Roger Landbeck was a long term member of HERDSA, joining in 1975 only three years after the new society had been founded. He had a close working relationship with many of HERDSA’s past presidents, first as a member, then as an Executive member in the 1980s and more recently as the Editor of HERDSA News from 1998 until his death in 2014. It was President Owen Hicks who recruited Roger to be editor of HERDSA News.

Always a reassuring presence - that’s my image, still very much alive, of Roger. As a fellow member of the Executive and then during my time as President, Roger was there and supportive, working behind the scenes, prepared to take on the unseen but necessary tasks and do them thoroughly. From a broader concern for humanity, he championed the ‘ordinary members’, the new members, the ‘junior’ members, of the Society. I remember Roger as someone who would wait to be heard in committee debate on critical issues, providing valuable and considered input, usually quietly but definitely. He was one who could state his view while accepting other persuasions might carry the day. On a more personal note, more

## Vale Roger Landbeck

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www.herdsa.org.au
From the Editors

The loss of Roger Landbeck, Editor of HERDSA News for so many years, has struck the whole HERDSA community. Roger’s dedication to the HERDSA and to the values of higher education was inspirational. As Editor, he brought to HERDSA News a calm authority and scholarship with a keen sense of compassion and humanity. It is fitting therefore that this edition begins with a tribute to Roger Landbeck and includes an interview with Roger from the Making a Place project recorded in 2007.

It is a pleasure for us to again showcase the annual HERDSA conference in this edition of HERDSA News. Conference coordinator Anna Kwan along with the conference committee and a dedicated group of student volunteers, gave us an excellent conference experience with the bustling city of Hong Kong as a backdrop.

Our snapshot of the conference includes an edited version of the keynote by Professor Rui Yan entitled Western Practicality Fused with Confucian Virtues: How far can it take East Asia’s Higher Education? We also offer reflections on the conference from some of our new members, a photo spread of some of the conference activities, some ideas about Chinese knotting, and of course a report from conference convenor, Dr Anna Kwan. We acknowledge the scholarship of members who won prizes and awards, while on a lighter note Trish McCluskey surveys the view from social media along with a selection of her favourite conference tweets.

Our regular features include the report from our President, Allan Goody, Deb Clarke’s regular report on the HERDSA New Scholars program, and a new — and hopefully regular — item reporting on HERDSA Special Interest Groups. For our Fellows Column Cristina Poyatas Matas reflects on her years as a HERDSA Fellow. Roger Atkinson provides a well-researched piece on MOOCs, while Bob Canon’s Meanderings continue to challenge us to think outside the box. News from the Branches shows there is a lot of activity happening around Australia and Hong Kong. Clinton Golding, President of HERDSA New Zealand, explains how HERDSA NZ operates and how the various activities work, including the annual Tertiary Education Research in NZ (TERNZ) conference and the TERNZ medal, the Graduate Attributes colloquium, the Educational Researcher symposium. Clinton also reminds us that the TERNZ conference is on again in Auckland this November.

We also have two articles that look at higher education research with Kate Thomson reflecting on completing her PhD. and the last report from the HERDSA/OLT sub-projects, this one from Sherrie Caarels on the use of mobile devices in science activities.

We welcome your comments on this edition of HERDSA News.

Maureen Bell & Peter Kandlbinder

New HERDSA Guides just out

Three New HERDSA Guides are now available. You will find details of their contents and how to order on line on pages 19, 22 and 29 of this issue.
Vale Roger Landbeck

from page 1

recently Roger was a valued confidant sharing the challenges, experiences and understanding of providing services in the higher education sector in developing countries. His perspective was always refreshingly free of institutional or personal self-interest. I will miss him but his spirit will be with me.

— Owen Hicks

Angela Brew was President of HERDSA from 2000 to 2003.

Most HERDSA members today will know Roger through the weekly email news which has become an institution in the Australasian higher education landscape. The email list arose from a concern to make HERDSA News more widely known and read. It was Roger who established its distinctive style and, kept it running for well over 12 years. The work to establish the email list, and the editorial work that he did with HERDSA News are testaments to Roger’s dedication and commitment to the work and the values of HERDSA. However, browsing some old HERDSA files recently, I was reminded of just how integral to many other aspects of HERDSA business Roger was over a very long period of time. During my presidency (1999-2003) and before that when I was a member of the Executive, Roger contributed to many initiatives of the Executive, including the HERDSA Fellowship Scheme, HERDSA elections, changes to the constitution, the establishment of new Executive positions, and much more. Roger represented the voice of reason. His gentle wisdom and practical advice together with his institutional memory contributed a great deal to the heady debates around the Executive table. I personally remember him with affection and gratitude. He will be sadly missed.

Shelda Debowski was President from 2006 to 2008 and 2011-13.

I first met Roger in 2003 when I joined the HERDSA committee as a member and was blessed with his support through my six years as President. While the committee might be engine room of our society, he was the heart of HERDSA. His dedication and support for the Society was an inspiration to all who came in contact with him. He modelled the best of qualities: he was a gentle, unassuming man who quietly provided wisdom and support to all around him. He enriched our community through his own presence and through the role he played in joining us all together as a community. He was a treasured leader and colleague. We will sorely miss him and his lovely smiles.

— Shelda Debowski

Geoffrey Crisp was HERDSA President from 2009-2011.

Roger Landbeck embodied the spirit of HERDSA and will be fondly remembered by his many friends, colleagues and HERDSA members. I first met Roger when I attended a HERDSA conference many years ago and I was impressed by his encyclopaedic knowledge of people and places associated with academic development in Australia and overseas. I must admit that I thought, in those early days when I first joined HERDSA, that Roger was HERDSA as he seemed to always be there and he always knew what was happening or what was supposed to be happening. When I joined the HERDSA Executive I came to appreciate the very generous nature of Roger’s contribution to HERDSA and the wealth of knowledge and insight he had about academic development, scholarly educational research and how to run a meeting properly. Roger understood the importance of regular communication with HERDSA members and I have heard often how members looked forward to Roger’s email news. It was their tangible contact with HERDSA and the wider academic development community. We will miss Roger’s warm and generous personality but we will always smile when we think of him and be glad that we had the opportunity to know and work with him.

— Geoffrey Crisp

Allan Goody has been HERDSA President since July 2013 when he was elected to follow Sheila’s second term as president. Roger’s death coincided with the beginning of the annual HERDSA conference which was held in Hong Kong in 2014 and Allan had the sad duty of informing the conference delegates of Roger’s passing.

Roger’s death added a very sad note to the conference but also afforded us the opportunity to publically celebrate and acknowledge Roger’s place in the history of HERDSA. Roger retired from academic life in 1997 but immediately took an active role in HERDSA, becoming the editor of HERDSA News and in 2002, the moderator of the weekly email list. His tireless work on the Executive was acknowledged with the award of a HERDSA Life Membership in 2005. Roger was always a positive contributor to HERDSA and especially to our Executive meetings. He never failed to be in constant email contact with me about publications and in particular HERDSA News. You could always be sure that HERDSA News would come out each time. In his role as Editor, Roger was always consistent, reliable and professional. It was one less thing for the President to worry about. The HERDSA Executive will greatly miss his presence and the warm welcome and encouragement that he gave everyone; let alone the extensive history of HERDSA that he would draw upon to remind us of past decisions and discussions at Executive meetings over the years.

I served on the Executive with Roger since 2002 on the publications committee when I become HERDSA Guides Editor. On a personal note, Roger was always among the first to enquire of my health over the past year. For many, Roger was a professional colleague but his loss is felt very much on a personal level.

— Allan Goody, HERDSA President
HERDSA 2014 Conference – Higher Education in a Globalized World

By Anna Kwan

The 37th annual HERDSA Conference was held in Hong Kong at the Hong Kong Baptist University (HKBU) from 7 to 10 July 2014. This is the first HERDSA Conference in Hong Kong, which was co-organized and co-hosted by the HERDSA Hong Kong Branch and the Centre for Holistic Teaching and Learning at HKBU.

The response to the call for submissions was highly encouraging. A total of 334 proposals were received, including 87 full-paper submissions. Each of the papers went through a double-blind review process involving two to three reviewers independently. 36 papers were accepted for presentation and publication in the full conference proceedings (a 41.4% acceptance rate). To maintain the overall rigor of the review process, the showcase, poster and roundtable submissions also went through the same process as the full-papers.

The Conference was officiated on 8 July by the guests of honor who put their hands together to turn on a crystal ball which symbolized the “globe” of globalization and the importance of collaboration in embracing the related challenges and opportunities. The welcoming addresses to greet the over 350 Conference delegates were then made by Professor Albert Chan, the President and Vice-Chancellor of HKBU, Professor Franklin Luk, Vice-President (Academic) of HKBU and Dr Allan Goody, HERDSA President.

The major aim of this Conference: to provide an international platform for colleagues to explore and debate the many facets of this truly significant global phenomenon – Higher Education in a Globalized World. By all accounts has been successfully achieved.

To begin with, the seven pre-conference workshops on Monday 7 July were well attended. Useful dialogues were starting to generate among the participants, especially at the breakfast reception to welcome new members.

The Conference delegates were enlightened by the keynotes by internationally renowned speakers. The keynote by Professor Susan Robertson of University of Bristol, titled A Global Revolution Ahead for Higher Education? On Navigating Between Fact-Facing, Myth-Making and Risk-Taking, examined the putative scale, shape and direction of the revolutionary developments mentioned in Sir Michael Barber’s 2013 report and analysed the extent these were facing the facts or myth-making, and the risks of ignoring these developments. She urged proper diagnosis and assessment of these developments for fulfilling the sector’s historic mission of advancing the frontiers of knowledge whilst creating innovative spaces for learning.
The keynote by Professor Jan Currie of Murdoch University, titled Global Trends and Universities: Rankings, International Students and MOOCs, analysed the major global trends such as the ranking exercises, the increase of international students and the use of new web technology like MOOCs. While countries across the globe strive to re-engineer their universities to enter the international ranking competition, a neoliberal agenda of globalization has been created and persists as a powerful force in higher education worldwide. The audience was invited to anticipate the trends and consequences of these developments such as the differentiation and homogenization of universities.

The keynote by Professor Rui Yang of the University of Hong Kong, titled Western Practicality Fused with Confucian Virtues: How Far Can It Take East Asia’s Higher Education? brought delegates’ attention to the obstacles in developing world-class universities in East Asia (EA). A central purpose of EA’s modern higher education has been combining traditions with western elements to bring together aspects of EA and western philosophical heritages. This purpose has not been fully achieved. Professor Yang called for a thoughtful integration of the indigenous and the western so that EA universities can become truly internationally-leading.

The keynote by Professor Rui Yang of the University of Hong Kong, titled Western Practicality Fused with Confucian Virtues: How Far Can It Take East Asia’s Higher Education? brought delegates’ attention to the obstacles in developing world-class universities in East Asia (EA). A central purpose of EA’s modern higher education has been combining traditions with western elements to bring together aspects of EA and western philosophical heritages. This purpose has not been fully achieved. Professor Yang called for a thoughtful integration of the indigenous and the western so that EA universities can become truly internationally-leading.

The Plenary Session on Chinese Learners took the discussion on cultural differences even further. The idea of the ‘Chinese learner’ has remained mysterious and paradoxical. This session chaired by Professor Owen Hicks successfully provided a platform for colleagues from various socio-cultural contexts to share their experience in working with Chinese students. Professor Hicks invited the scholars and students on the panel to discuss the idea of ‘the Chinese learner’ and it was agreed that this concept was not valid. There were many reasons for student differences, particular learning behaviors in the classroom. Some Chinese students did not ask teachers questions in class since this had not been fully encouraged in their previous learning experience. Student members of the panel would prefer teachers to treat them as individual learners and try to understand their needs. They suggested that teachers play an important role in creating an inviting learning environment for all students.

The conference maximized the opportunity for the exchange of experiences among the participants. The 242 concurrent sessions in the Conference, with 33 full-paper presentations, 122 showcase, and 53 poster presentations and 34 roundtable sessions, provided a wide range of exploration and discussion of issues and questions related to the five subthemes of the Conference: Embracing challenges & opportunities; Preparing graduates; Capitalizing technology; Transforming leadership; and Re-thinking higher education research, professional development and evaluation. Within the concurrent sessions, a Teaching Development Grants track was arranged to demonstrate some recent innovations in teaching and learning by local university faculty members.

To accommodate the needs of participants and to ensure good communication in the Conference, simultaneous interpretation into Putonghua and English was provided for all of the keynote and plenary sessions and some concurrent sessions. Elements of Chinese cultures were woven into the conference activities to enrich delegates’ experience. Samples of local snacks such as different types of pastries and dim sum were provided, while some popular Chinese folk arts like paper profile cutting, grasshopper making and Chinese knotting were made available.

The most intensive cultural experience was arranged in the Conference dinner which showed a typical Chinese wedding banquet cuisine. HKBU students played the Chinese music Blooming flowers and full moon to wish everyone a most enjoyable time. The Lion dance was another energetic and warm welcome to the delegates. The Changing face (變臉 “bian lian”), a mysterious technique in Sichuan opera used to reveal the inner thoughts and feelings of the characters, was specially performed to the dinner participants, symbolizing, as higher education educators, we need to be adapting to students’ needs all the time!
The feedback received from the delegates showed that HERDSA 2014 was very well organized. Some colleagues liked every aspect of the Conference. Most of the participants found the quality of support at the Conference from the local organizing team & HKBU staff and the process at the registration desk highly impressive. The conference Guidebook mobile apps were found easy to use and informative. Delegates particularly liked the involvement of students as MCs and Plenary Session participants, teaching Chinese knots and helping in other tasks, which provide students with valuable life-wide learning opportunities.

The conference committee is most grateful to the Hong Kong Baptist University for being the host institution, and colleagues in the Centre for Holistic Teaching and Learning to work with us in implementing this conference. Our most sincere gratitude goes to Tin Ka Ping Foundation for supporting 39 scholars from the Greater China Region to take part in the Conference. Special thanks to our other sponsors for their valuable support in this Conference.

We wish to thank our keynote speakers for their stimulating sharing in the Conference. Special thanks go to colleagues who reviewed submissions and offered workshops and sessions to participants. Thanks also go to the Momentous Asia Travel & Events Company Limited, for their great assistance in the implementation of the conference. Our sincere thanks go to the HERDSA 2013 team for their unfailing assistance for us. We are most grateful to HERDSA Executive for entrusting Hong Kong Branch with the Conference and their invaluable support to make this first HERDSA Conference in Hong Kong successful.

We believe having the 2014 HERDSA conference outside of Australasia was most appropriate as it beffited the theme of globalization. The Conference was attended by educators from 22 countries and regions, basically covering all continents except South America. We are not sure if this has broken HERDSA’s record, but hosting the Conference in Hong Kong has helped to expose HERDSA to Asia, and vice versa, bringing HERDSA members from Australia and New Zealand closer to the rest of the world.

The Conference was concluded but we really hope that the network established in the Conference will continue to develop. As in the closing of the Conference, we added a ‘Pan Chang’ knot (盤長結, which symbolizes prosperity, long-lasting network and collaboration) to the ‘Kete’ (the basket of knowledge in Māori legend) we received from HERDSA 2013 in Auckland, as a blessing gift to HERDSA 2015. The Conference will take place on 6-9 July 2015, with the theme Learning for life and work in a complex world. Dr Liz Levin of Swinburne University will be the conference convenor. We look forward to seeing all of you there!

Contact: anna.kwan@outlook.com
Higher education development has been achieving highly in most East Asian societies including China, Japan, Korea, Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan. The achievement becomes even more remarkable when compared with other non-Western societies. Throughout East Asia, a Western-styled modern higher education system has been well established, after absorbing Western knowledge for one and a half centuries. East Asia has now become the world’s 3rd great zone of higher education, science and innovation, alongside North America and Western Europe/UK, with research powerhouses, and the fastest growth in scientific output. While Japan has been a powerhouse in world science and technology for some time, growth of research in China, Korea and Singapore is impressive, and Taiwan is not far behind.

At institutional level, East Asian universities are rigorous in setting global research as their performance standard. The National University of Singapore, for example, is stronger than all of Australia’s universities in both research paper quantity and citation impact. Some middle-sized East Asian universities of science and technology have higher citation rates than the Australian National University.

While East Asia’s achievement in higher education has been widely agreed, assessment of its future development is not. To some, East Asian universities are poised at the most exciting phase of their development, leaping ahead to join the distinguished league of the world’s leading universities. “Sun sets on Western dominance as East Asian Confucian model takes lead”, and the “Confucian model” has put East Asia’s universities at the cutting edge. To others, although East Asian universities have made tremendous strides in terms of the volume and quality of research output, they generally still lag behind the best universities in the West. The notion of ‘world-class’ status in East Asian societies has been largely imitative rather than creative. Financial and other resources combined with some innovation strategies can make progress only so far. A kind of “glass ceiling” is to be reached soon. While both views cite culture as the reason, neither of them is cultural enough. Although there is an evident pride of the idea that East Asian universities are not willing to assume that Western models define excellence, few in the region are able to theorize their differences from Western universities.

Building their own identity is doomed to be an arduous task for East Asian universities. What has been lacking is a cultural perspective that gives weight to the impact of traditional ways of cultural thinking on contemporary development. To East Asia, modern universities are foreign transplants. East Asia’s strikingly different cultural roots and heritages have led to continuous conflicts between their indigenous and the imposed Western higher education values. East Asian universities have their institutional establishments based on Western values on one hand, and another system supported by traditional culture on the other. The two systems often do not support each other. Instead, constant tensions between them reduce the efficiency of university operation. Although there have been strong attempts to indigenize the Western idea of a university, little has been achieved. The Western concept of a university has been taken for its practicality. This explains why their achievement in science and technology is so much greater than that in the social science and humanities. This is precisely the bottleneck of East Asian higher education development. We might need to ask whether or not there is a ‘middle-income range/trap’ in East Asian higher education development?
East Asia has much to learn from its own history. Unlike the existent literature on East Asian higher education development that has been overwhelmed by the powerful influence of economic and political realities, such learning demands an appropriate cultural perspective that integrates East Asian traditions with the Western. In history, only twice had foreign influences brought to East Asian culture such a great impact, fundamentally changing the culture. One was the introduction of Buddhism to East Asia, which took over a millennium for the East Asian to receive, respond to its challenges, and reshape East Asian mentalities at both the intellectual and the popular levels. The other, the intrusion of Western culture into East Asia since the nineteenth century, is still ongoing as the result of the large-scale Western expansion. The magnitude is far greater than that in the first case, at a time when the vitality of East Asian culture was just about to exhaust while the momentum of Western culture was at its zenith. The process is far from completed, and “pain” is felt constantly and regularly. Only when the aspects of East Asian and Western philosophical heritages are brought together successfully, can East Asian universities become truly internationally-leading. Universities have three layers: materials on the surface, social institutions in the middle, and values at the core. By far, East Asia’s import of the Western model has been centered mostly on the material level, with some touches on social institutions, while the core of the Western model has not been understood fully, let alone implemented. While there lacks clear signs of such combination, East Asia is best positioned to achieve this in comparison with any other parts of the non-Western world.

Showcasing New Scholars at the HERDSA Annual Conference in Hong Kong

By Deb Clarke

As an outcome of the New Scholars Portfolio activities, the Annual HERDSA Conference has become a safe, inclusive and supportive space in which new scholars can showcase their research and build connections with other like-minded folks from across the globe or the academy next door. Whether those with whom the new scholars connect are other new scholars or academics of significant notoriety, the HERDSA conference has emerged as an avenue for creating strong bonds between members.

This year in Hong Kong, new scholars were provided with the opportunity to: i) attend a welcome breakfast, ii) compete for a best paper presentation prize by a student, iii) share their research via engaging and informative poster displays and showcases, and iv) join in conversations relating to higher education in a globalised world.

But what can HERDSA offer new scholars beyond the conference I hear you ask?

As a result of a HERDSA strategic funding grant, the members of the New Scholars Portfolio are designing an online set of interactive modules to support members who are interested in and/or are new to the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL). These learning modules will be accessible via the HERDSA website, by logging in using your HERDSA membership number. The modules will be designed to be self-supporting and guide participants through sequential scaffolded readings, and learning activities including the use of Youtube clips, podcasts, power point presentations, Blogs, Wikis and web-linked resources. These modules are currently in the design phase and the team envisage their release early in 2015. So keep watch on the HERDSA website for this new and exciting addition to the support that HERDSA provides its members.

But what makes our task of supporting new scholars wonderful?

Knowing that we have enhanced new scholars’ conference experiences.

The following feedback was an email received from a new scholar who had attended the 2014 HERDSA Conference in Hong Kong.

I just want to say a big ”thank you” to you for all that you do for the new scholars at the HERDSA conference. In particular, your awesomeness at making yourself known to us all, and ensuring that we feel included within the HERDSA community. Stuff like that makes a really big difference to our conference experience, and gives us confidence to feel legitimate as part of an academic community :-). I had a great time at the conference this year, and I hope that you did too.

Members of the New Scholars network are: Dr Deb Clarke, Dr Lee Partridge, Dr Lesley Petersen.

Contact Deborah Clarke: dclarke@csu.edu.au
I was fortunate to be able to travel to Hong Kong for the HERDSA 2014 conference. I say ‘fortunate’, as the current fiscal environment makes it increasingly difficult for staff and students to secure funding to attend conferences.

The experience of physically attending a conference is incomparable: the buzz, the engagement, the networking, the terrible coffee! However, thanks to the exponential growth of digital devices and social media tools, not being physically present no longer precludes people from actively participating in many conferences – wireless access permitting of course.

Victoria will be hosting the 2015 HERDSA conference so as co-chair of the Vic branch, I hit the conference with eyes and ears wide open, hoping to get some good ideas, tips and tricks to bring back to our eager committee.

I was particularly interested in how knowledge and ideas shared at the conference were being amplified to a wider audience, specifically through the use of social media and the twitter backchannel. As an avid social media proponent and ‘conference surfer’ I have gained much learning (and saved much money!) from virtual attendance at both local and global conferences; the Office of Learning and Teaching conference (#olt2014), Universities Australia conference (#uaconf) and the International Consortium for Educational Development conference (#iced2014) are just some recent examples. Check out the hashtags for these conferences as many of the tweets and resources are still available.

The use of the Guidebook conference app got HERDSA 2014 off to a good, (environmentally friendly) start and provided the opportunity to check out the program on a mobile device and to create a personal schedule prior to registration. This free app can interrogate the program across streams, themes and timeslots as well as provide maps, visitor information, and updated announcements, without having to turn a page. The app also provided a social space where attendees could register their profile and interests and thus increase opportunities for networking and possible future collaboration. However, although the app was well publicised on the conference website it was disappointing to see that only 17 people took advantage of this opportunity to register their presence and even fewer uploaded a photo so others could identify them. Delegate lists are no longer circulated at conferences due to privacy issues so this is an ideal solution to finding interesting people to network with.

The event hashtag (#HERDSA2014) was not well promoted and consequently there was some confusion at the start with some people using #HERDSA14 and others using #HERDSA2014 to tweet. This soon sorted itself out and the ‘tweeps’ present, both physically and virtually, began tweeting up a storm. Yes, there were a couple of selfies and pictures of food but mostly the tweets related to sharing and commenting on the content of the papers being presented.

Now it’s fair to say that not everyone has embraced the value of Twitter as a social learning tool and Sarita Yardi captures this:

“To some it suggests an intangible, clandestine community. To others, it suggests and empowering toolkit for participation collaboration, and interaction. The central function of the backchannel is its use as a secondary or background complement to an existing frontchannel, which may consist of a professor teacher, speaker or lecturer”

It certainly added value to my conference experience, especially as many of the papers I was interested in clashed on the schedule. However thanks to those who tweeted I could follow up the commentary later and check out the supporting resources and screen captures. It also enabled me to connect in person with some people whom I’ve followed for some time on twitter.

The tweets were mostly positive and mainly amplified what was being said, although there were also some instances of discussion and debate on content. Not many of the presenters promoted the use of social media, before, during or after their presentation, which in my view is a missed opportunity to get feedback, continue discussion and possibly shape further research. However a number of poster presenters were on the ball and used twitter effectively to promote votes and views of their posters.

Definitive stats of twitter activity at HERDSA 2014 are somewhat limited as I wasn’t asked to write this reflection until after the event and most analytical tools will only capture activity within a couple of days.
And yes there were some tweets about food – but they were inquiry based!!

of the event. However a rough scan of the HERDSA 2014 hashtag indicates that there were over 500 tweets at the conference. Of the 47 people tweeting, 17 were present at the conference and approx. 30 were tweeting from elsewhere. This only reflects the number of people who actively tweeted or retweeted using the conference hashtag, but I suspect that many more may have been ‘lurking’ or watching with interest and harvesting the links and information shared.

If anyone is interested in further developing their Social Media capabilities before HERDSA 2015 you may want to check out the Social Media Toolkit for academics, which was developed by CADAD and funded by the Network of Australasian Tertiary Associations (NATA).

Endnotes
1 http://www.educause.edu/library/resources/7-things-you-should-know-about-backchannel-communication
2 https://guidebook.com/
3 http://www.academia.edu/1850925/The_Role_of_the_Backchannel_in_Collaborative_Learning_Environments
4 natacadadproject/home
5 http://www.cadad.edu.au/
Trish McCluskey,
Senior Lecturer, Deakin University @Trilia

And of course the obligatory selfie!

HERDSA 2014 Conference
Awards and Prizes

Taylor and Francis Prize: Best Paper by a New Researcher
Lennie GEERLINGS, MPhilCandidate, James Cook University, Singapore.
Globalisation and Deterritorialisation: an Example of an Academic Discipline in the Malay Archipelago

HERDSA Prize Best Scholarly Paper
Professor Paula BARON, La Trobe University and A/Prof Lillian CORBIN, University of New England, Australia.
The Academic Role: Service, Compliance, Freedom

Best Paper Presentation by a Student
Siaw Wee CHEN, The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong.
Critical thinking: Contesting Perspectives from University Academics

Best Poster
Elaine LAM, Panda WONG, Peter LAU, Dr Theresa KWONG, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong
Assessing Cross-cultural Competence in Co-curricular Programmes: A Case Study of Using ePortfolio and Institutional Rubrics

Runner up Best Poster
Dr Sam LAU, Dr Vicky LEE, Helia HAI, Dr Lorraine YEUNG, Dr Karen WOO, Hong Kong Baptist University College of International Education, Hong Kong.
Educating the New Tech-Driven Generation: A Case Study in Hong Kong

HERDSA Travel Award
Le Uyen NGUYEN, University of Technology Sydney, Australia.
Creating core conditions for quality teaching evaluation in Vietnamese Higher Education
Impressions of the HERDSA CONFERENCE

The first experience of a HERDSA conference is generally a mingling of serious scholarship, developing collegiality, building networks, and of course, fun. New members Paula Myatt, Chloe Jie Lei, and Joanna Joseph Jeyaraj reflect on their experiences of HERDSA Hong Kong, 2014.

Paula Myatt, Higher education researcher

“Ni hao” from HERDSA2014 Hong Kong! What a wonderful opportunity to savour new sights and smells (!), see such diversity of living conditions, eat such a great variety of foods (although I am still not quite sure of everything I ate at the conference dinner) and mash this up with HERDSA friends both old and new. HERDSA2014 had all of the benefits of an international conference but bundled up with a familiarity of people, institutions and structure. Does that sound boring? I hope not. I have grown to greatly enjoy the experience of the HERDSA conference as a place of learning and networking, and as a space for thinking and planning. I admire and respect the quality and diversity of research that occurs across our members. HERDSA 2014 was no exception. Thank you to the keynote speaker who left me pondering the danger of “apocalyptic thinking” within Higher Education, the paper that advocated the value to leadership from “active, responsible followership” and thank you to the round table discussion that revealed new collaborative research opportunities. HERDSA2014 felt embedded in a globalised world, with a myriad of future opportunities - stir fried and served with noodles!

Chloe Jie Lei, Hong Kong Baptist University

It was a great opportunity for me to attend HERDSA Conference 2014 right in my own institution as I was able to meet delegates from many parts of the world without having to travel far. One of the presentations that resonated with me was the one by Owen Hicks, titled Globalization and Learning Across the Higher Education Sector – At the other extreme. He shared his moving account of teaching in three different developing countries (Timor-Leste, China, and Vietnam), and presented a very different picture of education in universities with severely limited resources. I learned that only around 5% of the universities in the world are ranked, and these world rankings are not very representative of institutions in less developed regions of the world.

Another highlight for me at the conference was the series of TATAL (Talking About Teaching and Learning) workshops. TATAL places great value on one's self-reflection on teaching and learning, and sharing stories in a safe and supportive environment. I am continuing the conversation with other TATALers on Skype, and working toward my very first teaching philosophy statement.

Joanna Joseph Jeyaraj, Otago University

As a new scholar embarking on an academic career, I found HERDSA 2014 to be a very worthwhile and enriching experience. By the end of the conference, I was inspired, encouraged and connected. The conference was inspirational through the many thought-provoking and eye opening presentations. I found them beneficial because they provided me with insight into academic life and gave me a sense of what to expect in the globalised world of higher education.

As it was my first time presenting at an international conference I couldn’t help but feel anxious and nervous. However, I felt greatly encouraged when many participants had warm wishes and kind words of reassurance. Being a part of such a supportive and friendly community certainly helped boost my confidence, which eventually helped ease my nervousness and apprehension.

Lastly, HERDSA 2014 provided me with opportunities to meet and connect with academics from different parts of the world. Social events such as the new members' breakfast and the conference dinner were great avenues for exchanging experiences and connecting with others in a casual and relaxed atmosphere.

HERDSA 2014 has led me on a good path, and I look forward to more opportunities like this in the future.
HERDSA Special Interest Groups – What’s in it for you?

Sourcing research funds, finding research collaborators, and getting published are not always easy. By joining a Special Interest Group (SIG), HERDSA members can talk about shared research interests as well as potentially undertake some collaborative research.

At the HERDSA conference in Hong Kong, a workshop was provided for the development of SIGs. Researchers gathered at the workshop to discuss common research interests and identify potential SIGs as well as learn how set up a HERDSA approved SIG.

Following the workshop 4 potential groups were identified and interested members are now talking by email on the way forward for these groups. Descriptions are provided below.

Are you interested in joining a SIG or starting up a new one? You can register your interest giving your name, institution and research interest/SIG.

Contact Jennie Billot: jbillot@aut.ac.nz or
Sue Bolt: Susan.Bolt@cbs.curtin.edu.au

Sig 1. Academics As Learners And Leaders
The academic context is fast evolving and placing more pressure on academics to be high performing and adaptive. This has significant implications for their identity formation, capacity to reflect and ensure ongoing learning across the range of roles they must play. This SIG provides a broad church for those interested in exploring the ways academics can learn and lead in constructive ways. Target members include: academics, academic developers, academic leaders (including executive members) and academic mentors. Key themes so far identified include:
- Collaborative reflective practice
- Academic mentorship
- Networking
- Academics as leaders

Sig 2. Academic Wellbeing
Is there an alignment between what is expected of academics, the Performance Management (aka Professional Development Review) and the reality of what academics do? Is there enough professional development/support for academics? This group wishes to research issues with regards to professional development strategies on role conflicts, leadership, communication and other issues in this area. How can we influence the current culture of PhDs, post-docs early academics to develop approaches to academia on working sustainably?

Sig 3. Students As Researchers
- Initial areas of interest include:
  - student/staff partnerships;
  - undergraduate students as researchers;
  - supervision;
  - research identities.
Other suggestions within the broad areas of students as researchers are welcome.

Sig 4. Internationalisation
This SIG is in the early phase of discussions and welcomes input.

Co-learning Chinese Knots (Zhonguo Jie)

I was very pleased to be invited to show the HERDSA 2014 Conference participants some Chinese knots as a participative cultural activity.

To fulfill this task, I learnt Chinese knotting on the web by myself. I practiced the steps of several knots for many times one week before the Conference. Finally I chose “True love knot” (同心結, which also means “same heart/mind”) as the learning focus. After the demonstration, conference participants could take the knot as a souvenir. If they were interested, they could learn how to tie the knot step by step. My role was a co-learner in the process.

By doing this assignment, I have learned how to put self-regulatory learning in real life situations. I planned what I needed to do and solved problems on the way. I reflected during and after each demonstration and figured ways for improvement and innovation.

By Li Sze Man

From this experience, I think every Chinese student should learn at least one of the Chinese arts in order to pass on the heritage and share it with the people from overseas as we now live under a globalized world. I will be graduating this summer. In the coming September I will teach in a primary school. I will find opportunity to teach my students some Chinese knots to start with.

I felt privileged to meet many professors in the Conference. Some of them even gave me advice for my future study! Hoping all of you will have fun in making this Chinese handicraft and keep good contact in the HERDSA network.

Li Sze Man is a student at The Open University of Hong Kong

Li Sze Man teaches Robert Kennelly the intricacies of Zhonguo Jie.
A
other successful annual HERDSA conference has come and gone. What a great event! We had the opportunity to share and learn from each other in a new location for HERDSA. Congratulations to Dr Anna Kwan and the Hong Kong branch and our hosts at Hong Kong Baptist University lead by Dr Eva Wong and her team from the Centre for Holistic Teaching and Learning for proving a successful conference and an introduction to the local culture and cuisine. The location meant that we had a strong representation of delegates from the East Asia region. In particular, I want to recognise and thank the Tin Ka Ping Foundation which financially supported 40 delegates from China to participate in the conference. I am sure you will enjoy reading the reflections of some of the delegates featured in this issue of HERDSA News.

Thank you to members who travelled great distances to ensure the conference was a success. It is interesting times in the higher education sector and I recognise that it is becoming more difficult to secure funding and time release to engage in activities such as the HERDSA conference. Your continued support is appreciated. I extend a warm welcome to the many delegates who attended for the first time. I hope that you find value in your HERDSA membership and engage in activities hosted by your local branch. I also hope that you take up the invitation issued by Liz Levin and the 2015 conference planning committee to join us in Melbourne for the 2015 annual conference.

I reported on some of the highlights of the past year at the Annual General Meeting held during the conference. These included the completion of the project Facilitation of advocacy and leadership in enhancing learning and teaching in the higher education community by HERDSA which was funded by the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT) and reported on in the last issue of HERDSA News. An enduring outcome of the project is the new online journal HERDSA Review of Higher Education which was launched at the conference. This annual publication is available free from the HERDSA website. Thanks to Peter Kandlbinder who developed and edited the journal. As part of the development of the journal we are renewing the website to provide greater functionality for networks and members.

Another outcome of the project has been an increase in branch activity. Our challenge now is to maintain that momentum. It will only continue with your input and engagement. I encourage you to seek out your branch and become involved. The Networks Portfolio has been coordinating these activities and developing resources to assist the branch committees. They have also begun collaborating with the OLT Teaching Fellows network to coordinate events presented by the OLT Fellows. In addition to branch activities, the hard work of Network portfolio members to re-establish Special Interest Groups (SIGs) has paid off with at least three potential SIGs identified at the conference. The Executive is keen to support these SIGs as they begin to develop.

The New Scholars portfolio has also been busy in the past year. The Scholarship of Teaching and Learning “How To” seminar series was a great success. In the coming year the program and resources will be put online so more people can access them.

The Fellowships committee have been implementing some of the recommendations of the review of the HERDSA Fellowship Scheme completed in 2013. These include the establishment of a Panel of Assessors and the introduction of an Associate Fellows category to recognise those in the process of completing their Fellowship portfolio.

HERDSA publications continue to be a good source of income for the Society and also provide expanding opportunities for the dissemination of research and practice in higher education. I have already mentioned the new online journal that has been added to the catalogue of publications. Higher Education Research & Development (HERD) has seen an increase in submissions and an increase in volume size that means an extra twelve papers can be published annually. The Editorial team has managed to reduce the time from accepting a manuscript to online and in-issue publication to 10 and 16 months respectively. HERDSA Guides remain popular with a number of Guides in development and several proposals under consideration. In a first for the Guides Series, we collaborated with the Australian Cooperative Education Network (ACEN) to publish Work Integrated Learning in the Curriculum. It was also the first Guide to have an editor who worked with the Series Editor to produce our largest Guide. Twenty-five ACEN members contributed to the Guide and HERDSA and ACEN are sharing development costs and profits.

I was fortunate to attend the Conference of the International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED) in Stockholm in June as the HERDSA representative to the ICED Council. This was the largest ICED conference ever with about 650 educational developers from 47 countries participating (with a very strong contingent from Australasia) which made for a wonderful mix of emerging and established educational development networks and their members. When gathering at such a meeting, there is the realisation of how many people are doing the same work of improving student learning and the network of colleagues that you can develop. For me it was somewhat of a home-coming as I lived in Stockholm about 10 years ago and worked at Karolinska...
Roger Landbeck completed his undergraduate studies in England in physics before becoming a hospital physicist and later a university lecturer in a London Medical School and then in an African university. He returned to England to complete a Masters in Science Education and became involved in the English Schools Council Integrated Science Project.

In 1974, he moved to Brisbane, Australia to take up a position as Senior Lecturer at the newly formed Centre for the Advancement of Learning and Teaching (CALT) at Griffith University. At the time, CALT staff were located in a specific school closely related to their original discipline.

Roger was located with the School of Australian Environmental Studies.

Roger joined HERDSA in 1975 and had a short spell on the Executive Committee in the 1980’s. In 1991 he arranged the HERDSA Visiting Scholar programme.

In 1992, Roger became the Director of the Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT) at the University of the South Pacific, which was based in Fiji.

As well as directing the Centre, he became involved in a significant research project with Dr France Mugler, using a phenomenographic approach; this research investigated South Pacific Islander students’ approaches to learning.

Roger retired in 1997 but has retained an active role in HERDSA, particularly in editing the HERDSA E-List and the HERDSA News. He continues to attend HERDSA conferences and was made a Life Member of HERDSA in 2005.

The following extract comes from an interview with Roger in June 2007 for the “Making a Place” project.

**Leading the University of the South Pacific’s Centre for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning (CELT)**

In 1992, I became the Director of the University of the South Pacific’s Centre for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT). Before I took the job I actually went to Fiji for a week and talked to as many people as I could to try and assess what people were thinking. How receptive are they going to be? Was it going to be worth going and trying this? So that was a useful sort of reconnaissance really.

In those days, CELT had a dual role. We had a group of people who were dedicated to helping students, particularly with English and Maths, and they had been attached to the Maths and English Department. They were taken away from those departments and put in this new centre. My role was really to look after them but also to begin the whole process of working with staff which had never been done before.

I went with the ideas from Bob Ross that we had to be involved in the important
I was the only academic developer for the whole university. While most of my work concentrated on Fiji and Suva, the whole university involves 12 island nations. We just couldn't split ourselves around too much.

The perception of many of the academic staff in Suva was that this centre, CELT, was very much for students and I had to work really hard to try to change that perception. What I did learn, a bit painfully in the end, was the importance of actually tapping into the expertise of the academic staff and getting them to be involved in workshops and projects; that was a bit slow coming. I wrote a chapter in a book on staff development that was published about two or three years ago and I called that chapter *Too Much Too Soon* because I went, with great enthusiasm and tried to sort of change a few things and I had to learn that you can't do it in a rush. The thing I tried to do too much too quickly was to try to change the very poor student evaluation of teaching process. But what I was offering in place was far too complicated and it was almost sunk with a few words from somebody in the Academic Committee. However, I managed to rescue it in the Academic Committee. That underlined for me, that if I hadn't been there, I couldn't have done it and it would have just disappeared. So that was a disillusioning thing. Also trying to interest people in improving their teaching was not an easy process, especially when you're told by the Professor of Biology, 'why are you telling me how to do anything? You don't know anything about Biology.' The irony was, of course, that my own background was in Science.

After a few years, I was in good touch with the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic), who was chair of the Academic Committee, and he would often put projects our way and look to us for advice on all sorts of matters. It really again underlined that, if you can get the high, important people in the university involved, it makes all the difference in the world. I had no idea how this whole thing was going to go. The whole idea of CELT was originally developed by the person who was Pro Vice-Chancellor in earlier times, Konai Thamen. She was very keen on teaching and a very good teacher and had written a paper and pushed it through the Academic Committee so it was brand new.

I suppose universities like the University of the South Pacific have a real dilemma. They want to be up with the rest of the world and yet they have a very important duty and role in their own community. I think one of the things that disappointed me was the fact that they didn't do enough local research, which they could have done. It was there waiting to be done. There were some Indigenous academic staff. There were some really great, intellectually wonderful people. This Pro Vice-Chancellor, Konai Thamen, who started the whole idea of CELT, is a wonderful person. It was a privilege to be involved with those sorts of people. Eventually, in 1997, I retired and returned to Australia.

The funny thing was, in 1997, I went to the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) conference in Adelaide and stood up at the annual general meeting and said, 'well this will be my last meeting. I just want to thank people for all that HERDSA has meant to me'. That was supposed to be my swan song! But a few weeks later I was asked if I could become the editor of the *HERDSA News* so I took that up and I haven't stopped doing it since.

**References**

I became a HERDSA Fellow in 2003. I was part of the initial cohort of ten Fellows, who were also involved in the development and evaluation of the initial processes used in the scheme. This happened under the intellectual leadership of Professor Angela Brew.

I still remember how it happened, just as if it was yesterday. The initial conversations on the Fellowship embryo started with Angela and seven more of us, in an apartment in Canberra in which I was staying. At the time, all of us were in the capital of Australia to take part in the 2002 National Teaching Forum and AAUT awards ceremony. These were the early days of the national teaching awards, with only six of them available to the whole nation, and no other alternative venues available to recognise and support the development of quality university professional engagement leading to good teaching and learning scholarship, one of the very basic concepts that drove the birth of the HERDSA Fellowship scheme.

Back then, I was quite lucky as the assessors of my HERDSA Fellowship portfolio were Professor Angela Brew and Dr Robert Kennelly, both of them quite influential thinkers in the Australian higher education world. Coming myself from a tradition of competing for teaching awards, first in my own institution in 2000 for the one individual teacher award, and then, having been a finalist for two consecutive years at national level, I learnt how the rules of engagement to demonstrate quality teaching worked in nationally competitive awards; you do not show your weaknesses just your greatness. Being at Parliament House for the awards felt very much like being in the Olympic Games award ceremonies, it was big and all about the winners, and being back into my teaching institution felt like having step out of the crowd without permission; quite a sin. Looking back, now I understand how the literature of teaching awards expresses concerns about issues of sustainability and dissemination. In particular, as Moore (2013) explained, teaching reward programs generally are about acknowledging isolated examples of teaching excellence, rather than about changing departmental and university teaching practice. As I experienced back then, the competitive nature of the award programs lead to the alienation of the competitors from the rest of their colleagues in their own institutions. That is why when I got involved with the HERDSA Fellowship, I was in for an unexpected professional learning journey.

When I wrote my first HERDSA portfolio draft, this was all about showing my bright teaching side, — the successful winning award one, — as usual. But it was not until Robert and Angela asked me during the assessment of my portfolio with a gentle tone: “And…where are the wounds of your teaching career? We cannot see them in your portfolio”. For some seconds, I was left there, wondering, speechless. Then, I started to cry, as I found the academic side of myself that I have been running away from for years, and as I confessed with shame that “I could not possibly share the dark side of my teaching life, the vulnerable side, the lonely one, the weak one…”. To which Robert, with lots of compassion in his eyes, replied: “well this is what is this Fellowship is about…”. Somehow, this experience was my academic wake up call, as the real spirit of the HERDSA Fellowship become clearer to me. This was not only the moment in which I realised that I have lost my academic self in the teaching competition game, but that becoming part of the HERDSA Fellowship could be a way to find the academic bits of me that were missing and that could not grow anywhere else.

These were the beginnings of a Professional Learning Community. It was about creating a safe professional and supportive professional space to recognise professional contributions, in different ways, to advancing learning and teaching in the Higher Education sector. However, indirectly, this also helped us to continue growing, not only as academics but also as human beings, trying to survive and thrive on a daily basis in a HE sector being, as Ritzer (2007) explained, “McDonaldized” at a rapid pace, not just in Australasia but also worldwide. We were assigned to triads, working in groups of three or four university HERDSA Fellows, some of whom we may have helped in their journeys to become fellows. In my group, there was A/Professor Beena Giridharan from Malaysia, Dr Sue Bolt from Australia, and Dr Alison Kirkness from New Zealand. Facing a new brave academic world, constantly impacting in the nature of my academic identity, being in touch with other Fellows, facing similar challenges in other parts of the world, helped me to have courage to keep going. During the last years we learnt a lot of from each other, through our reflective dialogues, and we contributed to our professional growth and mutual support, two of the vital elements of Professional Learning Communities. In time, our involvement in the HERDSA Fellowship led to different collaborations, joint conference seminars, competitive grant applications, and research papers (see for example Giridharan, Poyatos Matas, & Bolt, 2014).

It is now eleven years ago since I became involved with the HERDSA Fellowship, and since then the Fellowship has grown into a stronger professional recognition and
development scheme. Now it has its own college of assessors, which has just been established, and a larger cohort of dedicated university professionals, including academic developers, student support staff and discipline related academics, dedicated to enhancing the teaching and learning scholarship in Australasia and the world.

Being involved with the HERDSA Fellowship from its beginnings taught me many lessons. Most of all, it taught me professional humility, and, as Graham (2007) points out, to understand that teaching scholarship comes out of reflective and critical teaching conversations, contention and commitment, the basic ingredients of any effective professional learning community. It also taught me that the HERDSA Fellowship is a space in which I can safely explore my own identity as a teaching scholar, the authentic side of my teaching self, in a supportive scholarly environment.

References

Snapshots from the HERDSA 2014 Conference
I had committed myself for these Meanderings to return to my original themes of humour and the absurd. However, I found this to be very difficult as time went on with so much tragedy in the world. Then we received the very sad news of the passing of our Editor, Roger Landbeck.

Roger’s passing in July was a major loss for his family and also for his HERDSA ‘family’. Roger was a highly respected and warmly regarded long-term contributor to the work of HERDSA. He had been actively involved with HERDSA from its very earliest days when he became a member in 1974. We have all lost a very dear colleague, a colleague whom we will all certainly mourn and miss greatly.

Roger’s passing comes at a particularly worrying time in world events. Alarming news arrives at a rapid rate. The partial collapse of the Iraqi state, the shooting down of the Malaysian airliner in the Ukraine, the brutal murders of children and the eruption of hostilities yet again in Palestine are just three of many major sources of concern. Colleagues in the Palestinian universities I have been working with over the past few years show humbling dedication to their efforts to improve university teaching by doggedly continuing with their work and even arranging world class events on topics as diverse as community based learning and academic leadership. The fragile ‘peace’ that had existed in the recent past has crumbled and marks a return to the days of death and fear. Now it is almost impossible for academic colleagues from West Bank universities to meet together as the West Bank occupation is tightened, limiting the movement of academics from one university to another in the course of their work.

People’s capacity for brutality is one persisting feature of the human condition that education does not seem to be able to address. And people’s capacity – including students from the best universities – for sheer nastiness towards others in supposedly civilised societies is illustrated in Simon Dickie’s recent book Cruelty and Laughter, Forgotten Comic Literature and the Unsentimental Eighteenth Century (University of Chicago Press, 2011). Dickie recounts tales of Oxford University students and their cruel humour in robbing paupers of their last resources to finance drinking binges and destroying their victims’ meagre possessions for ‘fun’. And this behaviour was not limited to university students; such forays of depredation were also led by the nobility to fill in their idle hours.

I happened to be reading a book by Alain de Botton at the time of Roger’s death that goes some way to confront possible causes of such brutality and nastiness, at least in modern society. I want to say something about this book mostly because I think it would have appealed to Roger’s own beliefs and values and also because I believe its ideas warrant our consideration. It is rare in my experience to read something useful, interesting and consoling – and be curious as to the possibilities of importing certain of their ideas and practices into the secular realm (p.11). Religion for Atheists continues a long tradition of writing on this idea that includes Machiavelli, Voltaire, Mathew Arnold, Edward Gibbon and Jürgen Habermas, so de Botton is not exactly original.

He goes on to explain that religions serve two needs which secular society has not been able to address with any great success: first, the need to live harmoniously in communities (a need that surely religions have consistently served poorly as well), and secondly to cope with ‘terrifying degrees of pain’ such as those arising from professional failure, troubled relationships and death. ‘The error of modern atheism,’ he asserts, ‘has been to overlook how many aspects of the faiths remain relevant’ and to discover religions as repositories of ideas and concepts to moderate persistent ills of secular life. One aspect is the notion of community and here de Botton’s discussion of community is challenging – ‘One of the losses of modern society feels most keenly is that of a sense of community’.

I want to focus mostly on what he has to say about education – which is quite a lot – and by far the major focus of this engaging book. However, what may be more interesting is that education does not seem to be able to address. And people’s capacity – including students from the best universities – for sheer nastiness towards others in supposedly civilised societies is illustrated in Simon Dickie’s recent book Cruelty and Laughter, Forgotten Comic Literature and the Unsentimental Eighteenth Century (University of Chicago Press, 2011). Dickie recounts tales of Oxford University students and their cruel humour in robbing paupers of their last resources to finance drinking binges and destroying their victims’ meagre possessions for ‘fun’. And this behaviour was not limited to university students; such forays of depredation were also led by the nobility to fill in their idle hours.

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I want to focus mostly on what he has to say about education – which is quite a lot – and by far the major focus of this engaging book. Some of this discussion is intriguing and some of it humorous. He considers what could be taught and argues that higher education systems have two purposes, one, to teach us how to make a living and the second to teach us how to live. This second purpose, he asserts, has been left ‘recklessly vague and unattended’. That is an intriguing discussion that addresses concerns about brutality and nastiness discussed earlier. However, what may be more interesting for academics is his discussion of how we are taught. It is certainly one of the more humorous parts of the book!
De Botton says that Christianity has been guided in its teaching practices by the observation of how quickly we forget things and ‘a perplexing tendency to know what we should do combined with a persistent reluctance to actually do it’. Consequently, he argues, religion proposes that the central issue is not combating ignorance but how to deal with people’s reluctance to act on ideas already understood – something secular education implicitly believes is adequately dealt with when students ‘hear ideas only once or twice, at the age of twenty, before a fifty-year career … via a lecturer standing in a bare room speaking in a monotone’ (or presented via a computer screen, we could add).

Churches have preachers and universities have lecturers. Unlike the church, western universities have placed little premium on oratorical skills. Rather, they have emphasised the importance of truth to ensure understanding. The most recent manifestation of the oratorical tradition in Christianity is reflected in the work of African-American preachers and, based on their practices, de Botton conjures up hilarious images of comatose students being called awake by enthusiastic lecturers shouting ‘Do you hear me? I say, do you hear me?’ and then students falling tearfully to their knees to let important ideas about economics, mechanical engineering or poetry transform their lives.

Moreover, de Botton tells us, religions recognise the importance of reinforcing ideas in structured, regular and small doses to counteract ‘the continuous pull of distraction and disintegration’. The Book of Common Prayer is an excellent example of a highly structured program of reinforcement. By way of comparison, secular education presents us with an incessant stream of new ideas prompting us to forget everything, he says. We can see this flood operating in both undergraduate courses and in the torrent of academic publications that shows every sign of growing worse by the day.

Holding the attention of students, engaging them intellectually and emotionally, and reinforcing understanding are among the most basic issues of teaching. Yet readers will recognise these matters still need attention in whatever methods we choose to use. It is astonishing that after all the effort to improve teaching in universities over the past 50 years, there is still so much more that needs to be done – even at such basic levels. It is depressing to hear from a close relative who is studying for a course-work Masters degree, about lecturers who have very poor knowledge of their subject; who mark capriciously and then provide no feedback apart from a forlorn ‘63%’; have done no obvious preparation at all for their teaching; who forget to order the recommended textbook for students and then – astonishingly – penalize students for not citing it in their assignments that fall due before the book arrives; and who spend far too much time in classes complaining about their wives or describing their travel adventures overseas. That such really elementary practices of professional behaviour can survive in any self-respecting university that vacuously proclaims on its home page it provides ‘an outstanding learning experience taught by the country’s leading educators’ or that it ‘delivers (like pizzas, perhaps?) high quality learning and teaching experiences’, explains in some measure why the university sector constantly struggles to win solid political support and funding. That some universities do not consistently achieve even the most fundamental academic and professional standards of good practice shows how far they are from addressing, let alone even asking about, what de Botton describes as the most serious questions confronting humanity.

So to help address the brutality and nastiness of the world, the ‘how to live’ issue rather than just ‘making a living’, perhaps we should ponder de Botton’s final words about what religions might teach us: ‘Many of their methods, though remote from education, should nevertheless be considered essential to any plan to render ideas … more effective in our porous minds. These techniques need to be studied and adopted, so that we stand a chance of making at least one or two fewer mistakes…’ (p. 162).

I think Roger would have warmly supported the idea of studying these techniques.

Vale, Roger Landbeck.

Robert Cannon is the senior evaluation adviser to the large USAID PRIORITAS basic education project in Indonesia and has recently completed a major study of dissemination and sustainability of good practices there. He is also an external evaluator, and former Acting Chief of Party, of the USAID-funded Palestinian Faculty Development Program. Robert was Director of the Advisory Centre for University Education at the University of Adelaide from 1977 to 2001.

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New HERDSA Guide

Transnational Teaching and Learning (2014)
Anne Melano, Maureen Bell & Ruth Walker

Transnational Teaching and Learning is a comprehensive guide providing practical advice on the broad range of issues affecting academics engaged in transnational higher education. Distilling the wisdom of several dozen experienced transnational teachers as well as the research literature, this HERDSA Guide provides insights to some of the many questions transnational teachers and course coordinators are asking. Much of the practical advice in the Guide has been gathered from subject and program coordinators, co-teachers, students and staff in transnational programs in locations including Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Hong Kong.

To order this publication on-line go to:
http://www.herdsa.org.au/?page_id=139
MOOCs Revisited: An Aesop’s Fables Perspective

By Roger Atkinson

It seems to me that writers on edtech and IT in higher education topics have found few opportunities to draw upon the work of the great names we know from the Classical Greece period. To illustrate, Plato, Aristotle and Socrates are very rarely mentioned in the edtech literature, though “Socratic method” appears sometimes. My own learning experiences were confined to Euclid, Pythagoras and Archimedes (now long ago, but warmly remembered - the context was late 1950s high school maths and physics), who are almost never mentioned in the edtech literature.

So I was really quite chuffed to find an opportunity, at last, to invoke the work of a writer from the Classical Greece period: Aesop. Though perhaps not as great a contributor as Plato, Aristotle and Socrates, Aesop does provide an insightful perspective upon the data in Table 1.

How is that so? Well, it is just the usual process of seeking a succinct descriptor or phrase for a key feature in a set of observations, for example, “survival of the fittest”, in the context of the observations from which the theory of evolution emerged. My observations, summarised in Table 1, are nowhere near as momentous as Darwin’s, but nevertheless the notion of seeking a succinct descriptor or phrase is equally valid.

To begin with, “MOOCs revisited” arises from my speculation, about one year ago, concerning the scope for MOOC activities by academic professional associations [1].

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cluster</th>
<th>Consortium</th>
<th>Universities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. being among the world’s most prestigious universities</td>
<td>Coursera and EdX</td>
<td>Australian National U; U of Adelaide; U of Melbourne; U of NSW; U of Queensland; U of Western Australia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. having prestigious experience in online and distance education</td>
<td>Open2Study and FutureLearn</td>
<td>Curtin U; Flinders U; Griffith U; James Cook U; Macquarie U (incl. Grad Sch of Management); Monash U (FutureLearn); RMIT U; Swinburne U; U of Newcastle; U of Tasmania; U of Western Sydney; U of Wollongong; Massey U; U of Auckland (FutureLearn).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. having a special commitment to open education resources</td>
<td>OERu</td>
<td>Charles Sturt U; U of Southern Queensland; U of Tasmania; U of Wollongong; Lincoln U; U of the South Pacific.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. experimenting with an economical delivery framework</td>
<td>Blackboard Course Sites or in house LMS</td>
<td>Charles Darwin U; Charles Sturt U; Deakin U (in house: DeakinConnect); Swinburne U; U of New England (in house); U of Tasmania (in house); U of Waikato (in house).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. no MOOC (i.e. no readily findable public information about a MOOC offering or planned future offering, during or before July 2014)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Australian Catholic Uni; Bond University; CQUniversity; Edith Cowan U; Federation U of Australia; La Trobe U; Murdoch U; Queensland U of Technology; Southern Cross U; U of Canberra; U of Notre Dame; U of South Australia; U of Sunshine Coast; U of Sydney; U of Technology Sydney; Victoria U; Auckland U of Technology; U of Canterbury; U of Otago; Victoria U of Wellington.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Oceania region universities and participation in MOOCs

Notes for Table 1
1. Table 1 contains all universities in Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific, with other regions of the world and other kinds of educational organisations not included, in order to keep the size of Table 1 reasonable.
2. The ‘MOOC participation rate’ for Table 1’s listing (July 2014) is 28/48, i.e. 58%.
That scope, that window of opportunity, has receded or vanished, but quite interesting (‘QI’) perspectives arise from updating of observations on who is doing what in the MOOC scene [2]. Table 1 identifies MOOC contributions, if any, from each university in the Oceania region (Australia, New Zealand and the South Pacific Islands), and the consortium or delivery framework that the university has adopted. The ‘QI’ perspective arises from seeking succinct phrases to encapsulate key patterns in Table 1. My speculation led me to two that I associate with Aesop’ Fables, namely “You are known by the company you keep”, and “Birds of a feather flock together”. These are the “Morals” from The farmer and the stork respectively [3]. Here my emphasis is upon the aptness of the “Morals”, rather than upon the fable outcomes, which were definitely not good for the ass or the stork.

To test the aptness of “You are known by the company you keep” and “Birds of a feather flock together”, I have arranged the Oceania universities that provide MOOCs into four “clusters”. Succinct illustrations of key characteristics of each of the “clusters” may be obtained by quoting briefly from their websites:

1. “EdX offers interactive online classes and MOOCs from the world’s best universities.” https://www.edx.org/

2. “Coursera is an education platform that partners with top universities and organizations worldwide ... Choose from 400+ courses created by the world’s top educational institutions.” https://www.coursera.org/

3. “We [FutureLearn] are a private company wholly owned by The Open University, with the benefit of over 40 years of their experience in distance learning and online education. Our partners include over 20 of the best UK and international universities, as well as institutions with a huge archive of cultural and educational material, including the British Council, the British Library, and the British Museum.” (https://www.futurelearn.com)

4. “Open2Study is backed by Open Universities Australia (OUA), an Australian leader in accredited online education.” (https://www.open2study.com/)

5. “Based on our research, the top three reasons why organisations join the OERu network are: 1. to participate in an international network of “like-minded” institutions ...” (http://oeru.org/organisation-faqs/)

6. “Move Your Courses Online Free ... Create up to 5 course websites, free. ... Engage students in social learning. ... Weave multimedia into course content. ... Assess performance and manage grades. ... Share Open Education Resources. ... Teach open courses or MOOCs.” (Blackboard - Bb CourseSites in Table 1) (https://www.coursesites.com/webapps/Bb-sites-course-creation-BBLEARN/pages/)

It now seems very clear that “the company you keep” (the “Consortium” column in Table 1) is more important than the underlying technologies that deliver the online services for a MOOC. These days, one can almost say that it no longer matters which LMS (learning management system) or other software is used for a MOOC, or who provides the computer servers that host the MOOCs. This reflects a truly great maturation of the underlying technologies, the “ICTs”. Firstly, current software and hardware from any of the major providers allow teachers great flexibility in implementing their desired pedagogy. Secondly, from an educational provider’s perspective, we have benefited from an incredible lowering of technology costs in the areas of media production, digital storage, and online searching, retrieval and group discussion activities. Thirdly, from a learner’s perspective, we also have enjoyed an incredible lowering of technology costs for access to learning and learning resources. Fourthly, the same ICT advances have enabled a very welcome expansion of free online provision of educational resources by media organisations (ABC, BBC, etc), libraries, museums, galleries, zoos, government departments, businesses and community organisations - thereby expanding the range of learning resources that MOOC creators can utilise.

Of course there are quite a number of limitations in the perspective summarised in Table 1. Some universities seem to be trying out more than one “Consortium”, for example the University of Tasmania. It is important to note that polytechnics, TAFE colleges, community colleges and industry based providers are beginning to compete effectively with universities for “MOOC space”. Whilst awareness of “the company you keep” is important, academic leaders in universities have many other perspectives to consider in planning for MOOC participation. One of these perspectives is how to complement and draw from the university’s existing activities in “brand name promotion”, rather than compete with or detract from them. In particular, there are numerous other avenues that universities are using for free dissemination of educational resources associated with their “brand name promotion”, for example Apple’s iTunes U [4], YouTube, media outlets such as The Conversation (http://theconversation.com/au/partners), and of course their own university websites and extension departments.

Diversification in MOOC design and operation is increasing. For example, OERu is promoting MOOC “sub-components” characterised as a “micro Open Online Course (mOOC”). MOOCs have started to offer formal academic credit as an optional, fee paying extra. For example, Coursera partners can provide “official recognition from universities and Coursera with a verifiable electronic certificate”, as in UNSW’s Learning to Teach Online with its $49 option, “Introductory Price. For a limited time only!”. From OERu, “Our formal assessment services are optional - provided on a ‘fee for service’ basis by our partner institutes.”

To conclude, does Table 1 provide helpful insights into the way forward for current and potential providers of university based MOOCs in our region of the world? Perhaps that question requires much more research and many more data tables, extending worldwide and into other sectors of education. However, very tentatively, I suggest that further growth in “cluster 1” (“world’s most prestigious universities”) is probably unrealistic, because, let’s face it, with modesty: few of our region’s universities enjoy worldwide popular recognition as being in that category. Advances in our contributions in the MOOC format will centre upon “cluster 2” and “cluster 3”. These have strong regional roots through Open2Study and OERu (noting that OERu originated mainly from New Zealand). There could be strategic advantages in an informally or semi-formally coordinated Oceania region suite of offerings that differentiates us from American-based
“big name” consortia. Another strategic direction could be to substitute “modest” for “massive” in the acronym MOOC. Thinking “modest” could enable better serving of the purpose, “A good way of offering ‘taster’ courses that hook students in” [5]. Thinking “modest” could also enable better matching to regional, local and institutional interests and promotion, for example CDU’s MOOC, Charles Darwin, Evolution, and Tropical Australia [6] serves all three, whilst also having an international appeal. This MOOC is in “cluster 4”, which has significance as a potential pathway into “cluster 2” and “cluster 3”. Switching into “non-tentative” mode, the Aesopic morals, “You are known by the company you keep” and “Birds of a feather flock together”, are also insights into the way forward. Just choose one's company and one's feathers modestly.

Now some personal words of remembrance and appreciation for the late Roger Landbeck, for so long the Editor of HERDSA News. During the ten years that I have been contributing a news column I have been nudged along by Roger’s gentle reminders, though sadly we never got around to meeting in person. I will miss the “Hi Roger, …. Cheers, Roger” emails.

References
3. From a number of online, open access sources for Aesop’s Fables, the most useful seemed to me to be: http://www.aesopfables.com/; http://www.best-childrens-books.com/aesops-fables.html; and http://ancienthistory.about.com/od/greekliterature/a/aesopcontents.htm

Roger Atkinson retired from Murdoch University in 2001. His current activities include honorary work on the TL Forum conference series, Issues in Educational Research, and other academic conference support and publishing activities. In mid-2012 he retired from a 17 year association with the publishing of AJET website (including this article in html format): http://www.roger-atkinson.id.au/
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New HERDSA Guide
Work Integrated Learning in the Curriculum (2014)
By Sonia Ferns
Work integrated learning (WIL) connects students with industry, business, government and community with the intention of creating authentic learning experiences that strengthen students’ capacity to develop work-ready skills. This HERDSA Guide highlights the uniqueness of WIL and the opportunities and challenges it affords. The Guide provides insights into curriculum design, performance-based assessment, academic standards, risk management, institutional leadership, building staff capacity and evaluation strategies for WIL.

To order this publication on-line go to: http://www.herdsa.org.au/?page_id=139
I originally wrote a ‘Research in Progress’ article for the December 2009 issue of HERDSA News when I was just beginning my PhD. This follow-up article appears at Roger Landbeck’s invitation to report the results of my PhD and what I think I learned from it all.

My PhD journey started when I mentioned to Simon Barrie at the Institute for Teaching and Learning at the University of Sydney that I was thinking about starting a PhD. Simon offered himself and Keith Trigwell as potential supervisors and suggested we meet. On receiving their email I did what any student would do – I googled both of them. Based on what I read, I decided they were both worth considering as supervisors and agreed to meet with them. It turns out that the purpose of this meeting was for Keith and Simon to determine whether they should supervise me – I thought I was the one considering them. Still, it turned out to be an amazing five years working in academic development with opportunities to attend HERDSA and ICED conferences and to meet supportive academics from all over the world.

My PhD explored the nature of academics’ informal conversations about teaching within their university departments. I investigated conversations about teaching from the perspectives of two groups of academics. The first group, mid-career academics, were interviewed about their experience of informal conversations within their departmental contexts – the topics, and purposes of conversations, and what facilitated and impeded conversations. The second group, novice academics, were interviewed about their experience of informal conversations during and after attending a formal development program.

In total, thirty academic staff working in ten different departments at one Australian research-intensive university were interviewed about their informal teaching conversations. The interview transcripts were analysed using the constant comparative method associated with grounded theory as outlined by Glaser and Strauss (1967). The analysis provided evidence that conversations with colleagues play a significant role in reassuring and supporting mid-career academics to learn how to manage and improve their teaching practice in ways that they perceive to be relevant and contextually appropriate (Thomson, 2013). Academics described having greater conversations with those with whom they had much in common, such as those with similar disciplinary backgrounds, who shared their philosophy of teaching, and had common personal interests.

For novice academics, informal conversations had the potential to reinforce and extend ideas from the formal professional development program to their teaching practice, but this required a connection between the contents of the program and conversations. The absence of supportive conversations about teaching was described as hindering academics from drawing on colleagues’ experience to adapt the formal program ideas to their teaching context, and in this way, limited the impact of the program and conversations on academics’ learning.

The results of my thesis will help us to respond to Gibbs’ (2013, p.13) invitation to consider the possibilities for how we can support academics to communicate and learn about teaching, including through informal conversations about teaching practices.

In reflecting on my experience, there are some things that I’ve learned; like many PhDs, most of them were unintended.

1. I have learned that there are such things as bad research questions and bad writing; and I can’t tolerate either – from myself or others.

2. Rigour in research is important. I was surrounded by examples of excellent thinking and questioning from colleagues and even after I understood the importance of rigour, it didn’t mean that I could present my ideas well or in a way that makes sense to other people. I can now recognise a lack of rigour but I can’t always produce work that meets the standards I so admire in others – something I’m still learning!

3. One of my favourite things was (and still is) observing two or more ‘grown-up’ researchers debating and critiquing each other – all of it – the ideas, the project, the methods, and/or the appropriateness of the results and discussion, given the methods used. I observed and participated in some debates during research conferences, and within departmental research seminars, and these experiences were some of the best moments of my candidature.

4. I have learned how amazingly generous people are with their time and expertise. As a student, I have always felt welcomed and supported within this field (whatever this field is, wherever its borders lie – Higher Education research, Academic Development, and/or the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning). Having just started in my first full-time academic appointment, I realise how precious time is and appreciate their support all the more.

5. I enjoyed watching others’ reactions when I mentioned my supervisors’ names … and their subsequent reactions when I declared that I was using,
“anything but phenomenography”. Apparently that would have been a sensible methodology to use as it’s an area of expertise for both my supervisors.

6. I have learned that ‘water cooler conversations’ is an Australian (or Anglo-American) term. Colleagues from various Scandinavian countries have informed me that where they’re from, cooling water isn’t necessary, and their conversations are much more likely to happen over coffee or during Fika (the Swedish coffee break, see http://nordiccoffeeculture.com/for-the-love-of-fika/). This was a good lesson and a reminder that those I meet will work in contexts different to my own, and nothing should be assumed (Trowler & Cooper, 2002).

7. I wish I could do it again. Since finishing my PhD I have been appointed as a Lecturer, Work Integrated Learning, at the University of Sydney’s Faculty of Health Sciences. I’m still writing and looking forward to publishing from my PhD; and to future research challenges. Ideas and advice are always welcome.

References


Benchmarking Student Perceptions of the Use and Effectiveness of Mobile Devices in Science Practical Activities

By Sherrie Caarels, Rowan Brookes and Gerry Rayner

Technological advancements are rapidly changing the way students use and interact with educational materials. Students are now able to progress in their education by utilising a range of electronic devices that make the process more interactive, flexible and mobile. In the USA, a national study of student use of technology found that students are drawn to electronic devices across several domains, including food chemistry, education (Kolk, Beldman, Hartog & Gruppen, 2011) and chemistry research (Quinnell, Hibbert & Milsted, 2009). Furthermore, very little has been reported on student perceptions of their readiness to utilise such platforms, or concerns they may have about the viability of e-Manuals for practical activities.

Students are uncertain about the e-Manual concept

First year biology students were surveyed at the commencement of their degree studies in mid-2013 about ownership and confidence in using personal computers, including desktops, laptops, tablets and smartphones. The majority of students (57%, n=1209) agreed or strongly agreed with the statement “I feel confident enough to use my mobile device to write up my practicals directly into an e-Manual”. Yet despite this indicated confidence, half of the students agreed or strongly agreed that an e-Manual would be “more difficult to use than a printed manual”. Furthermore, although e-Manuals have many features that cannot be provided by hardcopy formats, most students were either ambivalent or thought that an e-Manual would not enhance the learning process (neutral - 54%, disagree-strongly disagree - 33%).
What is driving this uncertainty?

Student reluctance to embrace the e-Manual concept was due, in part, to the functional limitations and availability of electronic devices and associated software currently on the market. At the commencement of this project, an educational technologist was employed to conduct a full market investigation of the electronic devices and software available that might support the development of an e-Manual. Despite an extensive analysis, nothing was found to meet all of our required specifications: that being accurate replication of a paper-based practical manual, with key criteria being digital inking, text entry, online submission, and integration of multimedia and internet content. Until such tools and features are available, students will quite understandably continue to have misgivings about the advantages of using e-Manuals.

Another factor likely contributing to student apprehension of the e-Manual concept is the difference in the way in which such modes facilitate learning, as well as the added implications of entering into the “unknown”. Learning is facilitated by active reading, which by tradition has involved the physical manipulation of text by way of writing, annotating, and/or drawing. Inking tools for writing and drawing remain inefficient and awkward, and do not adequately mimic the experience of drawing or writing on paper. Further, syntopical use of more than one document or “page” is common within the practical environment. While personal computers, in particular tablet devices, attempt to replicate these features and processes they are not yet as efficient or user-friendly.

Students also expressed a concern about the potential for damage to personal electronic devices during practical sessions by exposure to laboratory chemicals or breakage due to physical impact. Despite this misgiving, however, it is envisaged that such events would be no more as common than with regular use outside the learning environment because of the strict safety protocols already in place. Protective covers could be added to further reduce such risks. Potential loss of data resulting from such events may be mitigated by ensuring that students regularly back up electronic data, either to a portable storage device (e.g. USB flash drive or hard drive) or to a cloud-based storage system.

Embracing transition: Staff and students

It is inherently clear that the transition from hardcopy to electronic learning formats requires a carefully planned management strategy that encourages and supports both students and staff through the transition process. When experiencing change, it is not the change itself that takes people out of their comfort zone, but rather the loss of something that is closely held and viewed as important that can create discontent (Heifetz, Grashow and Linsky 2009). In the instance of transitioning electronic teaching platforms such as the e-Manual, it appears that the ease and comfort of using well-acclimated paper resources to read, undertake note-taking and drawing may be the biggest hurdle for students.

To navigate the period of disequilibrium during the transition phase to an e-Manual, it is essential that academic and teaching managers have the resources to support tutors and students. This support should involve additional training for tutors and subsequent coaching and technical support for students. It is also crucial that alternative methods to mitigate the experience of loss are identified. For instance, students not wishing to use aspects of an e-Manual (e.g. the desire to continue to draw diagrams on paper) are shown alternatives during the interim (e.g. taking photo of drawn diagram and inserting it into the e-Manual).

We think that once the obstacles in student reluctance to use technology within the practical environment are overcome the value of e-Manuals can be fully realised.

Acknowledgments

Funding for this project was provided by HERDSA in partnership with the Australian Government Office for Learning and Teaching (OLT). The views expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the views HERDSA or the OLT.

References


Dr Sherrie Caarels is a senior Technical Teaching Coordinator in the School of Biological Sciences, Monash University who has previously undertaken a pilot study investigating the efficacy of an e-Manual prototype in a second year science unit. Dr Gerry Rayner is an education focussed academic and coordinator of first year biology units in the School of Biological Sciences, Monash University. Dr Rowan Brookes is an education focussed academic in the School of Biological Sciences, Monash University where she coordinates two science degrees, the Bachelor of Environmental Science and the BSc Advanced - Global Challenges (Honours).

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HERDSA New Zealand

Chair: Clinton Golding
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HERDSA NZ website: http://www.herdsa.org.nz/

HERDSA members sometimes comment that HERDSA NZ seems to be very active. For example, we organise our own conference, and we run at least one national symposium every year. We thought it might be useful to reveal the not-so-magic trick behind this: We have a big committee, generous with their time, drawn from a pool of more than 130 HERDSA members in New Zealand.

Like other HERDSA branches, we have a chair (myself), secretary (Rob Wass) and treasurer (Erik Brogt). But in addition we have a large executive committee with 13 members from 7 universities, 2 from polytechnics and 1 from a private higher education consulting institute. This gives us a representative perspective on tertiary education in New Zealand, and a very strong base for our work.

“I appreciate being part of an active committee with a diverse membership all of whom appear committed to making HERDSA relevant to tertiary educators across the country.” Jean Rath, committee member.

The executive committee is not unwieldy despite its size, because members choose their level of involvement. Some rarely attend branch meetings but share their comments via email when they have something useful to offer. Others are stalwarts at every meeting and guide the regular running of HERDSA NZ. Yet others take on one or more of the major tasks of HERDSA NZ. Because of the varied levels of involvement, previously active members can take a backseat when their other commitments are too heavy, while still allowing the committee to draw on their experience.

The main problem with such a large committee is the geographical distance. Our committee members are from cities all across the country and we cannot get together for face-to-face meetings. To deal with this challenge we meet using video conferencing at set times during the year, bringing together members from the bottom of NZ, the top of NZ, the middle and the sides. Virtual meetings can be challenging, but I work closely with Rob to ensure we keep accurate records and that these are disseminated to all committee members. We also have regular email contact and sometimes make decisions via email.

“I like the way the committee operates using the online meetings and emails in-between. It means that attending a meeting is not too onerous nor time consuming. If we had to travel for face-to-face meetings it would eat into other valuable time.” Lindsey Conner, committee member.

Having a big, experienced committee makes delegation viable as there is always someone willing and able to take on any project:

- The HERDSA conference in 2013 was organised by Stanley Frielick and his team at Auckland University of Technology
- Our Tertiary Education Research in NZ (TERNZ) conference in November this year is organised by Barbara Kensington-Miller from the University of Auckland
- The TERNZ medal committee is chaired by Linda Keesing-Styles from Unitec in Auckland
- The Graduate attributes colloquium in April every year is co-organised by Tony Harland from the University of Otago in Dunedin and Ako Aotearoa in Wellington (NZ’s equivalent of the OLT)
- Our educational researcher symposium for 2015 is organised by Jean Rath at the University of Waikato in Hamilton.
- My job as chair is to coordinate activities across NZ, delegate responsibility for our projects, help develop a vision for HERDSA NZ, liaise with the HERDSA executive and other branches, and to write things like this.

The committee includes members of many years standing, including a few ex-chairs, and by delegating and distributing the work across the entire committee we can be very effective.

“We tackle some really significant issues and the continuity and experience is hugely valuable in that regard.” Linda Keesing-Styles, committee member

So, to sum up, the HERDSA NZ committee works so well because of the active, distributed team approach from our large group of competent, committed members.

All HERDSA members are warmly invited to participate in the TERNZ conference 26-28 November in Auckland. TERNZ is a forum for enquiry into learning and teaching in the New Zealand tertiary sector. It aims to support and develop a community who share a common interest in research.

News from the Branches

By Maureen Bell

HERDSA branches and regional networks form a key link in the HERDSA community’s chain of networking and developmental events. Branch chairs and committees work hard behind the scenes to organise branch activities for HERDSA members. Local networking activities include colloquia, fora, pre- and post-conference presentations, network meetings, and speakers. If you have not yet made it to one of your branch activities we encourage you to get involved.

News of past and future branch activities can be forwarded to mbell@uow.edu.au for inclusion in the next HERDSA News.

Our thanks go to the Branch executive for the effort they have put into this initiative and good luck in future activities.

ACT

Chair: Catherine McLoughlin
HERDSA representatives from UC, ANU and ADFA have got together to plan a set of activities for the next few months. HERDSA ACT is considering organizing events centered on:

• visits by National Teaching Fellows
• digital badges in the tertiary sector in the ACT
• social media to support teaching and research activities.

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Hong Kong

Chair: Anna Siu Fong KWAN
HERDSA (Hong Kong Branch) has just held the first HERDSA Conference in Hong Kong this July. On 30 July, the Conference Committee had a post-conference meeting to discuss the follow-ups. The Hong Kong Branch Executives also met on the same day to plan for the branch activities in 2014 and 2015. To capitalize on the presentations shared and networks built in the Conference, a mini conference or a series of activities will be arranged. The first activity will be focused on welcoming new members.

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

HERDSA HK Website: http://herdsahk.edublogs.org/

Contact Anna Kwan: anna.kwan@outlook.com

Queensland

The QLD branch executives offer their condolences and deepest sympathies to the family, friends and colleagues of Roger Landbeck, who recently passed away on the Sunshine Coast.

Thank you to the QLD branch members who attended a branch meeting at the HERDSA conference in Hong Kong. The meeting included an introduction of the new executive committee, discussion about the branch website, events completed in 2013/2014, future events and potential collaboration with QPEN and CADAD.

At the end of 2013 the Queensland Branch (incorporating all of Queensland and northern New South Wales) of HERDSA underwent a change to the executive committee. Thank you to the previous executive committee members Steve Drew and Jason Lodge for providing a solid branch platform for the new executive to launch new professional development opportunities for members.

The new executive committee for 2014 consists of:

• Rebecca Sealey (Chair) - James Cook University
• Glyn Thomas - University of the Sunshine Coast
• Kylie Readman - University of the Sunshine Coast
• Angela Hill - James Cook University.

The branch has launched a new website which is maintained by James Cook University at this stage and is updated with advertised events and resources from completed events. The Branch Executive is currently exploring ways for the site to have optimal member impact and would welcome suggestions.

In 2013 the Branch hosted a range of professional development events for members. So far in 2014 the Branch has hosted two professional development events across multiple locations. OLT Fellow Romy Lawson presented workshops in Cairns and Townsville, the Sunshine Coast and in Brisbane on Principles for designing a curriculum to develop and assure student learning outcomes. These workshops received a total of seventy-eight attendees with all funding provided by Romy’s OLT Fellowship. Denise Wood presented workshops in both Townsville and Cairns as part of the James Cook University Learning & Teaching Week. There were forty-five attendees at Denise’s sessions on innovative methodologies to further the widening participation agenda through inclusive technology enhanced learning and transformative pedagogical approaches in higher education.

QLD branch members are working on a proposal to run teaching and learning writing retreats in 2014. The Branch will work toward an AGM for 2015 and would like to further populate and promote the
Branch website. Branch Executive Kylie Readman recently hosted discussions at the sixth Q-PEN (Queensland Promoting Excellence Network) Forum regarding potential collaboration between Q-PEN, HERDSA QLD and CADAD. These conversations are ongoing and positive.


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SOUTH AUSTRALIA
Chair: Sharron King, University of South Australia

The two recent workshops held by the SA branch were very positively received with good participation across the Higher Education sector. The first workshop in April with A/Prof Lynne Roberts (from Curtin University) focused on Developing Best Practice in Honours and Coursework Dissertation Supervision. Many of the participants commented on how useful it was to hear other people's ideas and share features of best practice. Key discussion points focused on defining and negotiating expectations for both students and supervisors as well as exploring student’s motivations for postgraduate study in the early stages of the supervisory relationship.

The second workshop (June 2014) was part of the series that A/Prof Romy Lawson (University of Wollongong) has been presenting as part of her OLT fellowship on Principles for Designing a Curriculum to Develop and Assure Student Learning Outcomes. Again there was good representation from the three South Australian universities and lively discussion of the resources that Romy provided, with a number of participants eager to trial the curriculum design model with their own program teams.

HERDSA SA will hold a full branch meeting in September to plan for future events. Sharron and the executive look forward to working with the SA branch members in 2014.

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TASMANIA
Chair: Tracy Douglas

14 HERDSA Tasmania members and University of Tasmania staff attended a Scholarly writing workshop facilitated by branch members, Assoc Prof Natalie Brown and Prof Mike Prosser in April. The event was a wonderful opportunity for individuals to investigate potential projects in SOTL and progress through any current projects with respect to planning, evaluation, presentation or publication. The feedback from attendees was so positive that the branch executive hope to make this an annual event.

The branch invited Assoc Prof Romy Lawson to Launceston in June to present a workshop on curriculum design. Romy’s presentation on designing a curriculum to develop and assure student learning outcomes included a demonstration of a curriculum mapping tool which can be used to map AQF, threshold learning outcomes, accreditation standards and more. The workshop was beneficial to the nine University of Tasmania staff (four HERDSA members) who attended and the branch hopes that the use of this tool in the future will enable members to efficiently map courses at University of Tasmania for quality assurance purposes.

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VICTORIA
Chair: Elizabeth Levin

A large conference committee with broad representation from many Victorian universities is working feverishly to organise the 2015 conference, which will be held in Melbourne from the 6th till 9th July, 2015 at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre. Professor Beverley Oliver conference chair and the conference theme is Learning for life and work in a complex world. The conference website can be found at www.herdsa2015.org.au and anyone with questions is welcome to contact Liz (email below).

The branch held a very successful event with over 50 people registering at Swinburne in June. Associate Professor Romy Lawson presented a very lively and engaging workshop entitled Principles for designing curricula to develop and assure student learning outcomes. Everyone really enjoyed the workshop which provided opportunities to see and hear about ‘best practice’ and to learn from one another. Collaboration and calibration or benchmarking were two key themes.

A few upcoming events are planned which will dovetail into the conference and encourage new members to get involved. The possibility of forming a sub branch based in Vietnam is under discussion – but more on this in the next newsletter.

Contact: Elizabeth Levin:
elevin@swin.edu.au

A/Prof Romy Lawson presenting at her HERDSA Vic Workshop
**Western Australia**

*Chair: Melissa Davis*

Melissa offers this statement on behalf of the branch.

On behalf of WA HERDSA members I join the rest of the HERDSA community in recognising the loss of Roger Landbeck. I offer our condolences to Roger’s loved ones and to the members of the HERDSA National Executive on the loss of a valued colleague and friend.

The WA Branch will be hosting the 2016 Conference and thank the Executive for their endorsement of our proposal. Thanks also to the members of the WA Committee who assisted with the proposal and to each of the five universities in Perth who have offered their support for the conference. HERDSA WA are excited to commence planning and look forward to welcoming many us to Perth in 2016.

An audience of approximately 50 people appreciated Romy Lawson’s recent fly-in-fly-out visit to Perth for a half day workshop on *Principles for Whole of Course Curriculum Design to Develop and Assure Student Learning Outcomes*. The branch is very grateful to Romy for making time in her busy schedule to come to Perth and for her good humour and generosity in sharing examples of practice. WA has a number of professional learning events planned for the second half of the year, including a seminar by Dr Daniel Southam on the use of a flipped class paradigm, a seminar by Dr Lee Partridge and colleagues on their OLT-Award winning Undergraduate Learning and Teaching Research Internship Scheme, and a seminar on student support and retention by Professor Keithia Wilson.

Please note Wednesday 1 October in your diaries for the annual “HERDSA Rekindled”. This is an opportunity for WA academics who did not make it to the HERDSA National Conference to hear the presentations of their WA colleagues. The branch looks forward to seeing you at Murdoch University for this event.

Contact Melissa Davis: m.davis@curtin.edu.au

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**New HERDSA Guide**

**Leading Academic Networks (2014)**

Shelda Debowski

Leading Academic Networks offers a complete tool kit for network leaders. Drawing on principles of leadership and management and successful network practices it explores a highly strategic approach to leading networks and their executive committees. This practical guide offers insight into the nature and features of academic network structures and design; the role of the network leader; developing the network strategy; managing the network’s activities, including financial and executive committee practices; developing an effective engagement strategy; and handing over to a new leader. Useful reflective tools are provided to assist networks and leaders in assessing their practices and effectiveness.

To order this publication on-line go to:
http://www.herdsa.org.au/?page_id=139
SNAPSHOTS FROM THE HERDSA 2014 CONFERENCE
I wish to thank the many HERDSA members who have so kindly sent messages of sympathy following Roger’s sudden death and so many messages of affirmation of him as a person and a long time member of HERDSA. He would have been totally surprised at the quantity and quality of the messages I have received - so humble was he. As you may know, HERDSA and all it stood for and aimed for was a passion of Roger’s and he thoroughly enjoyed his association with HERDSA over the years but most particularly valued the many friends he made as a result. He was very proud of his lifetime membership. He loved the annual conferences, as did I, as I was often able to accompany him. As a result I too made friends among you and greatly appreciated the warmth with which I was welcomed despite not being a HERDSA member nor even an academic. I shall miss those very much. So thank you all again,

Margaret Landbeck
HERDSA thanks our generous sponsors for their support of our HERDSA Hong Kong 2014 conference

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July 6-9, 2015
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Call for Abstracts and Registrations

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- Educating graduates to be responsive and adaptable professionals
- Exploiting emerging technologies to enable employability
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- Navigating uncertainty and complexity

Submission deadline November 5th 2014

www.herdsa2015.org visit our website to register and be kept informed