

# herdsa news letter 3/74

October 1974

## herdsa 75

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### Inside

Herdsa 73 Report  
Review  
Education of women

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The Conference and second General Meeting of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia will be held from Friday, 24 January to Sunday, 26 January, 1975 (immediately following the 46th ANZAAS Congress).

**VENUE:** Burgmann College, The Australian National University, Canberra.

**ACCOMMODATION:** Most participants will probably choose to take advantage of the full board arrangements available at Burgmann College, commencing with lunch (12.30 – 1.30 p.m.) on Friday, 24 January and concluding with afternoon tea on Sunday, 26 January. The cost for this is \$33 per person. (The cost for undergraduate students – who will be required to produce evidence of their undergraduate status – is \$20.) Participants not wishing to 'live in' may have lunches and/or dinners at Burgmann College for \$2 per meal. A bar will be available at appropriate times. Payment for accommodation or meals is to be made directly to Burgmann College during the Conference.

On request, TAA will arrange alternative accommodation in moderately priced hotels, within walking distance of the ANU.

**TRAVEL:** TAA has been appointed Official Carrier for the Conference and all arrangements may be made by contacting the special Conference Travel Advisers listed elsewhere in this brochure. A 10% reduction on TAA economy class air fares will be provided to participants (and spouses) where a minimum of 15 passengers travel together on the forward journey, and free transport from and to the Canberra Airport will be provided for such groups. TAA will provide a travel desk at the Conference to assist participants with travel arrangements, reconfirmations of reservations, post-conference tour planning, car rentals, etc. (Avis rental car bookings made through TAA or at the Conference venue will be eligible for a 10% discount on time and mileage charges.)

**REGISTRATION:** There will be no

registration fee for members. Non-members will be required to join the Society. Registration will commence at noon on Friday, 24 January 1975 at the Conference Office, Burgmann College. *The Advance Registration Form should be completed and posted to the address shown by 31 October, 1974 (see back page).*

**CONFERENCE FORMAT:** Instead of the conventional presentation of papers, participants will attend one of several alternative workshops. Each workshop will commence with one or more keynote addresses and participants will have the opportunity of presenting and discussing working papers and/or case studies. Each workshop will be expected to produce a report, the complete version of which will be printed and distributed to the entire membership and a brief version of which will be presented at a plenary session at the end of the Conference.

It has been suggested that a small number of the following themes might serve as workshop topics. On the Advance Registration Form you are asked to indicate preferences and to suggest other likely themes.

- 1 The Fourth Revolution: Where do we stand in Australia? Should Australia have a National Resource Centre? (Reference: **The Fourth Revolution: Instructional Technology in Higher Education.** New York: McGraw-Hill, 1972.)
- 2 New instructional processes and their evaluation. (Including case studies.)
- 3 Practical work. Why laboratory classes? The misuse of laboratory classes in science teaching.
- 4 Course or curriculum development or redevelopment. How do we design tertiary courses? What methods of course design are being used?
- 5 Admission to and selection for higher education.
- 6 Uses of the computer in tertiary teaching and learning.
- 7 Personalization of instruction in higher education.
- 8 Rehumanizing tertiary education.
- 9 The training of tertiary teachers.

10 Governance of higher education and the role of the student therein.

11 Continuous assessment = Constant examining?!

12 The assessment of tertiary teaching and the problem of reinforcement for teaching effectiveness and/or effort.

13 The organization of tertiary education: What has gone wrong since the report of the Martin Committee, why, and what should be done now?

14 What should be done in tertiary science education to make future scientists more sensitive to the social implications of scientific work?

**SOCIAL FUNCTIONS:** In order to maximize the amount of information communication between members such social functions as a Wine and Cheese Party will be arranged at Burgmann College.

**ADVANCE REGISTRATION FORM** is attached as last page of this Newsletter.

# Herdsa 73

## Alan Lonsdale

### Strategies for producing change

The first formal meeting of HERDSA took the form of a workshop on teaching and learning in higher education and was conducted during the Perth ANZAAS Congress in August, 1973. Members of HERDSA and delegates to ANZAAS were invited and about 130 people participated. The one afternoon workshop was concerned with two issues of basic concern to tertiary educators — strategies for producing change in higher education and the evaluation of tertiary teachers. The workshop was structured so as to facilitate the sharing of as much information as possible between participants, and took the form of

a number of brief (5 — 7 minutes) vignettes in which speakers presented a very short description of a case study or of research or development in which they were involved, or in which they clarified a problem or outlined a strategy. Each vignette was followed by a period of discussion and, for each issue, a concluding speaker presented a brief overview of the issues and summarized and commented on the discussions. This review of the proceedings of the workshop consists of a brief summary of the main points made by each speaker and of the discussion following.

The questions upon which speakers were asked to focus attention were:

How is educational innovation encouraged and implemented? What is the role of information dissemination, research and development, administrative fiat and other factors in producing innovation and change? What factors facilitate change? What factors act as constraints and how may these be overcome or avoided? The emphasis was on problems and strategies of change rather than the substance of the changes.

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*Barry McNeill, Director, Department of Environmental Design, Tasmanian College of Advanced Education*

#### **Academic conservatism: the importance of professional institutes in promoting change in tertiary education**

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In the Department of Environmental Design at the Tasmanian College of Advanced Education an innovative, problem-oriented and inter-disciplinary course has been developed for the environmental design professions, encompassing building, architecture, urban planning and landscape planning. Teaching methods are entirely non-traditional — the role of the lecture is minimal and there is considerable emphasis on project activities, individualized learning and the placing of responsibility on the student for his own learning.

The dissatisfaction of professional bodies with the "products" of full time academic programmes can be a major factor for change. The experience of the Department of Environmental Design is that the professional bodies are asking for problem-oriented graduates with the capacity to learn for themselves and the willingness to accept responsibility within the constraints of the real world. "You teach them how to think, we will teach them their profession". On the other hand, many academ-

ics, in what may be considered a defence of a rather insecure role, continue to emphasize detailed knowledge and formal academic performance. The reforms in the department's programmes have been almost entirely due to the lead given and the continuing support by professional bodies, especially the Royal Australian Institute of Architects. The role of these bodies as "approvers of qualifications" has provided an important counter to academic conservatism.

In addition to this major facilitator of change, several other factors were also seen to be important:

- 1 It is easier to establish an interdisciplinary programme in a small, new department where there are teaching economies and more direct communication between staff and between students and staff, than in an existing large institution with established departments and political power structures.
- 2 It is easier to mount a problem-oriented and individualized programme in a small community where informal and personal communications are more usual.
- 3 The establishment of effective communication links between all components of the total community involved in the programme is important. This community includes students, staff, professional groups, institutional groups, and even parents.

A further important factor in this case would appear to be the vigorous leadership of a small group of like-minded teaching staff — it is the traditional academic whose "status" and operation is threatened by innovation in tertiary education and who is therefore likely to resist its implementation.



*Dr Ian R Dunn, Senior Tutor, School of Physics, University of NSW*

## **A new teaching programme for first year physics at the University of NSW**

Changes in the curriculum in the first year physics courses at the University of New South Wales essentially resulted from the need to respond to external circumstances. The changes are being facilitated by an internal agency within the institution.

The external pressures arose from the introduction, in 1971, of new Higher School Certificate science courses in New South Wales. Two types of course were introduced, one involving separate six period per week studies in physics, chemistry, biology or geology, the other being a multi-strand twelve period per week course containing physics and chemistry or biology and geology. These were inquiry-type courses which made use of a variety of learning resources and activities to actively involve the student in the learning process.

Subsequently it has been decided to introduce these courses to all New South Wales high schools over the next few years.

Since students from these courses will form an increasingly large component of the first year intake, the School of Physics would be receiving students with four different backgrounds in physics — students from the earlier Wyndham science courses, students from each of the two new science courses and students who had not studied physics for the previous two years. It was realised that with entry from such diverse backgrounds it would be impossible to continue with the then present first year course structure and that a complete revision would be required.

To plan for the restructuring a working party consisting of Physics School staff and representatives of the University's Tertiary Education Research Centre (TERC) was set up. The working party was given quite broad terms of reference and examined the problem from all aspects, considering in particular the aims of the school in relation to education in physics at first year level and the type of course which could best achieve these aims. A number of recommendations were made, the most significant of which were that:

1 A new enquiry-type course should be trialed, integrating all learning activities capable of being provided by the School and aiming at involving the student in the learning process as much as possible. The

course represented a radical departure from the traditional "large lecture group, separate laboratory course" pattern adopted in other Australian physics schools.

2 There should be close involvement with TERC on all aspects of the trial, in particular in assisting staff with the preparation of course learning resources and in assisting in the evaluation of the various student learning activities being employed.

The role of TERC as an agent to facilitate change in this case was important. During preparations for the trial a large number of meetings of tutors and TERC representatives were held. Discussion at these ranged over such matters as details of the course content, assessment procedures and types and effectiveness of the various student learning activities which could be used. These meetings culminated in a workshop held just prior to the commencement of formal classes. The venue was the conference centre of the Leura Motel in the Blue Mountains, some forty miles west of Sydney. The tutors and representatives of TERC spent two days working through a total of six intensive sessions in final preparation for the year ahead. TERC is also involved in the continuing evaluation of the programme and its revision in the light of experience.

Discussion highlighted two aspects concerning staff attitudes which are important in a change of this type. In 1973, twelve tutors were involved in the trial programmes — these were selected from staff volunteers. It was anticipated that problems might arise when the pilot programme was applied generally, involving approximately 1800 students and a large number of staff. It was planned to use the initial staff group to encourage other staff members to operate according to the new programme. Similarly, a number of staff held reservations about the new type of programme — since it is problem-centred rather than based on a formal set of curriculum content, some had doubts concerning the actual learning of physics that would occur.

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*Dr Ronald D Traill, School of Teacher Education, Canberra College of Advanced Education*

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### **Replacement of formal examinations by cumulative assessment — a case study of procedures adopted by the School of Teacher Education**

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Prior to the opening of the School of Teacher Education's programme at the Canberra CAE, in March 1971, the Head of School, Mr Phillip Hughes and the newly appointed staff held a series of meetings to determine the underlying philosophy upon which courses would be based. A very early assumption established by the group was that formal examinations at the end of each course unit would not be adopted as the method of assessment. Assessment was regarded as an ongoing process that was to occur throughout the progress of various units and was to fulfil a number of functions apart from the traditional role of measuring student achievement. As a result, it is the policy of the School that assessment plays a dual role:

1 It has the usual role of giving information on the quality of a student's performance in terms of the achievement of desired objectives.

2 It is an objective in itself, in that teachers must understand the complexities and uncertainties of evaluation and be able to develop reliable and valid procedures.

The School has abandoned the idea of once-for-all assessment by means of the traditional "three hours final examination paper" and has adopted a set of cumulative assessment procedures.

Planning teams for each year of the course, which are composed of staff members teaching within the units offered in that particular year plus student representatives, plan the details of the programme for that year, including the assessment procedures. This involves the determination of methods whereby student achievement of the objectives may be assessed, of procedures to ensure reliability and consistency of marking and procedures for review.

Although the demands made on staff members are much greater in the cumulative assessment procedures as contrasted to end-of-unit formal examinations, it was stated that not one staff member would wish to implement a formal examination system as the only means of assessment. Advantages in terms of improved student learning, student tutor contact, higher standards and increased motivation

are evident.

Three main factors are identified as contributing to the introduction and acceptance of these innovations. Firstly, they were introduced from the outset when the policies and programmes within the School of Teacher Education were first being developed. There was therefore no question of introducing something different from that previously existing. Secondly, a clear educational philosophy and, in turn, a set of educational principles and procedures was established from the start upon which all subsequent practices have been based. Thirdly, and perhaps most importantly, only staff compatible with such procedures were recruited. Initial planning was done by the Head of School and the initial nucleus of staff. Staff selection procedures are such that only those sharing the same philosophy and who are prepared to work under such arrangements are recruited. New staff are asked, for example, "Are you prepared to work in a team situation where students will be involved in the planning teams?", and "Are you prepared to work in an institution or group where continual assessment is taking place?".

*Dr T Kennedy, Senior Lecturer, Department of Chemistry, Western Australian Institute of Technology\**

### **The WAIT mini fellowship scheme**

For the last three years the Educational Development Unit at the WAIT had been conducting a programme of staff education courses which have catered for staff new to the Institute or to tertiary teaching. In 1973, a mini-fellowship scheme was introduced to facilitate the participation of established staff in the educational development process.

This scheme is based on the principle that the greatest benefit to the individual and to the institution will accrue if the holder of a mini-fellowship is enabled to make a detailed study of a particular aspect of the educational process via some project which involves his teaching or a unit or course in which he is involved.

Broadly, the objectives of the scheme are to assist in the development of teaching techniques and to enable staff to keep up to date with new developments and innovations in tertiary education. Thus, by his involvement in a particular project, the individual takes part in the learning process. Awards under the scheme take the form of a reduction in teaching load, the extent of the reduction varying according to the particular project, but generally being of the order of two hours per week. Participants are expected to devote approximately four hours of personal time per week to the project. Each study project is individually structured and involves a reasonably in-depth study together with attendance at selected short courses provided by the EDU where appropriate. The participants may be replaced by part-time staff if necessary, finance being provided from special reserves. The role of the EDU is to provide advice and support services in the form of media facilities, typing and clerical assistance. No formal assessment of a project is made but progress reports are expected from time to time and attendance at seminars is usual.

In 1973, mini-fellowships were awarded for eight projects covering such topics as the development and evaluation of computer analysis of student assessment in the Department of Mechanical Engineering, the determination of educational objectives for the course in Occupational Therapy, the development and evaluation of the "WAIT in Europe" study tour project and experimentation with independent learning programmes in Accounting teaching. In association with Dr J Dunn, Dr Kennedy investigated the suitability of a

range of audio-visual media currently in use in Australia, the UK and the USA as teaching aids at first year level in the Department of Chemistry. Although this study was initiated in 1972, it was soon evident that, while the spirit was willing, teaching commitments were rather less so. The advent of the mini-fellowship scheme provided encouragement to continue. This was not to say that the actual time allowance enabled the achievement of what was not possible previously. The important factor was the encouragement derived from the scheme and the belief that the activity was considered worthy of some support and was not being simply done in a vacuum.

"Teaching staff are often being reminded of the need for innovation in their teaching. If it is to be effective and, just as importantly, if it is to be accepted by students and by colleagues alike, this innovation must stem from the teachers themselves. However, at the WAIT the class contact requirement for a member of the teaching staff is sixteen hours per week. Add to this lecture preparation, assignment marking, laboratory organization, student counselling and involvement in industrial consultancy and research activities. Perhaps it is not surprising that innovation is sometimes a little slow to be realised. The mini-fellowship scheme provides stimulus to the teaching staff to investigate new ideas and I believe it is a welcome step towards their greater involvement in implementing educational innovation."

*\*Dr Kennedy is now the Head of the Educational Development Unit. WAIT.*



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### Overview

*Professor Fred Katz, Tertiary Education Research Centre, University of New South Wales*

We have been given four examples of some exciting new developments. I believe that they will lead to greater effectiveness in teaching. Most importantly perhaps, they illustrate the fine balance which exists between conditions facilitating and constraining change.

Conditions which appear to facilitate or assist change are:

- 1 Students. Articulate and critical students are one of the greatest agents for change.
- 2 Accountability. Tertiary institutions are increasingly being held accountable for their educational practices and the manner in which they spend growing sums of public money.
- 3 Technological advancement. The knowledge explosion is tending to force the teacher to re-examine his curriculum.
- 4 Research and development centres in tertiary institutions can assist in stimulating or facilitating change.

Constraints to change:

- 1 The self-perpetuating phenomenon: There is a strong pressure on teachers to try to produce students similar to themselves, to be as "good" as they are.
- 2 The problem of evaluating outcomes: We still find it extremely difficult to assess just what we are achieving. Associated with this is the difficulty of specifying objectives; we therefore find it difficult to evaluate our activities.
- 3 Pressure from professional bodies: Professions may not be so concerned with what students achieve, but rather that they stay as long as possible in the institution, and in this way enhance the status of the profession. On the other hand we see that in some situations (the TCAE, for example) professional bodies can act as positive agents for change.

In addition, some other factors which were instrumental in effecting the innovations described include:

- 1 the advantage of newness: It is easier to introduce innovative educational practices when an institution or department is initially developing. At that time, during the early development, there is a greater awareness of a need for clear educational policies and set of operating procedures which encourages and facilitates appropriate innovations. The recruitment of teaching staff compatible with the philosophy and practices is also possible.
- 2 external pressures, for example, arising

from changes in the secondary curriculum.  
3 the conduct of programmes for teaching staff in tertiary education practices and developments.

4 the importance of institutional encouragement and facilitation of change. This can occur through, for example, a mini-fellowship type scheme. The activities of research and development centres within institutions can also be of considerable assistance in this regard. However, for full effectiveness it is important that institutions do not rely solely on such schemes and activities, but rather that they develop them as part of a planned, total institutional programme which encourages, facilitates and rewards change and improvement. This involves, for example, attention to organizational and administrative requirements which may constrain change, and the development of reward systems for staff which recognise the importance of good teaching and educational innovation.

5 the natural tendency for academics or, more generally, people within institutionalized situations, to be suspicious of or resistant to things new or difficult must be overcome.

Much of the discussion centered on the meaning and value of change. Do we encourage change for its own sake? Professor Katz suggested that probably the greatest benefit arising from change is the process of thinking about alternatives and the resultant clarification of aims.

The issue of institutional reward systems was also highlighted. Teaching staff may spend long hours improving their teaching programmes; these are often not rewarded. Such a situation inhibits change. On the other hand, if the pressures encouraging change become sufficiently strong it will be necessary to establish conditions which will require and enable such effort to be exerted and rewarded. Examples were provided where a whole department has changed and, as a result, the reward and organizational systems have been modified such that each lecturer is expected to and is able to devote more time to the exercise.

# The evaluation of tertiary teachers

Calls for accountability to students, institutions and the community are resulting in mounting pressures to establish procedures for the evaluation of tertiary teachers. Can it be done? Should it be done? What measures are available? What are the experiences of those who are developing or are involved in evaluation procedures? What are the effects?

Four speakers discussed different aspects of the evaluation of tertiary teachers. Firstly, Professor C A Gibb outlined some of the thinking and events behind

moves for teacher evaluation at the Australian National University. Secondly, Tom Tescher of the Australian Union of Students, argued strongly for the evaluation of tertiary teachers and, in particular, for the use of student evaluation of teaching. Norm Henry (RMIT) described projects underway which sought student opinions on teaching, and finally Jack Williams (WAIT) discussed a scheme for staff progression which was originally based on a management-by-objectives system.

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*Professor C A Gibb, Australian National University*

## Teacher evaluation at ANU

For many years the ANU has wished to recognize good teaching as well as research work and participation in university affairs, and efforts towards this end have been made by arranging conferences and short courses aimed at improving teaching and stimulating staff interest in this area.

In 1969, the Board of the School of General Studies was prompted to establish a committee on teacher evaluation, consisting of three professors, two senior lecturers, a lecturer and a student member. After reviewing information concerning teacher evaluation practices from forty American universities the committee agreed that:

- 1 teaching capacity should be judged by organization of the unit or course, the intellectual calibre of the unit, the impact of the unit on students and the effectiveness of the follow up of class-work, examinations and other activities,
- 2 teaching ability should be assessed by a combination of staff and student evaluation,
- 3 student evaluation should be controlled by the academic administration of the university,
- 4 staff evaluation should be by a committee composed of staff who are not themselves involved in promotions procedures,
- 5 there should be an evaluation committee for each faculty (but with faculty overlap),
- 6 the committees should feel free to use a variety of procedures including auditing, interviewing, reviewing handouts and examination papers etc., and
- 7 the information gathered should be made available to the staff member for his information and comment.

A report in 1971 reaffirmed these agree-

ments and presented two additional items:

- 1 it recommended that a teacher evaluation consultative committee of the Board be established to determine policy and give continuing oversight to all phases of the undertaking in order to safeguard the rights of individual staff members, and
- 2 it firmly associated teacher evaluation with the provision of a consultative/training service by which members of staff might seek to improve their performance and their ratings.

The Board paid lip service to the ideas presented and to defer further consideration sought reactions of all full time staff members. Sixteen percent of the staff responded and of these about half rejected student evaluation and more than half rejected staff evaluation. The validity and reliability of such procedures were questioned. In March 1972, after attempts were made to kill the activity completely, the report was referred to all student members of the Board and to faculty committees for their comments. Only 14 of the 46 student members of the board commented; they strongly urged teacher evaluation as a necessity.

The issue was now clearly public in the University. The ANU Staff Association circulated a University of Queensland Staff Association report on the assessment of teaching ability and the Board asked its committee to take account of this report. In October the committee reinforced its beliefs, pointing out the opinion of the AUC that tenure should be granted only after universities had satisfied themselves about the competency of staff both in teaching and research. It presented modifications which would overcome major objections and drew attention to the steps being taken to establish an office of research in academic methods which would assist the development of teaching skills.

Following further discussion the Board agreed:



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- 1 to support the provision of special assistance for teachers wishing to improve their teaching ability, particularly those newly appointed to junior posts, and
- 2 to support the Vice Chancellor's intention to introduce *experimental* evaluation of teacher performance at the earliest possible time.

During discussion the following points arose:

- 1 Experience in a US institution indicated that it was recognized by staff that for purposes of promotion and accountability there is a need for the evaluation of teaching. Similarly, institutions recognize that there is a direct obligation to do something about the improvement of teaching. When a scheme of teaching assessment was introduced as a fait accompli there seemed to be little opposition to it. If given the choice, staff rejected it.
- 2 Any systematic procedure would be an improvement on the "chancy" methods for evaluation used at the moment. In the case of ANU, a promotions committee discusses each recommendation for promotion, generally with the Head of Department making the recommendation. In the discussion, the teaching performance of the individual staff member is considered. However, the Head may never have seen the staff member teach. Some staff members state that they would cease teaching if their Head of Department entered the classroom.
- 3 It was suggested that staff within a department would have a very good idea of the performance of a member of that department. Professor Gibb's view was that they do not; further, this would represent a large number of departments at ANU. It is not common for staff members to visit the classrooms of others, even for shared classes. He therefore suspected the judgments of staff concerning other members of staff.

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*Tom Tescher, Resource Officer,  
Australian Union of Students*

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### **Student evaluation of tertiary teachers**

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Our views of the student role in the assessment or evaluation of tertiary teachers are likely to be heavily influenced by our beliefs about the learning process — or what we see education as being. Two years ago, the Vice-Chancellor of Monash University claimed that the purpose of university teaching was to allow students to sit at the feet of great and learned men (god — professors). If such a definition is accepted, it is obvious the students would be in no position to provide the responses, feedback or criticism necessary in an evaluative situation. They would merely be passive receivers of information.

I believe the god-professor notion reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of what learning is, and an unjustifiable faith in the intellectual superiority of some human beings over others. To me the education process is one in which all people expand their skills, knowledge and understanding and develop a reliance on themselves for their own development. This process of development involves the teacher as well as the student, with the teacher taking the added roles of displaying skills in the further attainment of knowledge, and guiding the students from dependence on the instructor to self reliance. Despite the two-way learning process, teaching exists in tertiary institutions essentially for the students — and the main task of the staff is to teach — therefore the student must be involved, and possibly solely responsible for the evaluation of that teaching. In Italy in the renaissance period for instance, students were entirely responsible for the hiring and firing of staff.

In what ways can student evaluation of teaching assist the learning process. I would like to mention four, which have been based on a paper by Peter Blizzard (TERC, University of NSW).

- 1 In a learning situation where the resources and skills available are continually changing, evaluation by students can assist the teacher to update, modify or maintain the methods he is using.
- 2 Evaluation by students can assist other students in their selection of courses. This has been done at Harvard since 1920 and at Flinders and this university for the past two years where counter orientation handbooks have been produced.
- 3 Evaluation by students can assist in staff promotion. In a two-way learning

## ..evaluation 3

process, it seems logical that students are involved in staff promotion in the way staff are involved in the promotion of students.

4 Most important of all, evaluation by students should lead to a greater interest in learning, and in the relevance and effectiveness of teaching, by both staff and students. Assessment of students should also, but rarely does, have this purpose.

Methods of assessment form a wide spectrum, from informal (person to person) to formal (the questionnaire).

An evaluation can be made of interest in the subject, attitude to students, presentation, self reliance and confidence, stimulation of curiosity, and so on.

The assessments should be specific rather than general and done in a spirit of cooperative effort between staff and students both aiming for improvement. Concomitant with this, I believe that teaching should play a far more important role in promotions policies that it presently does vis a vis research, and further that student assessment of this teaching should be taken into account. If tertiary staff and administration are unwilling to take note of and act together with students in this process, they take a risk. Students are very concerned with the current situation and will take action themselves if they cannot participate in a cooperative way.

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*Norman Henry, Principal Lecturer-in-Charge, Education Unit, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology*

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### Teaching evaluation at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology

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Teaching evaluation projects were implemented in two RMIT departments in 1973. The first was in the Department of Management, the second was in the Department of Librarianship.

#### The Management Project

Although this project was initiated by the Head of Department, Dr J W Suiter, organization of the project was in the hands of a working group consisting of three staff members, the secretary of the Management Students Association and a member of the Education Unit. Significant features involved in the initiation of this project were:

- 1 the staff of the department was fully involved in the project,
- 2 student support was sought very early in the project,
- 3 the Education Unit played the role of a helper, the Management Department obviously having responsibility for the project, and
- 4 after initiating the project and defining its purposes and limits the Head of Department practically withdrew, allowing the working group to proceed in its own way.

Basic decisions made by the working group were that all enrolled students should be given a questionnaire which would seek student opinions on the Management course as a whole and on each subject taught, with information arising from these to be openly available. Opinion would also be sought on the teaching of each lecturer; this information would be strictly confidential to the lecturer concerned. All members of staff and students were circularized in advance to fully inform them of the details of the project. To avoid suspicion that some lecturers might gain confidential information about other lecturers, no staff of the Management Department were to be involved in the distribution and collection of questionnaires. Questionnaires were administered during class sessions by staff of the Education Unit, assisted by members of the Management Department Students Association. The Education Unit staff had the responsibility of collecting responses to questions about the teaching of individual lecturers. These sections of the questionnaire were sealed in envelopes in front of each class for later distribution to staff members.

## ..evaluation 4

Follow up activities were planned. Firstly, it was intended that a meeting of the Management Department be held to discuss the results and their implications. Secondly, a recent research report (Change, April 1973) indicated that a lecturer is unlikely to change his teaching methods as a result of student opinion surveys unless student estimates of a lecturer's teaching are below his own. The same report also indicates that normative data is of considerable assistance in placing student opinions in perspective. As a consequence it was decided to ask lecturers to provide (anonymously) figures on the student opinions of their teaching. The averaged results were to be distributed to staff.

### The Librarianship Project

A similar project was conducted but with the following differences:

- 1 the project grew out of ideas expressed by lecturers at a staff meeting,
- 2 the questionnaire developed by the Management Department was available as a starting point,
- 3 a larger working group was used with greater student representation,
- 4 it was decided to sample the opinions of students who had withdrawn from their courses, in addition to full-time and part-time students,
- 5 only part of the student population was sampled, and
- 6 to avoid disruption to classes questionnaires were issued but not collected during class hours. Questionnaires were returned to a system of post boxes.

At the time of the Workshop the results of these surveys were still being analysed. However, four points were made concerning experiences with these projects:

- 1 students and staff should be fully informed and their support enlisted,
- 2 problems of survey administration and processing could be substantial,
- 3 a considerable proportion of the potential benefit lies in follow up activities, and
- 4 an Education Unit does not lose its effectiveness if it plays a relatively unobtrusive role.

In discussion, an important issue raised was the extent to which students, in answering student questionnaires of this type, may not be familiar with or may lose sight of the educational objectives. For example, if one were aiming to teach problem-solving abilities, students may rate the teaching highly because staff helped them solve problems — whereas in fact it may be educationally more desirable for the students to have solved the problems themselves.

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*Mr Jack Williams, Senior Lecturer in Educational Administration, Department of Management, Western Australian Institute of Technology*

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### The staff progressive scheme at WAIT

The procedure discussed consists of a system for the annual review of academic staff. In essence the objectives of the scheme are:

- 1 to enable a staff member to place on record each year the contribution which he believes he has made to the objectives of the Institute, and
- 2 to enable the Institute to evaluate his contribution and reward him appropriately.

The scheme had its origin in the **Sweeney Report** (1969) which coupled a recommendation that university-level salaries should be adopted in CAEs with the suggestion that salary increments should be related to job performance. In 1970, WAIT Council announced that university-level salaries would be paid, subject to the provision that annual increments would be conditional on satisfactory performance of duties, these to be determined by annual review and as a result of which increments could be granted as normal, doubled or withheld. A further provision, that progression beyond the fifth level of the lecturer salary scale and the third level on the senior lecturer scale would depend on the holding of specified qualifications, qualities and experience, led to considerable opposition from academic staff, which was focused through the activities of the Academic Staff Association. During these discussions a hostile climate was generated. One effect of the Institute's actions was to strengthen the Academic Staff Association as a body and make its potential power apparent to the members of the Association as well as to the Institute Council and management.

Further negotiations between the Institute administration and the Staff Association led to the formation of a joint committee — the Consultative Committee: Council — Academic Staff Association (CASA). After further negotiations a staff review scheme was adopted and the provision concerning salary bars was dropped. Following a period of development the staff review scheme was implemented for the first time in October 1972, after more than two years of negotiation and discussion.

The elements of this scheme are as follows:



## ..evaluation 5

1 Following a formal evaluation each year by his Head of Department, a staff member may receive accelerated, normal or retarded progression along the salary scale, until he reaches the top of the scale.

2 A statement of WAIT objectives and a related statement of typical forms of contribution to objectives are distributed to assist the staff member in specifying his contribution, to provide criteria for Heads in evaluating these contributions and for Deans in reviewing the evaluations.

3 Staff members initiate the procedure at the appropriate time each year by completing two copies of a "cover sheet" which provides for contributions to be described under three main headings — teaching, on campus activities other than teaching, off campus activities.

4 A "master sheet" listing recommendations for the Department is sent by Head to Dean, who passes undisputed one-increment or no-increment recommendations, provided he also agrees with them, to Personnel Branch for implementation.

5 Disagreements may arise, possibly in any combination, between staff member, Head and Dean. If the disagreement is not resolved by discussion the minority party has the right of appeal to a "Review Committee", which consists of an independent chairman appointed by Council, a nominee of the Director, and an elected representative of the Academic Staff Association. Decision of the Review Committee is final and is passed to Personnel Branch for implementation.

6 A staff member at the top of his salary scale may choose not to take part in the above procedures.

7 A recent policy change will enable some lecturers to progress through to the senior lecturer scale without having to wait for an establishment vacancy.

A number of issues were raised during discussion. Firstly, there is no provision in this scheme for student evaluation. A number of the Workshop members considered this to be a weakness. Secondly, attention was drawn to the central importance of the relationship between a Head of Department and individual staff in the operation of a scheme of this type. Such a scheme may give a Head considerable powers over members of staff, and would be very dependent on the kind of relationship established between a staff member and his Head of Department. Thirdly, the validity of the scheme was questioned. It was proposed by one speaker that the extensive research on teacher evaluation indicates that it has not yet been possible to determine the criteria of good teaching, or to assess the qualities of a good teacher. Doubt was

cast on the extent to which such qualities can be assessed in a scheme of this type.

The original basis for the scheme was a management-by-objectives procedure in which a staff member and his superior officer would, at the commencement of the year, determine the objectives for the staff member in the light of Institute objectives; an assessment of the achievement of these would be made at the end of the year. This part of the scheme was dropped because it was not considered to be workable.

# Review

*"Teaching About Families", Search 5 (7), July 1974, 279-282.*

*Liz Fell and Anne Summers*

The ANZAAS journal has taken the unusual step of devoting the whole of its last issue to "Images of the Family". Those of us who are experimenting with small group teaching will find in this opening article a reflection of the excitement and the frustration of that style of education. It describes a seminar course on family structures taken by 11 fourth year students of government who were encouraged to discuss the relationships within their own or others' families. One predictable outcome of dealing with personally relevant content in this way is that when the necessary self-exposure is unilateral, expected of students but proscribed for their teachers, the group retreats to "spending the last two terms of studying theory."

Limited details on the process of the group (presumably because its main interest was thought to be the content of uncertainty about what is the best way of studying families) have made it difficult to locate this attempt on the small group continuum which ranges from the traditional tutorial style to a limited encounter group. Many similar attempts are made every year but the lack of peer support on particular campuses militates against effective coping with the inevitable discouragement. Perhaps HERDSA could ask these authors to discuss their experience more fully in the Newsletter. They may, however, be hard to find: six months after the course ended, the authors' whereabouts are described as "Formerly of Department of Government, University of Sydney".

*Kim Wyman, Head of Counselling Services, Caulfield Institute of Technology*

# Letter

In the latest newsletter you take as your main issue, *Research in Colleges*. I am disappointed that you could not report on the research that is currently being undertaken by CAEs staffs that relates directly to the teaching and learning of the students in CAEs, and more importantly, does not drive a wedge between the staff member and the students they are employed to help.

I would just like to requote for you paragraphs from the three research items you published — all of which strongly support my theory that undertaking research is in conflict to the activities of a teacher, unless the research is directly related to the learning situation.

**Quote 1.** "It is almost essential to plan for full-time release from normal duties during the writing of the project report. Much background research has to be done and the demands of other duties tend to distract one's train of thought during a period when. . ." James Dyall, Head of Department of Accountancy Studies, RMIT.

**Quote 2.** "This approach (employment of part-time research assistance) is working well but it is essential to divorce oneself physically from the office to avoid the inevitable involvement in the day-to-day activities." Bruce Horne, Senior Education Officer, Gordon Institute of Technology.

**Quote 3.** "If I were a research applicant now I should wish to include in my costing submission an allocation for personnel to carry out at least part of my normal

duties." Elizabeth Stecher, Senior Librarian, RMIT.

I know that currently it is very unfashionable to actually enjoy helping students and to be happy to use your own initiative and ability to be of service to others, but before this reverence for "research" goes too far I think it is time that staff in the CAEs answered the questions — "What is the function of a CAE?" and "Is the public happy to pay me my quite considerable salary not to perform my "normal" day-to-day duties?"

*Yours faithfully,*

*Dr Jean Clark, Physics Department, Swinburne College of Technology.*



## evaluation 6

### Overview

*Mrs Barbara Falk, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne*

Mrs Falk commented briefly on some points raised in the discussion and tried to place them in perspective.

It is generally agreed, she said, that there is need for a sounder basis for making decisions about appointments and promotions than the rather haphazard methods of collecting data on which decisions are based at present. During the session four schemes were described and discussed. Each of them was presented as having met with opposition from teaching staff, because the procedures were deemed incapable of producing a valid judgment and would also create discord in departments. It was apparent in the discussion that members of the audience were agreed that research evidence to date shows that precise measurement of teachers or their teaching is beyond our present competence. Mrs Falk stressed that a general or overall appraisal should be distinguished from quantitative measurement. What we can do in the present situation is to seek for more systematic yet flexible and informed appraisal of tertiary teaching. The most recent research literature shows a turning away from attempts to create instruments for precise quantitative measures towards 'Evaluation as Illumination', that is the systematic laying out and categorising of data and an *evaluation* rather than *assessment* of that data. There is no escape from the exercise of judgment by affixing numerical values to elements, some of which can be measured and some cannot.

There is a danger that those responsible for decision making will wish to seek security in the apparent objectivity of using rough scoring methods.

Another point about the discussion seemed worth making. During the discussion people spoke mainly as if teaching was only the presentation of material in classrooms. Mrs Falk reminded the audience that a broader definition of teaching would lead to a more valid evaluation. Teaching includes all aspects of the preparation of opportunities for students learning, choice of objectives, syllabus and curriculum construction, preparation of lecture notes, choice of media of presentation etc. It also includes choice of, and efficient use of, methods of assessment of student progress. All of these elements should be considered when a man's teach-

ing is evaluated.

A final point was that evaluation of teaching may be done in order to improve teaching and learning as well as to provide information for appointment and promotion. Mrs Falk drew attention to the procedures of evaluation used at Melbourne University for this purpose. The emphasis is on the evaluation of the work of the teaching team or the department as a whole. Evaluation of individual teachers may form the basis for remedial work. Follow up activities are provided in the form of in-service courses for university staff and a personal consultative service.

In conclusion, Mrs Falk spoke strongly against setting up a system of evaluation in the face of opposition from staff. "I find it extremely difficult to conceive how the necessary diversity and efficiency of teaching will be increased by any enforced system. We should attempt to persuade colleagues to see the importance of orderly and just assessment, rather than imposing assessment in a way that would lead to conflict between people within the institution."

Kim Wyman, Head of Counselling Services, Caulfield Institute of Technology

Elizabeth Stecher, Senior Librarian, RMIT

I know that currently it is very uncomfortable to actually enjoy helping students and to be happy to use your own initiative and to try to be of service to others, but before this reverence for "research" goes too far I think it is time that staff in the CAET answered the questions - "What is the function of a CAET?" and "Is the public happy to pay me my due considerable salary not to perform my "normal" day-to-day duties?"

Yours faithfully,  
Dr Jean Clark, Physics Department, Swinburne College of Technology



# Education of women

In May 1974, the Schools Commission began an enquiry into "Social Change and the Education of Women". The Steering Committee of this enquiry was asked to make recommendations to the Commission in preparation for its first report in May, 1975.

The Karmel report had commented only briefly on the education of girls (*qual*) girls: "Except at the highest socio-economic level, girls left school earlier than boys. Being a girl is an educational disadvantage, except when it is also associated with high socio-economic status. The varying expectations which families of differing socio-economic levels hold in relation to the likely future of girls are brought into the school; but the extent to which the school either reinforces the low expectations of some groups or positively sets out to counter them is not as yet well documented". (*Schools in Australia*, May 1973, p 19.)

Part of this documentation, the Steering Committee agreed, should be an annotated bibliography, concentrating on Australian materials.

In this first attempt at compilation, we have concentrated on material at hand without very much searching out of new material. This was simply a question of the limited resources available to us at the time. We hope to fill out the obvious gaps and thinly covered areas before the next bibliography is compiled.

We have included articles and books in related subject areas, such as sociology, education, the women's movement, where we have judged them relevant to the major emphasis on "Social Change and the Education of Women". However, we have not tried to completely fill these interstitial areas.

This draft bibliography is by no means complete and has many deficiencies, though we hope not too many errors. We have tried to keep it as simple as possible and minimize cross references.

The system is simply alphabetical within categories. Each category is divided into four national groups: A. Australia, B. Britain, C. United States of America, D. Other Overseas. Each entry has also been given a number for easy reference and these run serially.

*Enquiries should be directed to Dany Torsh, C/- Schools Commission, PO Box 34, Woden, ACT 2606.*

## Contributors to this issue

Alan Lonsdale, Kol Starr, Kim Wyman, Jean Clark, Dany Torsh.



# Herdsa 75 Advance registration form

If you intend to attend the Conference and Second General Meeting of Herdsa kindly complete this form and return by 31 October 1974 if possible to: Dr K H Star, Honourary Secretary, Herdsa, c/- Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee. PO Box 1142, Canberra City ACT 2601. If you later find that you will be unable to attend, please notify Dr Star at the earliest opportunity.

Names

Address

Postcode

**Anzaas Congress** Will you be attending the 46th Anzaas Congress? Yes/No  
**Travel to Canberra** How do you intend to travel to Canberra?

## Accommodation

**1 Burgmann College** I/We will require full board at Burgmann College (\$33, undergrad students \$20). *Delete if inapplicable* (Double accommodation, if available, will be very limited and will be allocated on a 'first come' basis.)

**2** I/We will require TAA to arrange accommodation at the following:

	<i>Single</i>	<i>Twin</i>
Noah's Town House Motor Inn	\$18.50—20.50	\$18.50—24.00
Kythera Motel	\$15.75	\$18.75
Speros Motel	\$15.95	\$17.90

*Delete where inapplicable. Note:* The above motel prices are for 'room only' and are subject to alteration without notice.

Date of arrival

Date of departure

**3 Meals only at Burgmann College.** I/We do not require accommodation at Burgmann College but will require the following meals:

Lunch Friday January 24	Dinner Friday January 24
Lunch Saturday January 25	Dinner Saturday January 25
Lunch Sunday January 26	

(Payment for accommodation or meals is to be made directly to Burgmann College or the relevant motel during the Conference.)

**Workshop theme** Using the numbers given on page 2, please indicate which workshop you would wish to attend:

First choice                      Second choice                      Third choice

I would prefer to attend a workshop on

I would be willing to prepare a working paper or to present a case study for the workshop. *Delete if inapplicable.*

**Membership of Herdsa** There is no Conference Registration fee for members but non-members are required to join the Society.

To be filled in by non-members only

## Herdsa Application form

Mr A J Lonsdale, Hon Treasurer, HERDSA, c/- Educational Development Unit, Western Australian Institute of Technology, Hayman Rd, South Bentley, 6102. I wish to join HERDSA as a \*Member (\$5 joining fee plus \$5 annual subscription)/Student Member \$1 joining fee plus \$1 annual subscription). (\*Delete where inapplicable). Payment accompanies this form. Please send me HERDSA publications etc.

\*Delete where inapplicable

Title

Name

Position

Institution

Address for correspondence

Areas of special interest



# Herbs to Advance Registration form

I hereby certify that the information furnished on this form is true and correct. I understand that anyone who furnishes false or misleading information on this form or who omits material or information requested on the form may be subject to criminal sanctions (including fines and imprisonment) and/or civil sanctions (including multiple damages and civil penalties).

1. Name of the registrant (Last, first, middle initial)  
 2. Date of birth (Month/Day/Year)  
 3. Social Security Number (SSN)  
 4. Current address (Street, city, state, ZIP+4)  
 5. Current telephone number (Area code and number)  
 6. Current e-mail address  
 7. Current occupation (Title and employer)  
 8. Current education (Degree and institution)  
 9. Current marital status (Single, married, divorced, widowed)  
 10. Current employment status (Full-time, part-time, self-employed, unemployed)  
 11. Current income (Annual gross income)  
 12. Current net worth (Assets minus liabilities)  
 13. Current assets (Real estate, personal property, investments, etc.)  
 14. Current liabilities (Mortgage, car loan, credit cards, etc.)  
 15. Current debts (Mortgage, car loan, credit cards, etc.)  
 16. Current income tax status (Single, married, divorced, widowed)  
 17. Current income tax return (Attach copy of return)  
 18. Current income tax payment (Amount paid)  
 19. Current income tax refund (Amount received)  
 20. Current income tax credit (Amount received)  
 21. Current income tax deduction (Amount received)  
 22. Current income tax exemption (Amount received)  
 23. Current income tax credit (Amount received)  
 24. Current income tax deduction (Amount received)  
 25. Current income tax exemption (Amount received)