thinking. Nevertheless, no legislation currently existing or proposed in Australia contains reference to mandatory quotas for women or for any other group. It is believed however, that a new federal law may require organisations to set *targets* for the proportion of women employees as one of the long-term goals in an affirmative action management plan.

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*Equal opportunity is what, ideally, should exist; affirmative action is not something beyond it, but rather something which leads us towards it.*

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The last in the battery of concepts used when these issues are discussed is equal opportunity itself. Equal employment opportunity, truly equal access to work and careers in all fields, is perhaps best seen as the goal which affirmative action policies are trying to achieve. Equal opportunity is what, ideally, should exist; affirmative action is not something beyond it, but rather something which leads us towards it.

Of course the basic premises here are that inequalities exist between various groups in Australian society, and that such a state of affairs is not desirable. While all manner of evidence and argument can be produced in support of this kind of claim, it is, in the final analysis, a political question which reflects values as well as facts.

For women students, universities and CAEs will not cease to be alienating places, where they see themselves as intruders, until these institutions are no longer male preserves. A structure in which men hold almost all of the senior teaching and administrative positions, and in which the few female staff are, by and large, marginalised and relatively powerless, do not afford real access to women. For women to get the most from their studies, female role models must be available to provide both academic and personal support.

Anti-discrimination legislation in New South Wales already requires large public employers to institute equal employment opportunity (EEO) management plans. Universities and CAEs, initially exempted, are now scheduled under the NSW Act and most have at least initiated work towards the development of a plan of affirmative action. Some institutions — notably the University of NSW, the NSW Institute of Technology and Kuring-gai CAE — took it upon themselves to decide, before being scheduled, to appoint EEO Officers or Directors. Others are now following suit.

Within New South Wales, however, some institutions and their Councils have demonstrated marked reluctance to take steps of this kind. It is largely through pressure from the Association of Women Employees of the University of Sydney (AWEUS) that a Research Fellow, Dr Gretchen Poiner, was appointed to investigate the position of women at that university. (Sydney University has since appointed an EEO Officer, Ms Sue Jobson, in compliance with the Anti-Discrimination Act.) At Macquarie University, also, it was not until a group called Women at Macquarie took up the cause that a research project into EEO in the University was commissioned. Both local and federal staff associations have lent support to campaigns by women on campus to force action on equal opportunity issues.

In other states things are not nearly as advanced. Staff associations and groups of women employees, sometimes acting in concert, have agitated for the implementation of EEO policies and the appointment of Directors of EEO. Campaigns have met with limited success, most institutions seeing fit only to set up an advisory committee or to commission research projects (some on an extremely short-term basis) on EEO. At least in the university sector groups on campus have been

active on this issue in all states except Tasmania. The University of Melbourne has employed a Research Fellow, Dr Shalini Reilly, as a result of a University Assembly Report on the position of women. Monash has advertised for someone to fill a similar position, despite strong representations from staff groups calling for the immediate introduction of an EEO management plan, and an EEO Co-ordinator. The University of Adelaide has added to its administrative handbook a comprehensive section dealing with sexual harassment, sexism in university teaching and non-sexist language. Other institutions in both sectors in response to pressures from female staff and students have established internal grievance procedures to deal with cases of sexual harassment.

The two national staff organisations in the higher education sector have strong policy on EEO. Since 1982, FAUSA has had a Standing Committee on Affirmative Action which oversees policy development in relevant areas, and which has been working on a number of projects to inform the university community and staff association members in particular about the problem of discrimination against women, and how it can be countered. The Federation of College Academics has a national women's committee, made up of representatives of like bodies in all states, which performs a role similar to the FAUSA committee.

In mid-1983 FAUSA reached agreement with the Australian Vice-Chancellors Committee (AVCC) on a statement on non-sexist terminology which has been circulated to all university administrations. Considerable progress has also been made with a National Guideline on equal employment opportunity, and agreement between the Federation and the AVCC may well be reached before the end of 1984. The Guideline sets out a number of statements of principle on EEO and offers a model for the setting up of appropriate committees and other machinery for the development of EEO in universities.

It is encouraging that consensus of this kind is possible between employer and employee groups, and it is indicative that there is broad agreement, at least in the higher education community, on the need for a more equitable deal for women in employment.

Consensus is not, however, universal. Some institutions have steadfastly refused to take up the issue, or else have

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*For women to get the most from their studies, female role models must be available to provide both academic and personal support.*

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managed merely to introduce token policies and relatively powerless watchdog committees. Appeals to institutional autonomy ought not to give universities and CAEs the right to exploit or discriminate against any group or individual. If women across all 60 Australian higher education institutions are to enjoy equality of opportunity in employment, then comprehensive federal legislation will be necessary. The road to EEO is long, tortuous and perhaps costly in effort and money terms. The consensus we have already reached should be a strong foundation for federally co-ordinated efforts to achieve equal opportunity for both staff and students in universities and CAEs.

Jane Nicholls,  
Federation of Australian  
University Staff Associations.

#### References

- 1 I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Bronwyn Davies, of the University of New England, in the preparation of this article.
- 2 Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, unpublished data 1982.
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 FAUSA Database and Australian Bureau of Statistic, University Statistics 1981.
- 6 Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission, unpublished data, 1982.
- 7 Ibid.

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## Teaching and Teacher Education: An International Journal of Research and Studies

### CALL FOR PAPERS

A new journal, **Teaching and Teacher Education: An International Journal of Research and Studies**, will be published by Pergamon Press beginning January, 1985. Papers should be submitted to the Editor, N.L. Gage, School of Education, Stanford University, Stanford, CA 94305, or to one of the Associate Editors: Sara M. Delamont, Dept of Sociology, University College, Cardiff, P.O. Box 78, CF4 IXL, Wales, U.K., or Michael J. Dunkin, Centre for Teaching and Learning, The University of Sydney, N.S.W. Australia, 2006. For further information concerning the purpose and scope or directions for contributors, write to the editor or one of the associate editors.

Authors who wish to remain anonymous to referees should use separate pages for all identifying information (name, affiliation, references or footnotes to one's own work, etc). These pages will be removed before the manuscript is sent to the referees who will themselves remain anonymous except for acknowledgement as a group.

### Congratulations

**Professor Dick Johnson** has been appointed Head of the Department of Education and Youth Affairs in the Commonwealth Government. Dick is Professor of Classics at the Australian National University and has held a senior administrative position there. He is well known to HERDSA members as a current member of the HERDSA Executive and as co-leader of the CTEC funded national series of workshops for senior staff on Departmental Reviews.

# Plagiarism: An Issue of Ignorance?

Are we accusing students of Plagiarism when in fact theirs is a crime of ignorance? Pauline Mahalski believes this may be the case and she describes a novel program undertaken to educate students in the use of source material.

Last year we became aware that plagiarism was a problem within the psychology department, particularly among third year students. Lines of published text were being inserted into essays without quotation marks and some essays were almost unedited transcripts of Scientific American articles. The problem was most obvious in two new courses of physiological psychology and neuropsychology, probably because there are more facts in these subdisciplines and fewer controversies compared with the material in our longer established courses, such as cognitive, developmental and social psychology.

We decided to treat this problem as a matter of ignorance rather than sin and I have since devised a short training programme for our introductory students. It seemed important to focus students' attention on what they should be doing at the start of their university studies and these skills should be portable to all other disciplines, not just psychology. The programme consisted of a series of homework assignments of increasing complexity, which were integrated into the practical course and carried out over the first few weeks of this teaching year. The requirements for proper use and citation of other authors' work, seem to fall into a set of subroutines. This is that students should:

1. identify the important information required
2. be able to summarise the material in their own words
3. cite the source of the material using established conventions
4. integrate the material between different authors, and with their own work
5. compile a reference list or bibliography at the end of an essay or report.

Students use a laboratory manual for their practical course which begins with a general section about grading, internal assessment, absence and so forth. It has been difficult in the past to get students to attend to this general information, so their first homework assignment was simply to go through these notes and identify the important points by some form of underlining (see (1) above). During the next practical class they were shown facsimile pages on the overhead projector with the main points underlined, so they could match their judgement against my own.

The second assignment required students to use part of their required text book (always a desirable practice!) and integrate part of the text with an experiment which they had performed themselves to discover what makes people change their opinions during arguments. Students were directed to the appropriate pages of this text which would help them to discuss the question, "How can social influence modify opinions?". They were told to mark appropriate parts, express the material in their own words,

include it in their discussion, relate it to their experiment and cite the source of the information in their discussion and under "References" at the end of the report. They were also referred to the section in their laboratory manuals which gave instructions about how to cite books and journals. Demonstrators, who take the students' practical classes and mark their work, were given a photocopy of the relevant section of the students' text and advised how to mark the students' work.

The third homework assignment concentrated on the ability to summarise, and also tested understanding of a complex but important idea, which could be summarised in that old Gestalt Psychology dictum that, "The whole is always more than the sum of its parts."

The fourth, and for those who did it well, final assignment was similar to the second, but related to more complicated material from two journal articles. It was not related to the practical work performed at the same time, but related to work done in the second term. Students were given two excerpts from New Zealand research about adolescent smoking habits which seem to have produced contradictory findings. They were asked to identify the contradictory results, present them briefly in their own words with due citation and suggest why the results were different. The latter was much more difficult, however not all students were expected to be able to suggest a possible reason for the contradictory findings, it was a bonus if they did. Those who carried out the rest of the assignment satisfactorily were not required to do the follow-up assignment, which was similar to the one about smoking but was about another topic covered during the practical classes in the second term.

At the same time as students were carrying out these homework assignments, they were also carrying out a simple library assignment designed to get them into the building, locate the psychology sections and use the catalogues. This provided them with more models of correct citation by author and topic, and showed why it was useful and necessary to be disciplined about this aspect of their work.

I do not intend having any more special assignments related to this anti-plagiarism campaign but will use every opportunity to remind the students what they should be doing. When they received their list of essay topics for Term 1 they were given some suggested references and reminded about the homework assignments and objectives behind them. Some demonstrators have already noticed that students are being more careful about citation in their reports of their practical work. We will continue to encourage them into good working habits.

Pauline A. Mahalski,  
Otago University.

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## Conference on Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Place University of Western Ontario

Dates 17 - 20 June 1984

Information Educational Development Office, University College, The University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario N6A 3K7, Canada.

# A Plan for Resource-based Education for Chemical Engineers

There are few occasions on which a department decides that a fundamental reappraisal of its teaching programme is necessary and has the courage to make the investment required for a substantial revision. A current example of this is the Department of Chemical Engineering at the University of Queensland. The department has agreed to implement a scheme of resource-based learning based upon self-paced laboratories, computer aided learning and audio-visual resource material. Three of the staff involved describe this initiative:

## Summary

There is a grave need to modernise engineering education within universities. This contribution presents the current problems and describes the proposed plan of the Queensland Department of Chemical Engineering to implement a scheme for resource-based education. The financial cost over the period 1984-1989 is estimated to be as high as half a million dollars. Additional efforts of dedication and self-sacrifice by staff are necessary but cannot be quantified.

## The problem

The traditional mode of instruction in engineering over the past 40 years has been mainly lectures supplemented by some problem and laboratory classes, and yet outside the University a major information revolution has taken place. In the light of the changes outside the University environment, the time is prudent to evaluate whether better use of new resources can alleviate the problems that are perceived by this Department. These problems are:

- **Content** The content of the degree course is expanding in response to rapid growth in both the breadth and depth in engineering knowledge.

The rapidly expanding base of engineering knowledge tends to submerge and confuse students' understanding of fundamental principles.

- **Structural changes** The Graduates in industry have at their command a vast resource of information — databases and computer software packages. Increasingly they are no longer expected to carry out routine engineering calculations, rather they have to select the correct computer package and to critically evaluate the results.

To perform these tasks a student should be thoroughly grounded in fundamentals and exposed to various software packages.

- **Laboratory** Much of the laboratory equipment and many experiments in the Queensland Department of Chemical Engineering are becoming obsolete.

As a result, some of the skills students are being taught are increasingly irrelevant in the modern industrial environment. Indeed, in many areas industrial practice is far in advance of our laboratory experiments.

- **Student/staff ratio** The increasing student/staff ratio means less feedback to students in terms of comments on tutorial problems and practical reports.

We need to promote more interactive teaching practices and more efficient use of student-staff contact time, i.e. more opportunity for individual contact and discussion and fewer formal "one-way" lectures.

- **Literacy** In the age of electronic media, incoming students are less inclined and less able to extract information efficiently from books. While we may decry this trend, we must nevertheless adapt to it.

Course notes, directed reading and information databases are some possible aids in this area.

- **Motivation** The changing social environment and the secondary school environment are no longer producing students who are "automatically" motivated.

We need to introduce instructional techniques to instil motivation as well as concepts and knowledge. Course and subject objectives and the increased use of interactive media and personal contact will assist.

## A solution: Resource-based education

To meet the challenge of educating chemical engineers for the 1990s a fundamental evaluation of the curriculum and the mode of instruction is being carried out in the Department. It is recognised that the traditional mode of instruction needs to be reviewed together with re-evaluation of the curriculum.

After much discussion in the Department during 1983, a plan has evolved to change the mode of instruction towards a resource-based and partly self-paced learning environment.

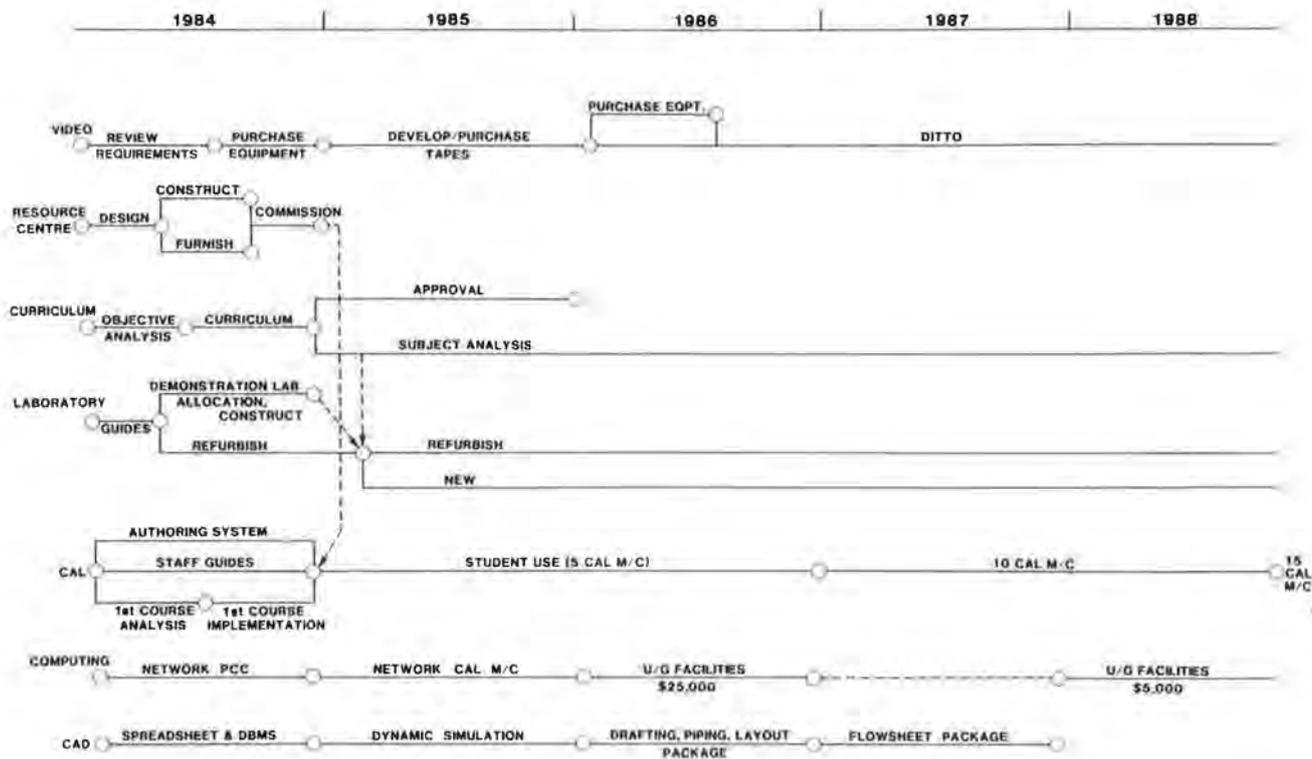
It is planned to implement the new mode progressively from 1985, after a detailed curriculum re-evaluation and writing of aims and objectives for the course and individual subjects has been carried out. The figure shows the current planning diagram for the project. The main features of the new scheme are:

- Reducing the total number of lectures given in the course and reserving the remaining lectures to concentrate on fundamental principles.

Currently there are a large number of lectures and students are often unable to discriminate between fundamental principles and the vast amount of factual material presented.

- Setting up self-paced laboratories, with regular opening hours attended by academic staff. The laboratories will be refurbished to modern engineering standards and experiments will be designed to meet specific objectives. Written or video tape aids will be available to assist students in carrying out experiments.

Currently, students are required to carry out specific experiments at scheduled classes. In a class-like atmosphere with many students working at one time, staff-student contact often takes the form of staff advising students what to do rather than discussion of the results



and underlying precepts. By providing better guidance on how experiments should be conducted, more time will be available for discussion of results. The quality of staff-student contact should improve.

- Setting up a self-paced computer-aided learning (CAL) laboratory with regular opening hours attended by academic staff. Only material specifically suited for CAL will be taught in this mode. Some CAL courseware will be prepared by our own staff and where possible some will be purchased. It is envisaged that the CAL laboratory will be open 11 hours per day allowing students to learn at their own pace. A staff member will be in attendance to discuss problems with students providing effective personal contact.

Currently students are taught through lectures often at a pace not appropriate to them and at a time when they may not be receptive, and with little or no opportunity for review.

- Making available a comprehensive range of chemical engineering software packages, physical and chemical properties data package, computer-aided design packages, etc. We are in the process of building up such a library of packages.

Students will be exposed to resources comparable to those available in industry. They will be trained in the use of computer databases for access to reference knowledge and in critical evaluation of computer results in a manner required of them as practising engineers in industry.

- Making available audio-visual reference material. Much industrial training is presented today with the aid of professional audio-visual aids. Some of these quality aids are also ideal university teaching aids and an attempt will be made to obtain such materials wherever possible.

Audio-visual materials, particularly video-tapes, offer the opportunity of bringing the industrial environment to the student when the student requires this information. Presently the student receives this information only from field trips or printed media, the timing of which may not coincide with the need for such knowledge.

- Setting up a laboratory of demonstration experiments.

They will be very simple and easy to operate experiments for illustrating basic principles and a variety of observed phenomena. Many will be transportable to lecture or tutorial and all will be accessible to students when they wish.

The ability to observe phenomena in the laboratory without the usual long preparation, procedures, and reporting and being able to choose their own time and pace should provide students with motivation and a valuable complement to other resources.

### Conclusions

To successfully carry out this major programme of modernisation will require:

- a commitment by the Departmental staff to the new concept
- the willingness of Departmental staff to make short-term sacrifices
- the diversion of financial resources to fund the scheme.

Discussion within the Department during 1983 has resulted in enthusiastic support from the staff. As part of the plan each staff member will be relieved in turn of normal duties to be retrained in CAL and video techniques and to prepare new resources.

The necessary financial resources will need to be found from such sources as equipment and computing grants, salaries (by delaying appointments), consulting funds and any special development grants that can be obtained.

While each element in the proposed mode of operation is not novel, the implementation of the integrated package on a Departmental basis in chemical engineering is both new and challenging. This is the beginning.

### Acknowledgement

The ideas for this project are the outcome of discussions with a large number of people. We wish to acknowledge particularly input from Dr B.W. Carss (Director of CAL), Mr A.W. Coulter (Director of Computing) and Professor E. Roe (Director of TEDI) all of the University of Queensland.

Bob Newell, Peter Lee, Ming Leung,  
University of Queensland.



to be a particular need, identified in the discussions as a series of "How to" booklets. There is a lack of short, easily accessible, down-to-earth guides to the wide range of activities undertaken by academic staff. It was felt that such booklets could perform a valuable function in two respects: direct assistance to academic staff in a variety of areas of activity and as "texts" for academic development activities in institutions.

HERDSA's Publications Committee has listed a large number of topics for individual booklets. They include: evaluating subjects, planning and preparing, assessing student learning, conducting seminars and tutorials, supervising postgraduate students, lecturing, conducting laboratory classes, curriculum development, running an academic department, evaluating individual performance, and many others. It proposes to adopt the following procedures:

- decide priorities (order of publication)
- commission appropriate authors [but see below]
- provide guidance as to audience, length, format, type of content, deadlines, trialling
- initial refereeing by Publications Committee
- refereeing by at least three referees, including at least one practitioner
- reports to Publications Committee which will recommend to the Executive for or against publication or seek

further advice.

The first booklet in the series has been accepted and will be published shortly. It is *Planning and Conducting Reviews in Colleges and Universities* by Rod McDonald and Ernest Roe. Two other booklets have been commissioned, on assessing student learning and on conducting seminars and tutorials.

Although the Executive intends to rely to a considerable extent on commissioning particular individuals with known expertise in a particular area, it would welcome suggestions, proposals and offers. If you would like to contribute to this series, please write to the convenor of the Publications Committee, Dr Bob Ross, CALT, Griffith University, Nathan, 4111, Qld, providing a brief outline of the proposed content.

The intention is to publish in a cheap but attractive format, keeping the price as low as possible, and to offer very substantial discounts for bulk purchases. However, marketing details are still being worked out.

Further information about this significant HERDSA venture will appear in the next issue of HERDSA News. Meanwhile suggestions from members concerning any aspect of the booklet series will be very welcome, as will offers of contributions or any other assistance.

Ernest Roe.

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## REVIEWS

**Informed Professional Judgement**, Ernest Roe and Rod McDonald. St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 1983. 300 pp. ISBN 0-7022-1724-7, \$30.00. (Available through HERDSA as a pre-publication offer to members for \$27.00)

This book is a most valuable addition to the literature on evaluation in higher education. It provides a thoughtful and practical introduction to principles and methods of evaluation which can be used as the basis for informed professional judgements about whole courses, single course units, or the teaching performance of individuals conducting courses. I highly recommend the book to HERDSA members, and I urge them to promote it within their institutions by bringing it to the attention of senior academic and administrative staff who are frequently making important judgements about courses and the teaching performance of individuals. The book's purpose is to help educational institutions, and particularly the senior academic and administrative staff in them, to make better informed judgements about their educational activities.

The authors, who should be well known to HERDSA members, have for the past two years been involved in conducting a nationwide series of workshops on evaluation for senior academic staff. As is noted by Peter Karmel in a foreword to the book, the workshops proved successful and were highly valued by participants. The book has been developed from the file of materials produced for the

workshops. It is subtitled "A guide to evaluation in post-secondary education" and its style of presentation is most easily described as being that of a handbook or manual for evaluation in educational settings.

There are five chapters in the book. The first, entitled "Considerations in Evaluation", addresses the basic considerations in planning and carrying out evaluations. These include questions about what the purpose of the evaluation is, who should carry out the evaluation, what information should be sought, from whom and by what means the information should be sought, how the data should be reported, and how the evaluation can be evaluated. In addition, there is an interesting and helpful discussion of the problems of politics and climate as they apply to evaluations.

The second, third and fourth chapters are entitled "Evaluation of Course Units", "Evaluation of Whole Courses" and "Evaluation of Teaching" respectively. The striking characteristic of these chapters is the variety of methods for obtaining evaluative information which are described. Furthermore, the descriptions are thorough. Not only is each method discussed in some detail, but examples of it are also provided. In the end, anyone without any prior knowledge of evaluation would feel capable of applying the method to their circumstances. The other striking characteristic is the way in which these chapters lay stress on obtaining evaluative information from a wide range of sources, including students, colleagues and documentary materials.

The final chapter, entitled "Some Concluding Reflections", returns to the theme of the book, that is, the importance of the thoughtful and systematic collection of

information as the means of providing a sound basis for the exercise of informed professional judgement. The authors suggest, however, that such activity is most likely to be positive and constructive when it is undertaken within a climate in which academic staff have a continuing commitment both to their own and each other's professional development. And so we are left with a noble challenge.

The five chapters are followed by a substantial portion of the book containing "Exercises and Case Studies". These are drawn from the workshops and are intended to dramatise important issues and questions. In the first exercise, for example, the reader is given a range of documentary and survey information about Mr N's "Introduction to Journalism" course and is asked to respond to it as if a member of the course approval committee discussing the unit. In my opinion it will be rare for individual readers to work through these exercises and case studies themselves. But, if given an opportunity to work on them in small groups, then many hours of highly productive fun can be assured.

There is an appendix by Jerome Winston, entitled "Notes on Planning for Data Analysis in Evaluative Studies". This presents guidelines for planning data analysis and is likely to be most meaningful to those of us who at some stage have suffered from having done many of the things he says are "don'ts". And, finally, there is a comprehensive and useful list of references on evaluation.

I was puzzled by the sudden reference in the early part of chapter four to a possible second volume which will cover the evaluation of the overall performance of academic staff other than their teaching performance. Forewarning of the second volume might have come earlier. In any case, such a second volume would be most welcome as a weak spot in this part of the book is that it could not cover those other aspects of the performance of staff. It would also be pleasing to see in a future volume (or volumes) as a treatment, following the style of this book, of the evaluation of departments, institutions, equipment used by academic staff, and student and staff support programmes and services. One minor suggestion for future volumes is that all references to cooking and recipe books should be excised. There is a risk, I think, that readers of a book such as this might be tempted to regard it simply as a book of recipes to be followed whenever you wish to do an evaluation. Such an uncritical acceptance of the contents of the book would bother the authors, I am sure, as much as it would bother me.

The approach of this book struck me as being remarkably fair, gentle and yet resolute. It does not attempt to bully the reader into one way or another of doing evaluations, or even into doing evaluations at all. Its approach is too honest and reasonable for this. But its message is consistent and is presented forcefully throughout: being reflective and systematic in the collection of information about courses, units or teaching performance is the basis for better informed professional judgements in these areas. The book itself is a fine example of the reflective and systematic approach which it advances.

Martin Hayden,  
Lincoln Institute of Health Sciences.

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**The Effective Use of Role Play: A Handbook for Teachers and Trainers**, Morry van Ments (1983). ISBN 0-89398-166-9. \$38.95. Distributed by Pitmans Publishing Pty Ltd.

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For people first venturing into the use of role play, this book offers a useful introduction to the shoals one is likely to encounter. The author describes the range of functions that role play can fulfil and discusses the different approaches appropriate to achieving different ends. It is possibly as an introduction to this area that the book works best. However a scan of the table of contents should also be reassuring to the more experienced workshop leader, in terms of the range of issues included. In this sense it is an ambitious undertaking, however it succeeds, probably because of the breadth rather than the depth of the discussion. It will be of use to practitioners if only because it lists and articulates so many of the issues with which they have to come to grips. The structured approach to designing and conducting a programme using role play is thoughtful and will be appreciated by many. The sensitivity of the author's approach to his subject is unfortunately marred by sexist language, which is not ameliorated by the disclaimer in the foreword, and is disappointing in so recent a book dealing with human interactions.

Elizabeth deRome,  
NSW Public Service Board.

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**Training Activities for Teachers in Higher Education**, Vol. 1. Pat Cryer (Ed.); Guildford, Surrey, SRHE, 1982 (64 editorial pages, 66 resource masters). ISSN 0262-7752. (£15; members £10, post free from SRHE)

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It is believed that university teachers talk to each other very little about their classroom activities and experiences. I also suspect that workshop leaders engaged in staff development are similarly prone to over-privatise their teaching work. What measures can they take to deliberately open it up? This volume, the first in a promised series by an SRHE working group, is an example of one approach to sharing our collective wisdom.

The exercises, games, simulations and workshop activities it contains have all been produced and tested by people actively involved in training teachers in Higher Education, and their intention is to share their own methods and techniques with others, and to invite others to contribute to future volumes. This seems to me an admirable approach to supporting and vitalising staff development.

How successful is this particular volume in achieving this aim? A reviewer can examine the activities only at face value, since the book is intended of course to be used, not simply read. At this level, however they impress with their rich insights, thorough detail, painstaking formulation and most substantial promise.

The opening contains three crucial sections: Criteria for a training activity, How to use the materials, and Guidelines for organisers. These are dense with information and ideas, presented clearly and concisely. It is indispensable guidance for the reader who intends to try the activities, particularly because here is where we find most of the group's indication of its general philosophical position about "workshopping" — a point to be returned to later.

There follows a substantial chapter comprising three "starters" and one "finisher"; then five chapters each devoted to a major "core" activity of the sort that would

be central to a workshop session. Each is excellently organised into sensible subsections (synopsis, duration, materials, number of participants, physical setting, procedures, etc.) and then follows a collection of notes and materials (resource masters) to be copied for use in one's own workshop.

General layout, design, readability, accessibility and proofing are all of a high standard and the book should be a pleasure to use. Bibliographies are extensive and appear most useful. Pains have been taken to trace and cite the authorship of each "idea" behind an activity, difficult though this must be in many cases. A dual copyright policy is followed: general editorial matter (on orange paper) is protected, but resource materials (on white) may be reproduced for teaching purposes.

Now a few points on the debit side. I believe many women will be unhappy with the use of "he" and "him", and unsatisfied with the somewhat lame defence that it simplifies the style. One would hope that the SRHE endorses non-sexist writing style guidelines. If so, this should be attended to in future volumes.

The only layout fault is that some pages are unnumbered; and the problem of finding quickly something you want is not helped by the odd policy of citing only the author's name in the running heads on each page. Surely the activity title is indispensable here.

The norm seems to be for longer workshops, one day or more. Hence we find a neglect of the needs of half-day workshop leaders, but this we can only hope will be made up in future volumes. Starters and finishers for long workshops all take an hour or more, for example. One wants to know what there is that serves the same function when there are only ten to twenty minutes available in the three to four hour meeting.

How might a leader help prepare and orient participants towards a particular activity? This can be crucial for success when what is to follow is a game or activity far removed (on the surface) from obvious academic concerns. Participants surely need to be "sold" the idea that this game will be worthwhile, since the notes admit how many activities will appear "unorthodox procedures" compared with teaching methods customarily used by most academics. Should they be expected to just slip into engagement without some wise and helpful preamble from the leader?

One could also take issue with some of the claims (implicit, at least) among the philosophical premises within the introductory pages. I wonder whether, or with what confidence, we really *know* that "in an action

context — learning by doing — (there exists) a *more congruent and long-lasting* kind of learning"? I think many of us believe so, or hope so, but is it more than a point of faith? This highlights the importance of the working group developing a more rigorous philosophical stance, in parallel with its development of yet greater numbers of workshop activities. It is to be hoped that much thought will be given to this, since the present statements need testing, refining, and much more development.

Which finally leads me to toss aside the reviewer's cap and address some more general issues a publication of this sort brings to our notice. Among pressing needs for staff developers in higher education to look at, I would suggest three, for starters. Any one of them has implications for a project such as the publication of these activities manuals.

First, we ought to be documenting what we do (successfully) in our own workshops, keeping records of them — their styles, programme details, techniques — as we refine them over the years into tried and reliable approaches. Then to publish them, as this volume does. More sharing can only be a good thing.

Second, we need to find out more about what our participants think. This is research — to replace so many of the perhaps false beliefs and assumptions we presently base our decisions upon, regarding why people come to workshops, what they expect or believe they need, and what background of educational ideas and justifications they have.

Third, we need to critically examine and analyse the things we do and develop, among other things, a typology of workshops. It is clear that the activities in this volume cover a wide range of types, aim at a wide range of intentions, and would meet the needs of a wide range of audiences. What are the significant discriminating characteristics of all our workshops? Do we even have a vocabulary with which to describe them accurately?

No doubt readers who, like myself, regularly turn to Pfeiffer and Jones (or similar sources) for workshop ideas will take heart as they read this new venture in print, for unlike those others it is expressly tailored to higher education needs and settings. Hopefully it will not be long before further volumes arrive from the working party and we will happily find ourselves turning first to our library of SRHE activities books!

Lee Andresen,  
University of New South Wales.

## CORRECTION

In the article "Evaluating a TAFE College", *HERDSA News*, November 1983 issue, two sentences were transposed in the original editing. The final paragraph in the first column on page 9 should have read:

### First steps

The initial directions for the work were provided at a national workshop followed by a meeting of the project's national advisory committee. At this time there was agreement that:

- the underlying aim of the project was to bring about the improvement of TAFE Colleges;
- the decision to conduct a college evaluation should not be imposed from outside but should be the result of

internal initiatives;

- the committee or team charged with the task of conducting a college evaluation should mainly come from within the college, with expert external help to be provided as necessary.
- the audience for the evaluation should primarily be the internal college community, namely, staff, students and council. Just who, beyond the primary audience, should receive the evaluation report is a question of considerable importance for the college evaluation team to consider. While there may be pressure to keep the information confidential within the college community only the more naive would believe such a thing is possible in this day and age. It is probably, therefore, wise to begin the exercise with a "secondary" audience in mind, e.g. central office administrators.

# ABSTRACTS

HERDSA Abstracts are based on a regular survey of relevant literature. They are intended for use by tertiary teachers, research workers, students, administrators and librarians. The abstracts are classified into the same groups used by the Society for Research into Higher Education in their quarterly publication *Research into higher education abstracts*.

The Abstracts attempt a coverage of current English language publications in Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. Publications describing research, teaching, administration, staff and students in higher education are abstracted.

Educational or other non-profit organisations may reproduce a limited number of these abstracts in their own publications provided that HERDSA receives suitable acknowledgment.

HERDSA is most grateful to its abstractors and the co-operation of the editors of a number of journals abstracted in this issue. The Abstracts are edited by Robert Cannon, Director, Advisory Centre for University Education, The University of Adelaide, Adelaide, S.A. 5000.

**Note:** Authors or editors who would like abstracts of articles, books or monographs to be included are invited to send a copy of their work, together with an abstract, to the Abstracts editor.

## A GENERAL

Anderson, D.S. and Eaton, E. **Australian higher education research and society part II: Equality of opportunity and accountability 1966-1982.** Higher Education Research and Development, 1, 2, 1982: 89-128.

This is the second part of a review of research on higher education since World War II. Part I, published in the previous issue of the Journal, examined how research responded to post-war reconstruction of the later 1940s and the rising community expectations for education of the 1950s and 1960s. In Part II the themes are equality of opportunity and the end of expansion. By the mid-1960s many researchers were questioning the representativeness of participation in higher education and the nature of the education process. More recently some of the research questions have been reminiscent of the late 1940s, that is, how can the efficiency of higher education be improved. Whereas expansion and optimism characterised the first thirty post-war years however, the context is now one of reduced resources and some pessimism.

(Journal abstract)

Karmel, P. **Learning and earning — education and employment as activities for youth,** The Australian Journal of Education, 27, 3, 1983: 260-273.

Any discussion of future policies for the education and employment of young people must take account of the changes that have taken place in the economy since the great expansion of education in the 1960s. The 1960s and early '70s provide a bench-mark against which to measure more recent trends. This paper examines that bench-mark and then discusses the changes that have taken place in the 1970s and which must be taken into account as background factors in the formulation of future policies.

(Journal abstract)

Standish, P.E.M. **Accounting education in Australia: 1982-83,** Accounting and Finance, 23, 2, November 1983: 1-30.

This review of accounting education draws attention to some serious problems and calls for greater co-operation with the accounting profession in the development of both the undergraduate curriculum and the applied or clinical stages of accounting education.

(RAC)

## B SYSTEMS AND INSTITUTIONS

Dufty, N.F. **Members' views on the staff association and its role in the decision structure.** Journal of Educational Administration, 20, 2, Summer 1982: 200-212.

The views of academic staff in a large CAE were sought on a number of aspects of their staff association with particular reference to its role in the organisation's decision structure. Generally speaking, staff make little use of their association as a channel of communication or as a means of exercising influence on those committees on which the association has ex officio membership. Measures of active and passive participation are highly inter-correlated and so are levels of satisfaction with the association's performance of its functions. Discriminant analysis suggests that participation in the association is related to staff satisfaction with the operation of decision-making machinery at the School rather than the institutional level. Measures of satisfaction are positively related to staff members' integration with the organisation, indicating a degree of incorporation. This seems a consequence of the situation rather than any shortcoming of the association itself. A general consideration of the appropriate role of staff associations leads to the conclusion that they have a very limited function. In these circumstances participation in their activities may be explained by the symbolic nature of participation itself.

(Journal abstract)

Juchan, R. **Climate of an academic department.** Journal of Educational Administration, 20, 1, Winter 1982: 98-116.

This paper reports an investigation into climate of an academic department of an English polytechnic. Background discussion is provided on "departmental" and climate concepts and the research approach and perspective employed for the investigation detailed. To collate and summarise "climate" data, a climate "cobweb" model is presented and then employed to examine and sum the data to form a multi-faceted climate picture of the department.

(Journal abstract)

## C TEACHING AND LEARNING

Beswick, W., Cooper, D. and Whelan, G. **Videotape demonstration of physical examination: evaluation of its use in medical undergraduate teaching.** Medical Education, 16, 1982: 197-201.

A videotape demonstration of the physical examination of the alimentary system was used, in place of a traditional lecture, in the first week of a teaching programme for half of a group of commencing clinical students. At the end of the week, these students obtained higher scores than the matched controls in a clinical assessment which utilised an objective scoring-chart devised especially for this study.

(Journal summary)

Boud, D. and Lublin, J. **Self assessment in professional education.** Report to the ERDC, Sydney, Tertiary Education Research Centre. The University of New South Wales, 1983. 34 pp plus Appendices.

The feasibility of introducing student self assessment into undergraduate courses in professional areas is examined. The study used a series of case studies from engineering, law, architecture and dentistry to illustrate a variety of methods and to demonstrate how self assessment can be used to enable students to take greater responsibility for their own learning and to monitor their own progress. The major issues discussed include the relationship between assessment and teaching and learning activities, the central importance of staff attitudes, and the validity of self and peer assessments. The report includes a detailed discussion of the stages of implementation of self assessment practices in the classroom and concludes with recommendations for further development of self assessment in professional education.

(Report abstract)

Colditz, G.A., Sheenan, M. **The impact of instructional style on the development of professional characteristics.** *Medical Education*, 16, 1982: 127-132.

First-year subjects were rated according to Basil Bernstein's concepts as to the degree of classification and framing they involved. Students were then asked to rate the degree to which each subject encouraged, discouraged or neither encouraged nor discouraged cognitive, interpersonal and professional skills. It was found that subjects which were strongly classified and framed only encouraged skills required for factual recall. Weakly classified and framed subjects failed to encourage these skills but encouraged self-educative, interpersonal and professional skills. It was concluded that changing either the type or quantity of content in a curriculum will not effect the acquisition of these latter skills. Teaching styles and curriculum structure must also be amended.

(Journal summary)

Cooper, D., Beswick, W. and Whelan, G. **Intensive bedside teaching of physical examination to medical graduates: evaluation including the effect of group size.** *Medical Education*, 17, 1983: 311-315.

The effectiveness of intensive bedside teaching of techniques of physical examination of the alimentary system to students commencing their clinical training was assessed. All students viewed a videotape demonstrating these techniques and then participated in a morning practice examination session but only half of the class received afternoon bedside teaching of physical examination in addition. Teaching in history taking was used as a "placebo" for the control group, and half the students in each of the study and control groups were taught in units of four, the other half in units of eight. Thus the effect of group size could also be estimated. After one week, the students' performance of a physical examination was assessed using a standardised scoring chart which demonstrated good reliability. The study group performed significantly better than the control and within the study group there was a trend for the students taught in smaller units to perform better.

(Journal summary)

Dunkin, M.J. **A review of research on lecturing.** *Higher Education Research and Development*, 2, 1, 1983: 63-78.

Research on lecturing has been addressed to two main issues, the effectiveness of lecturing in comparison with other teaching methods and the differences between more effective and less effective lecturing. This article summarises conclusions reached by earlier reviewers concerning the first issue. It then presents and discusses research on specific aspects of lecturing in relation to the second issue. These specific aspects concern content coverage, clarity, expressiveness and management. Research on syntheses of specific aspects of lecturing is also discussed. The article concludes with suggestions for future research. One suggestion is that more attention be given to the study of lecturing in field rather than experimental settings.

(Journal abstract)

Flanagan, J. and Juchau, R. **The core of the curriculum for accounting undergraduates — an Australian study.** *Accounting and Finance*, 23, 2, November 1983: 67-80.

This paper reports a study that adapted an American curriculum questionnaire to identify a common core of accounting knowledge from a list of 190 topics. Senior practitioners' and educators' perceptions were surveyed to reach conclusions about the content of the common core and also the separate cores of accounting knowledge for the areas Financial Accounting, Managerial Accounting and Auditing.

(Journal abstract)

MacNamara, M. and Weekes, W.H. **The action learning model of experiential learning for developing managers.** *Human Relations*, 35, 10, 1982: 879-902.

The purpose of this paper is to collate a theoretical background for the action learning model of management education. The paper relates the learning processes that occur in the action learning model to the basic concepts of group dynamics proposed by Bion. Many writers consider that management education should be active and experience-based, problem-oriented, continuous, supportive, and modified by feedback. Students should have a high level of motivation. The action learning model meets all these criteria. In addition, it has the ability to harness unconscious forces that can be generated in group work if the group is properly formed and led. Bion identified these forces as the protomental system, which derives from the potential valency of each member of the group. The interchange of new learning experiences between the members of the group has been likened to symbiosis by Revans. The potential valency of each member of the group — and hence the symbiotic effect — can be reinforced by the group leader or set adviser and this is a distinctive characteristic of the action learning model.

(Journal abstract)

Marshall, J.R. **How we measure problem-solving ability.** *Medical Education*, 17, 1983: 319-324.

A review of some of the more recent literature on problem solving is presented. An attempt is made to identify factors which may lead to discrediting the PMP (Patient Management Problem) as a measure of problem-solving ability. A definition of competence in problem solving is proposed and the question of scoring is discussed. A possible method for future research is suggested.

(Journal summary)

Marshall, J.R., Fleming, P., Heffernan, M. and Kasch, S. **Pilot study use of PMPs.** *Medical Education*, 16, 1982: 365-366.

Patient management problems (PMPs) have been used for many years in an attempt to design tests capable of measuring clinical problem-solving ability. Problems have arisen particularly related to criterion validity, though some studies have suggested that content and construct validity are satisfactory. One of the major problems has been that a common definition of problem-solving ability has not been developed yet. In addition, various formats have been used with considerable variety in construction, possibly influencing outcomes, and scoring procedures have not been standardised. A serious charge has been that PMPs are content specific and therefore are unreliable and not valid for measuring any general characteristic such as problem-solving ability (assuming this exists).

(Journal summary)

Newble, D.I. **The critical incident technique: a new approach to the assessment of critical performance.** *Medical Education*, 17, 1983: 401-403.

Owing to the deficiencies in viva examinations and word rating of medical students, new approaches to the measurement of students' clinical ability are being examined. Although clinical examinations were structured as a major component of final year examinations there was still a need to increase student performance standards. Another method of examination, which involves rating students in a ward situation as carrying

out either "good" or "bad" clinical performances, was studied. A pilot study using sixth years established the feasibility of this approach, increasing its potential as formative assessment. (CEH)

Roe, E. **Reflections of an evaluator.** Higher Education Research and Development, 1, 2, 1982: 129-142.

Using as a case study a major project he directed which evaluated student services in Australian higher education, the author discusses the approach and the methodology adopted. Some difficulties and inadequacies are identified and explained, and the criticisms made by some "victims" of the evaluation are presented. Finally, the paper discusses some issues emerging from the experience of this project in such areas as the politics and climate of evaluation, consultation with and education of the evaluated, the credibility of evaluators, self-evaluation and the use of external evaluators; and points to some lessons which might be learned.

(Journal abstract)

Williams, C. and Shaw, M. **Counsellor contribution to academic goals: a team work approach.** Higher Education Research and Development, 1, 2, 1982: 167-169.

University teaching so often focuses exclusively on the subject being taught and takes little cognisance of the problems of the learner or of the learning process. This paper outlines an example of how the skills of a person outside the responsible teaching department (in this case a counsellor) were used to help Architecture students achieve the desired academic outcome. The counsellor's involvement had additional benefits for the students concerned. A case is made for utilising such a model for the benefit of a wider range of students.

(Journal abstract)

Williams, L. **Microfiches as an aid to teaching histology.** Medical Education, 16, 1982: 269-272.

A set of six colour microfiches and an atlas of black-and-white prints of the photomicrographs used in the microfiches have been prepared by the author and have been used for teaching an Histology course to medical students for 4 years. Student reaction to them and their use has been gauged by voluntary questionnaires. Of students who responded, 78% found the microfiches made the course easier for them; 76% like the microfiches because they can use them for home study; 77% find them useful for class discussion; 62% like them because of their colour reproduction. A small group of fifteen students, who failed the Histology course the year prior to the introduction of microfiches and subsequently repeated the course, felt they could revise better with the help of the microfiches. Also they felt the course was clearer. Comparison of the examination results of the students for the 4 years preceding the introduction of microfiches with those of the 4 years since, shows an improvement in mean percentage achieved together with a decrease in the standard deviation.

(Journal summary)

Winefield, H. **Subjective and objective outcomes of communication skills training in first year.** Medical Education, 16, 1982: 192-196.

An 8-hour training programme in basic communication skills was carried out for an entire behavioural science class. Students participated in small-group practical workshops which focused on attending and primary accurate empathy (Egan, 1975). The latter was assessed objectively by written responses to short trigger statements, and in matched pre- and post-training measures showed a significant overall increase in empathetic responding. Student evaluations of the project were positive and allowed suggestions for increasing the impact of similar training efforts in the future.

(Journal summary)

## D INFORMATION NETWORKS

## E STUDENTS

Feletti, G.I., Doyle, E., Petrovic, A. and Sanson-Fisher, R. **Medical students' evaluation of tutors in a group-learning curriculum.** Medical Education, 16, 1982: 319-325.

This study focused on students' evaluation of tutors' effectiveness during an academic term, using a nineteen-item questionnaire. The study took place within an integrated problem-solving medical course. Four major factors in the tutor's behaviour were identified as having importance in the rating process: the ability to care for students, a knowledge of course structure and teaching staff philosophy, the ability to encourage independent thinking in students and a knowledge of the specific medical problems being studied. Further analysis suggested that students distinguish between good and bad tutors, those in different medical strands and with differing status. In general, the findings complement those dealing with student evaluation of lectures and to some extent, patient satisfaction with doctors.

(Journal summary)

Kidson, M. and Hornblow, A. **Examination anxiety in medical students: experiences with the visual analogue scale for anxiety.** Medical Education, 16, 1982: 247-250.

Medical students' levels of anxiety under different conditions of stress were investigated, as well as the stability of anxiety ratings from one examination to another. After completing an end-of-term psychiatry examination, fourth-year medical students at Monash University were asked to score the Visual Analogue Scale for Anxiety (VASA) for three situational cues; usual day-to-day anxiety, highest anxiety associated with major exams the previous year and anxiety experienced in the end-of-term examination just completed. Twenty-eight weeks later students rated their anxiety in a subsequent end-of-term psychiatry examination. Most students rated themselves toward the lower end of the VASA for day-to-day anxiety and as having significantly, though not markedly higher anxiety in the end-of-term psychiatry examinations. The previous year's examinations, marking the end of pre-clinical training, provoked extremely high anxiety for most students, who achieved academically despite this. Comparison of anxiety ratings for the two end-of-term examinations indicated that VASA ratings shifted substantially for half the class. This variation suggests that students' levels of anxiety are not stable and predictable from one examination to another. Examination anxiety should not be seen necessarily as a consistent response to a specific and recurring situation. It is postulated that a range of situational factors and personal pressures, operating at the time, may determine how much anxiety is experienced as a reaction to the examination.

(Journal summary)

Nowotny, R.E., and Grove, D.I. **Description of an examination for the objective assessment of history-taking ability.** Medical Education, 16, 1982: 259-263.

A novel examination of the ability of final-year medical students to take a targeted history is described. One hundred and nine students were examined in one day. Each student interviewed three patients, each with a different problem. One of these persons was a real patient, while the other two were simulated patients. Patients were able to give consistent histories and the use of simulated patients enabled a high degree of standardisation to be achieved. The examination provided a useful degree of discrimination among students.

(Modified journal summary)

Prosser, A.P. **The relevance of tertiary science courses to professional employment: who decides and how.** Higher Education Research and Development, 1, 2, 1982: 143-153.

As undergraduate courses in science are widely regarded as vocational training, they are evaluated by various groups as preparation for, inter alia, professional employment. However, the criteria for evaluation are usually not agreed because the groups describe the work of scientists in substantially different

terms. In this paper, the perceptions held by several specific groups are outlined. The academics' perceptions is of up-to-date, sophisticated scientific principles; the perceptions of other experienced scientists are in terms of the use of knowledge and skills to solve problems, and the attitudes consistent with being an employed professional. Undergraduate curricula are largely determined by the academics' perception because no effective means has been found for academics to understand and accept the other perceptions. Acceptance of the other perceptions may lead to substantial changes in curricula.

(Journal abstract)

Watkins, D. **Students' personality and satisfaction with an Australian University: a study of interdisciplinary differences.** Higher Education Research and Development, 1, 2, 1982: 155-165.

A survey of 562 internal undergraduates (311 male, 251 female) at the University of New England indicated that the majority was fairly satisfied with university life. However, further analysis showed important differences in the attitudes of students in different faculties. Moreover there was some evidence that the different academic environments experienced by students in the various faculties may attract and satisfy students of different personality types. The importance of such findings for the proper understanding of students' adjustment to college life is pointed out.

(Journal abstract)

## F STAFF

Bowden, J.A. and Anwyl, J. **Some characteristics and attitudes of academics in Australian universities and colleges of advanced education.** Higher Education Research and Development, 2, 1, 1983: 39-61.

This paper examines some important characteristics and values of Australian academics in universities and in colleges of advanced education, derived from a national study conducted in 1978. The data are discussed under a number of headings: research interests and activities, teaching, qualifications and level of appointment, tenure, study leave, role satisfaction and

attitudes to institution, attitudes to funding, institutional government and institutional democracy, access to tertiary education, role of universities and CAEs, tertiary institutions and the state, general educational issues, social issues, public debate, and demographic and personal data.

There are differences between the two groups on a number of variables, among them being tertiary qualifications held, work activities and interests, and previous work experience. Some of these differences are related to the objectives of the institutions and how they were established and staffed. On most educational and social values, however, the opinions of the two groups are similar except for their views on the roles of universities and colleges. They most differ when they reflect on each other.

(Journal abstract)

Lonsdale, A.J. **The making of academic promotion decisions: criteria and processes.** Higher Education Research and Development, 2, 1, 1983: 17-37.

There is increasing recognition of the role of the academic promotion process in institutional reward structures, and of the influence of promotion criteria in guiding the work of academic staff. This study sought to investigate the relative importance of the criteria used in the making of promotion decisions as perceived by senior academics. Social judgement analysis was used to make explicit the bases underlying simulated promotion decisions. The data indicate that teaching and scholarship were important criteria for promotion from lecturer to senior lecturer, but that leadership was more important for promotion from senior to principal lecturer. The implications of these results for institutional policies and practices are discussed and, through an analysis of the nature of the judgements involved in promotion decisions, procedures which may assist decision making by promotion boards are suggested.

(Journal abstract)

## ABSTRACTORS

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