

HERDSA NEWS

The Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia Incorporated

I.S.S.N. 0157-1826

VOL. 17 No. **3**

FEATURES

THE POSTGRADUATE AND RESEARCH EXPERIENCE AT UNE
Graham MacKay, Tom Maxwell, Helen Arthurson,
Graham Jones and Desiree Jurgs Page 3

ACADEMIC LECTURES: WHAT ARE WE TALKING ABOUT?
Alex McKnight Page 5

TOWARDS A PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY, ORGANIZATION, AND
CODE OF PRACTICE FOR ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT
Lee Andresen Page 7

1996 HERDSA VISITING SCHOLAR: *Sheila Tobias* Page 12

REPORTING UP THE LINE: SUBJECTIVE QUALITY
INDICATORS FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT
Neil Flemming Page 14

A SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP
FOR ACADEMIC DEVELOPERS Page 17

REGULAR ITEMS

NEWS FROM THE EXECUTIVE Page 11

REPORT FROM THE *Language & Learning* SIG Page 18

REVIEW Valerie Clifford Page 19

HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH IN PROGRESS Page 21

CONFERENCES Page 23

NOV. 1995

Editorial

Margaret Buckridge



This will probably be my last editorial as editor of HERDSA News. I say this with fingers crossed as the Executive negotiates with a couple of likely candidates. Accordingly, I might have used this editorial either for a retrospective romp across the past five years of changes in the Australasian higher education systems or for a conjuring up of utopian ideals. The second might have been harder to do than the first. I don't know if our ideals have quite regathered themselves.

As it happens, however, there is a matter arising out of the articles in this issue that should rightly take precedence over such self-indulgence and that will certainly bear comment - and, we can hope, continuing discussion.

There are two proposals regarding the further organisation of staff developers. One is Graham Webb's call for the establishment of a new Special Interest Group that would focus on the work of academic developers (ADSIG). The other is Lee Andresen's article, which proposes a degree of organisation for developers that goes well beyond the voluntarism of the interest group and looks to a professional association which would, as one of its initial moves, draw up a Code of Practice for developers.

I believe these proposals pose a couple of questions that all members of HERDSA are likely to be interested in. They are different kinds of questions.

The first is the question of who is a developer. Although a 'them and us' distinction is mobilised from time to time within the Society, there might be reason to think that the distinction is becoming less sharp rather than more. The culture of academia is becoming development-oriented - albeit in a somewhat self-conscious and managed way. Supervisors and managers are given explicit responsibility for staff development; the staff members whom we term 'practitioners' are learning how to claim credit for their developmental work of dissemination, peer review and peer mentoring; there is a proliferation of appointments in a number of institutions which combine discipline or academic counselling roles with staff development responsibilities. To further complicate the picture, many 'developers' are busily engaged in the meta-level policy and executive work that will devolve what they have

traditionally done (and from which Lee draws many of his examples) to the group broadly characterised above. This fuzziness is not a problem for the ADSIG - people will join it if it seems to meet their needs. But it may be a problem for a harder-edged group - who's in and who's out? when does your proactive collegiality become 'development'? In terms of ethics, how do you negotiate between the different ethical demands of supervision, collegiality and development?

The second question is somewhat implicit. But my guess is that it's going to hover around us for the next little while. What should HERDSA's relationship be to a professional association of developers? (And yes, the D stands for 'development'.) The immediate answer is easy. It kept being given at Rockhampton. HERDSA is not just developers; HERDSA has no interest in being a gate-keeping, hard-edged professional association for any group within it. There was an uneasy awareness, however, that any large-scale diversion of developer allegiance to a more focused association might weaken HERDSA even as it attempts to reform itself in order to better include the practitioners, academic managers, information scientists, learning support staff, administrative staff and others who comprise the majority of the society and who, in their very diversity, have enabled HERDSA to achieve successful penetration of the whole system. None of this will happen overnight, of course, and there may well be room for two different kinds of developer affiliation. But perhaps it provides us with an additional good reason, if more were needed, for getting behind the reforms and making the Society work to meet the needs we have of it.

And so goodbye. It's been nice having this little soapbox. And it's been fun choosing the colours, although I must confess they don't always look quite as they do in the swatches. I have appreciated the support I have received in the job and I value greatly the contact it has brought me with many of you.

The Postgraduate and Research Experience at UNE

Post-graduate research studies have been a rapid growth area in the higher education system over the past few years. To further complicate this, institutions have found themselves on very different footings. Not surprisingly this has resulted in no small amount of self-scrutiny and strategising. In this article, a group from a small provincial University provides us with an account of their continuing experience.

The growth of postgraduate studies has been extraordinary when compared to the slowing of natural funded growth. Newer Universities are building numbers and expertise rapidly and challenging 'territory' held by the older and more established Universities. The Quality Assurance rounds have reinforced the need to find out more of what is going on within a University and to encourage policies that develop 'quality' in its many forms.

The degree of Doctor of Philosophy has been offered at the University of New England since 1956, with an initial enrolment of 8 candidates. Since then, there have been 843 doctorates awarded. In the last ten years, PhD enrolments at UNE have more than doubled, from 269 in 1985 to 550 in 1995. (Arthurson, 1995) In this period, the rigorous standards for entry to the PhD Program have not altered, which suggests that this increase in enrolments is an indication of UNE's strong research culture. However, attracting good quality postgraduate students is only the beginning. Since the inclusion of research higher degree graduates in the calculation of a university's share of the research quantum, there has been increasing pressure to improve PhD graduation rates.

The UNE has initiated a variety of institutional studies to establish solid baseline data on PhD and research Masters students and to find out what staff and students think of the postgraduate experience. The resultant publications concerning postgraduate supervision include:

1. *Review of the Research Postgraduate Experience 1995* by Jurgs, MacKay and Jones (1995) which looks at the results of a questionnaire and associated comments from 379 postgraduate students in research Masters and PhD programs and from 99 supervisors.

2. *Enhancing Postgraduate Supervision at UNE - 1995*, by Jones (1995), who interviewed supervisors and postgraduate students as well as examining the practices at other Universities. A set of recommendations is included.

3. *Review of the PhD program - Part 1 - Student Statistics and Degree Outcomes 1984-1994* Arthurson (1995) explores supervision, candidature changes, completion rates, examination processes and non-completion characteristics over the last decade.

A further publication concerns research cultures:

4. *Research Cultures in Academic Departments*, by Maxwell *et al.* (1995) investigated the research cultures of four successful Departments. Common threads were identified together with proposed models on how to develop research cultures.

Many issues have emerged from these studies. A number are outlined below, in the form of questions with some comment for your consideration.

A. INSTITUTIONAL MATTERS

Is postgraduate supervision taken into account when determining teaching loads?

Only 48% of staff could say that it was taken into account. In two of the four Faculties, it is an issue requiring urgent attention. Across campus, guidelines are needed in this area (Jurgs 1995:90).

Are adequate support structures provided for students and supervisors?

The Ph.D Office, in Research Services, is perceived as offering good service by students and staff. There is some concern about helping develop students' writing skills. This concern is particularly strong in Faculties with high NESB (Non-English-Speaking-Background) enrolments.

Female students expressed the greatest level of satisfaction with quality and effectiveness of supervision. . . . Despite this. . . . female students have been less likely to complete or graduate than males.

Is a Graduate School needed?

Students strongly supported the idea of a Graduate School, whereas amongst staff responses were divided. There was more support for the Graduate School than for moving to an American-style coursework program.

B. STUDENT AND SUPERVISOR PERSPECTIVES

Which group of students express the greatest level of dissatisfaction?

Consistently it is the part-time internal students who are most negative and whose concerns need to be heard.

Which students appear to be the most satisfied?

Female students expressed the greatest level of satisfaction with quality and effectiveness of supervision. They saw supervisors as having better interpersonal skills and, compared to the other student

groupings, indicated that they received more regular written feedback. They also indicated that they had easier access to supervisors (Jones 1995). Despite this, the study by Arthurson (1995:92) indicates that female students have been less likely to complete or graduate than males. However in very recent times the trend is gradually changing with better female graduation rates.

How do supervisors and students view the postgraduate experience?

Factor analysis identified items for staff and students that show similarities but with a different focus. Staff appeared to evaluate the success of the postgraduate program in more 'structural' terms as evidenced by one supervisor's comment that they needed:

- good students
 - sizeable research schools within departments
 - strong research cultures within departments
 - supervisors who are strong researchers
- (Jurgs 1995:66).

Students' overall satisfaction with supervision was concerned more with 'interaction'. Items focussed on the competence of the supervisor as a researcher and communicator. Although staff enjoy 'good students', the reality is that many felt students needed more help with writing (57%) and with developing their literature surveys (39%). Who should be responsible for doing something about this was not clear. Students receiving supervisor feedback every week, every fortnight or even monthly found that many issues were resolved and that writing and publishing needs were kept in perspective with positive attitudes being expressed by most students.

C. DEVELOPING SUPERVISION TRAINING AND WORKSHOP PROGRAMS

How do staff and students view the need for training?

Many established staff see no need for help and training to improve their practice. For staff entering from the ex-CAE sector disciplines of Education and Nursing, 50% thought they needed further training while only 41% of students felt they needed help. In all the other Faculties the trend was very different with only 16.7% of supervisors in the Sciences feeling they needed any training, while 76.7% of students felt that they did. (Jones 1995:40)

How should training programs be approached?

A cautious approach is needed, as most supervisors think they have little time to spare. Many supervisors believe they learnt the 'art and craft' during their own postgraduate study and/or through observing colleagues while acting as a co-supervisor. One comment from a student is worth considering:

One cannot work in an institution whose purpose is supposed to be that of education, and yet tolerate the staff learning their craft by 'trial and error' or by 'sitting by Nellie' (Jurgs 1995:66).

D. IMPROVING COMPLETION RATES

What are the chances of completion?

Of those students leaving the PhD program between 1984 and 1994, 62.3% graduated, 1.8% completed unsuccessfully, and 35.9% did not complete the program. (Arthurson 1995)

What about gender balance?

The review indicated some positive trends in PhD enrolments at UNE. Over the period from 1984 to 1994, there have been increased enrolments of both men and women in PhDs. In the Faculty of Arts the percentage of women PhD students has remained steady at close to 50% of enrolments, while the proportion of women in the Faculties of the Sciences, Economics Business & Law, and Education Health & Professional Studies has increased.

How can graduation rates be improved?

From the review, two groups of PhD students were identified as being significantly less likely to graduate than their counterparts: these were women and external students. The PhD Office has recently initiated an exit survey of all students leaving the PhD program. It is hoped that this will help to identify causes for non-completion. However, there is some thought that student support strategies such as a Postgraduate Student Centre within a Graduate School, and the establishment of a mentoring scheme for research postgraduates will improve retention and graduation rates.

E. HELPING DEPARTMENTS DEVELOP THEIR RESEARCH CULTURE

Where did the idea come from?

The earlier research cultures study (Maxwell, *et al*, 1995) showed that at the staff level there were particular blends of cultural elements that were conducive to producing effective departments with high quality research outcomes. Two crucial elements appeared to be a belief by departmental members in the importance of high quality research and a commitment to collegiality, in its widest sense. Communication within these departments was also seen as crucial and sometimes this meant creatively using space and time to ensure the adequacy of both formal and informal communication. These departments had well developed programs, e.g. a regular seminar series and a postgraduate manual, and fair resource distribution and they clearly understood departmental governance. They had actively cultivated relations both within and outside the faculty.

What is a departmental research culture?

Essentially it is 'the way things are done around here' with particular focus upon research. The recognition that it is socially constructed allows the possibility of modifying certain cultural elements of the department.

Why departmental research culture?

The project focuses attention on the department as a unit. While focus on individual skill development has its place, concentrating upon as many in the department as possible allows for departmental beliefs, values, myths and traditions and behaviours and practices to be scrutinised. Often these are represented by practices and structures that departmental members have developed as part of the way things are done. Members are affected by these.

How did departments get involved in the followup project?

Departments could opt into a monitoring process in the project whereby they took on board the idea of the development of research cultures but wished to manage their own process. Three departments, however, elected to be supported by a facilitator.

(continued page 16)

Academic Lectures: What are we Talking About?

The academic lecture has been, and continues to be, the subject of much bad press. In spite of this, and for evident reasons of economy and tradition, it persists as a major form of teaching within universities. Alex McKnight, who is conducting research into the learning of international students in lectures (see Research Abstracts this edition), urges us to do some definitional house-keeping if the debate is to go on.

I have read with interest the articles on the use of the lecture in higher education which appeared in HERDSA News of November 1993 and April 1994. The articles by Baldwin, Clerehan, Ling and Waugh raise a number of issues which need to be considered if we are to progress in this debate. I have set out some of these issues below.

WHAT IS A LECTURE?

The most important issue is to clarify exactly what it is we are debating. As Baldwin points out (1993:6), the lecture form has persisted for a remarkably long time, and it is still alive and well. Possibly because this form of teaching has persisted for so long it is taken for granted, and we do not consider it necessary to define what it is we are talking about. What exactly we mean by a lecture is not as trivial as it may seem, if our aim is to improve the learning of our students, and if we are to engage in meaningful debate about the effectiveness or otherwise of this particular mode of teaching.

The importance of being clear about what we mean by a 'lecture' can be seen from some elements of the debate published so far. For example, as Waugh states (1994:8), he has lectured successfully to groups ranging from 5 to 950. How does he know his lectures were successful? Did his behaviour vary depending on the size of his audience? How exactly did he lecture to the two groups? Did the behaviour of the audience vary in the group of 950 compared with the audience of 5? What exactly did the two audiences do? Did the two audiences actually learn what was intended? Unless we can begin to consider some of the complexities concealed in the blanket term 'the lecture' we may well be talking about different things, and the 'debate' may lead nowhere.

As the questions above indicate, the academic lecture is an extremely complex behavioural and linguistic event. Some of the relevant features which we need to consider in any debate, together with their potential influence on the behaviour of lecturer and audience, are explored below.

GROUP SIZE AND INTERACTIVITY

The size of the audience may clearly influence the behaviour of both lecturer and audience. In smaller groups there is more possibility of interaction between lecturer and audience, and students may feel more free to interrupt and ask questions or seek clarification, and the lecturer may well ask genuine (as opposed to rhetorical) questions of the audience. Such interaction does not always happen in small groups, as indicated by Baldwin's experience of small group lectures in the

USA (1994:7), and it is possible to make large lectures interactive to some extent, but the chances of interaction between lecturer and audience are greater in small lecture groups. It would be interesting to study and compare student learning in interactive and non-interactive lectures of the same audience size.

... the academic lecture is an extremely complex behavioural and linguistic event.

LEVEL OF AUDIENCE

It is a matter of common-sense that a lecture on economics to a large group of first-year undergraduates is unlikely to be the same phenomenon as a lecture on economics to a post-graduate group of the same size. In the former case, the lecturer may be unable to make any assumptions about the prior knowledge of the group, but in the latter case prior knowledge may well be substantial. This will be reflected in the content, and quite possibly the stance taken by the lecturer towards the content. We know from studies of comprehension that comprehension is enhanced by prior knowledge of the topic. So this factor clearly has relevance to the debate.

COMPOSITION OF THE AUDIENCE

In a multicultural society such as Australia's the lecturer may be faced with an audience made up of native speakers of English, non-native speakers of English who are long-term residents and citizens, and international students from English- and non-English-speaking backgrounds. The situation becomes even more complex if we consider the increasingly common situation where an academic may be addressing an English-speaking audience using her second language, or the common phenomenon at international conferences where both lecturers and audience come from a range of different non-English-speaking countries, but use English as the medium through which they teach and learn. Australian universities are fascinating laboratories in which we could study how best to teach multilingual groups through English, but too little research is being undertaken.

STYLE OF DELIVERY

We commonly think of a lecture as a spoken address by one person to a large group, and forget that the term 'lecture' derives from the word for 'reading', and refers to a common teaching technique used before books became widely available. Even today there are lecturers who present information by reading a carefully-prepared script, although this approach appears to be becoming less common. A number of researchers have isolated three different lecture styles (cf Dudley-Evans and Johns, 1981), although these may be over-simplified and suggest that lecturers may not shift styles for particular purposes. Speech rates and pausing behaviour may be significant factors in how students learn from lectures, and these features have been studied by a number of researchers, although often in experimental rather than authentic contexts (cf Griffiths, 1990; 1991; Griffiths and Beretta, 1991). We need to clarify the different lecture styles and study what influence different styles have on student learning.

Speech rates and pausing behaviour may be significant factors in how students learn from lectures, and these features have been studied by a number of researchers, although often in experimental rather than authentic contexts.

MODE OF DELIVERY

We tend to think of a lecture as being presented through the medium of speech, but we forget that lecturers frequently make use of the visual mode as well as the oral. A lecturer may illustrate the lecture using slides or video; the lecturer may provide hand-outs or overhead visuals; the lecturer may make frequent reference to a set text; or the lecturer may do all three. We know little about how lecture content is presented using both oral and visual media, or the impact of different presentation modes on student learning. Does the presentation of different types of visual input as well as oral input assist or impede learning?

NOTE-TAKING AND LEARNING

Despite Ling's negative evaluation of the activity (1994:7), note-taking appears to be a central aspect of audience behaviour in academic lectures, and has been studied by Clerehan (1992) and others, most notably Dunkel and her associates (cf 1988; 1991; Dunkel and Davy, 1989). However, the relationships between student note-taking and student learning are very complex, and it is difficult to show that note-taking assists or hinders learning. In addition, we know little about student note-taking in interactive lectures. Do students take notes of the contributions of other students? Do student contributions assist the learning process of others? Do students take notes from video or slide presentations?

CONCLUSION

Research into student learning from lectures is very complex and generalisations are difficult since every classroom is unique. Academic lectures have been the subject of study intermittently since the 1920s, but the recent publication of an important collection of papers on the subject (Flowerdew, 1994) may herald a resurgence of interest in the field. It is to be hoped that this is the case, as we know very little about how students learn from authentic academic lectures, and universities around the world are coming under increasing pressure to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

My own research suggests that it is facile to assume that students necessarily learn from lectures through listening comprehension processes, and learning from lectures - if it occurs at all - results from the particular mix of subject, lecture content, lecture style, mode of presentation and other individual factors. We need to clarify just what is involved in lecturing and learning from lectures, before we discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this very persistent teaching method.

REFERENCES

- Baldwin, G. (1993) To lecture or not to lecture: the case for. *HERDSA News* 15 (3): 6-7.
- Clerehan, R. (1994) Yes and no: what value the lecture? *HERDSA News* 16 (1): 10-11.
- Clerehan, R. (1992) 'Don't bother to take this down': what are students doing in lectures? Paper presented at HERDSA Conference, Monash University, Gippsland. July 1992.
- Dudley-Evans, A. and Johns, T.F. (1981) A team-teaching approach to lecture comprehension for overseas students, in *The Teaching of Listening Comprehension*. London: The British Council: 30-46.
- Dunkel, P. (1988) The content of L1 and L2 students' lecture notes and its relation to test performance. *TESOL Quarterly* 22 (2): 259-282.
- Dunkel, P. and Davy, S. (1989) The heuristic of lecture note-taking: perceptions of American and international students regarding the value and practice of note-taking. *English for Specific Purposes* 8 (1): 33-50.
- Flowerdew, J. (ed.) (1994) *Academic Listening: Research Perspectives*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Griffiths, R. (1991) Pausological research in an L2 context: a rationale and review of selected studies. *Applied Linguistics* 12 (4): 345-364.
- Griffiths, R. (1990) Speech rate and NNS comprehension: a preliminary study in time-benefit analysis. *Language Learning* 40 (3): 311-336.
- Griffiths, R. and Beretta, A. (1991) A controlled study of temporal variables in NS-NNS lectures. *REL C Journal* 22 (1): 1-19.
- Ling, P. (1993) To lecture or not to lecture: the case against. *HERDSA News* 15 (3): 7.
- Waugh, G. (1994) The loneliness of the long-distance lecturer. *HERDSA News* 16 (1): 8-9.

Alex McKnight
Deakin University, Toorak Campus

Towards a Professional Identity, Organization, and Code of Practice for Academic Development

Lee Andresen led a very lively session at this year's conference on the topic of the professionalisation of academic development. He writes: 'This article continues the conversation begun by a survey of opinions I conducted earlier this year and reported in sessions at HERDSA '95 at Rockhampton. My hope is to stimulate open, critical and scholarly discussion regarding Academic Development as a profession, the quality of our practice, and our organizational options for the future.'

INTRODUCTION

Over a decade ago Paul Hirst (1982) argued, in a piece about schoolteachers as professionals, that there was

... no escaping the conclusion that in education the professionals at present lack institutionalised machinery adequate to the proper conduct of the tasks that have been committed to them ... This hampers, on the one hand, the development of their expertise at their jobs ... It hampers too their developing the politicisation necessary to promote the best public determination of the range of activities that they should undertake and the institutional structures and resources essential to those tasks ... (It) also militates against the interests of the professionals themselves because it weakens public confidence in them ... The price that the profession will pay in the long run ... lacking adequate machinery ... will be severe. (181).

Today I find these words extraordinarily pertinent to Academic Development. I suggest you re-read the extract, substitute 'developers' for 'the professionals' and 'academic or educational development' for 'the profession', and see if it captures anything of our contemporary situation.

I want to take and apply these ideas to our own case: the argument is Hirst's, the errors and inadequacies of application are mine. I hope it will stimulate debate about an issue central to HERDSA's present restructuring mission.

1. PROFESSIONALISM, ITS AUTHORITY AND ITS ORGANISATION (After Hirst, 1982)

The challenge

Hirst challenged UK school-teachers as a profession to pull its finger out, stop being the pawn in the game, and to construct a voice and identity of its own. I doubt it ever heeded that call or, if it did, that it was capable of doing anything about it.

Professional practice - the private role

□ The great caring professions (Medicine, Law, Education) serve ends which are broadly considered to be for the good of all (Medicine promotes health, Law justice, Education the development of persons). Professions exist to pursue general goods, but to get

them for particular individuals - called clients. I use 'client' to describe the role of our academic colleagues when we are in our role of being a 'developer' for them. This in no sense diminishes the collegiality we share - we remain colleagues whilst we are developer and client.

□ The professional's job is to look after clients' best interests in a way that neither they nor any other group can adequately discern or pursue. Clients commit themselves to professionals, whom they trust, for certain important tasks to be undertaken on their behalf; this leads the two parties to stand in a special relationship.

□ Professional activities operate within particular societies and social settings. In ours this involves complex institutional structures which powerfully determine how professionals can operate. Nevertheless each profession's peculiar institutional structure remains a balance between what the professionals themselves determine and what will allow public scrutiny and accountability.

□ The most commonly mooted objection to this view is an error, namely that the work of professionals such as teachers or doctors can be undertaken simply as a 'technology'. The objection is false because the ends such professions seek are achievements in human beings which are brought about by reasons and not simply by causes; they involve unique personalities in complex non-causal relationships, operating in what are almost always unique circumstances.

Professional authority and autonomy - the public role

□ A society (which includes the professionals within it) needs to know what are the matters on which professionals should exercise their own knowledge, skills and judgements on behalf of their clients *without interference from outside control* (i.e. the specific autonomous territory covered, though there will of course be 'grey' boundary areas).

□ It also needs to know what is the profession's role in wider decision-making about the framework within which any group of professionals should exercise their authority.

□ No one else but professionals themselves can express their expert understanding and judgement on matters within their domain; hence the wider public have a right to know the considered view of professionals on matters that the professionals alone know about, and on how those matters bear on the public's wider concerns.

□ Professionals must therefore take a lead in the formulation of public policy, because although they are not necessarily authorities themselves on questions of policy per se, they are in a position to consider those questions more profoundly than the public at large and should accept this responsibility. To do so is also in their own interests and serves to protect their activities from inept restrictions or interferences.

□ To exercise this public role (with its implications for their own professional well-being) requires minimally that any group of professionals be *well-organised*.

An adequately-organised profession

□ Adequately organised professionalism can be developed only as individuals within a group participate in a relevant discourse about their theory and practice with fellow-professionals. This implies consciously developing their capacity to hand on their practices and discourse in a way that they are open to influence from two quarters: from research and theory deriving from the 'pure' academic territories to which they are related, and also to ongoing pragmatic self-criticism (the reflective practitioner). This is the organised context of self-development within which professionals collectively promote their shared understanding and skills. This does not organise itself!

□ Adequately organised professionalism also displays the ability to apply its collective knowledge-base to the determination of questions that inevitably arise over whether a professional has, in any particular instance, acted properly for the good of a client. Those who possess the professionalism have a right to be questioned over what they do for their clients; they are answerable to someone. Knowledgeable and experienced colleagues are the proper first court in which such questions are to be settled. If colleagues do not approve of the actions then the professional has failed to exercise his or her authority properly. If colleagues do approve and still the actions are called into question, the activities of the profession as a whole are being called into question, and the proper limits of professional authority are being re-examined as matters of public policy.

Institutionalised Machinery

□ It is a characteristic and proper function of professional bodies that they are organised in a manner that enables them to act in both these ways - (i) as a court to determine the propriety of questionable actions by individuals within, and (ii) as a body to debate public policy matters about the boundaries of the profession's authority.

□ Whatever other legitimate professional functions exist (there may be many) these two alone are enough to indicate the need for *an institutionalised machinery* adequate to the proper acquitting of the profession's obligations both to itself and the public it serves. The lack of such machinery hampers professionals from developing the politicisation necessary to promote the best public determination of the range of activities they should undertake and the institutional structures and resources essential to those tasks, as well as weakening general public confidence in the profession. Again, this does not organise itself!

2. APPLYING HIRST'S ANALYSIS TO ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT ('AD')

AD as professional work

□ Academic Development cannot be undertaken merely as a 'technology' because it operates to seek achievements in human beings which are brought about by reasons and not simply causes. If we examine our *reasons for acting* as Academic Developers we will find they are substantially the same reasons as academics themselves will give for acting. Both sets of reasons refer to the *reasons Universities exist*. If some Developers presently view their work as merely 'technical' and operate in that way, they are practising at an inferior level - however expertly they may be doing it.

□ Academic Developers deal with their Academic clients (ie Academics themselves as well as a cluster of other 'personalities' such as Schools and Departments which comprise Academic collectives) in ways that involve complex non-causal relationships. Each case we meet is set in the unique circumstances of that Academic's (or a Department's or School's) life and work. Our work, while it must include technical elements, goes beyond the technical - it is professional in its nature.

The 'goods' delivered by AD

□ Academic Development exists to provide a *general good for particular individuals*:

- (1) The *general good* is the development and maintenance of good academic practice in respect of the business of higher education teaching and learning which Universities undertake on society's behalf.
- (2) The *particular individuals* for whom AD provides this good are Academics themselves (who of course constitute another profession about which a similar discussion to this one could be undertaken).
- (3) AD also provides professional service to the collective 'territorial' entities within which academics organise themselves to research and teach - their Schools, Departments, Faculties and the total Institution.

□ Academic Developers serve these multiple clients in ways neither the clients nor their employer institution can adequately discern or pursue. These clients commit themselves to Academic Developers as professionals whom they trust, for certain important tasks to be undertaken on their behalf - tasks which they would not and could not undertake for themselves. As in all professional work, the parties stand in a special relationship of trust and obligation.

□ The institutional structures which determine how Academic Development can operate comprise a subset of the structures of the Universities themselves, within which our Academic clients operate. The public scrutiny and accountability of Academic Developers as a professional group is generally undertaken by the Universities themselves on behalf of the Academics they employ.

Implications for Academic Developers

□ The total University (including the Academic Developers within it) needs to know what are the matters on which Developers should autonomously exercise their special knowledge, skills and judgements on behalf of their clients *without interference from University control*. We all need to know the specific territory covered by ADs' authority (always admitting, of course, 'grey areas' around boundaries).

□ The University also needs to know what is the AD profession's role in decision-making about the *wider institutional framework* within which they exercise the autonomy vested in their professional knowledge-based authority.

□ No one else but Developers themselves can express their expert understanding and judgement on *matters within their domain*. It follows that our immediate wider 'public' - the rest of the University and its Academics - all have a right to know the considered view of Developers on *matters they alone know about*, and on how those matters bear on that 'public's' wider concerns. This interest in knowing and respecting Developers' considered views probably also extends to the wider collectivity of the Universities, which in Australia might include the AVCC and other national entities.

□ Academic Developers must take a lead in the formulation of 'public' policy. They are in a position to consider certain policy questions (e.g. concerning good teaching and learning) more profoundly than the University and its academics at large and should accept this responsibility. To do so is also in our own interests, since it serves to protect our own activities from inept or regressive restrictions and interferences.

□ To exercise this 'public' role requires at least that Academic Developers be well-organised. It is inconceivable that the organising be undertaken by any collective entity that is not under their autonomous control to ensure that it represents ourselves and ourselves alone as a professional group. A good organisational base also has profound implications for Developers' own well-being and job-satisfaction.

A satisfactory organisational base for AD

□ Developers must participate in an ongoing relevant discourse with one another about their theory and practice. We must develop our capacity to hand on to each new generation our practices and discourse. We must develop ways of learning from and contributing to the relevant academic disciplines (including our own 'discipline' - the study of Higher Education as such). We must engage reflectively in ongoing pragmatic self-criticism.

□ As an organised profession we must find ways to apply our collective knowledge-base to determining questions, as they arise, over whether particular Developers may have, in any instance, acted properly for the good of their client/s. If ever such questions should arise, we Developers ourselves must comprise the first court in which the questions are to be settled.

□ If, in the normal course of events, our actions (or those of the Centres/Units in which we operate) are ever seriously called into question, by implication the activities of the profession of Academic Development as a whole and the proper limits of its professional authority are themselves being questioned. These would

comprise matters of 'public' policy (University-wide or even National in some cases) - they would be questions about whether AD should exist at all, or should operate in its present way within our country's university system.

□ Academic Development must be organised in a manner that enables Developers to act in *both* these ways to protect itself:- (i) as a court to determine the propriety of questionable actions by individuals within, and (ii) as a body to debate public policy matters about the boundaries of the profession's authority.

□ The lack of any organisational machinery to achieve these vital ends continues to hamper Academic Development's politicisation. Without such machinery we cannot promote the best public determination of the range of activities we should undertake. We cannot have a coherent voice about what institutional structures and resources might be essential to our tasks. Without it the Universities' and Academics' general confidence in our profession's work is weakened.

3. WHERE DO WE START?

A full agenda for achieving robust AD professional organisation would require a rather long paper. I have made a start on that elsewhere (Andresen, in press). Here I'll introduce one issue only - ethical practice - and use an approach suggested by the distinguished Australian philosopher John Passmore.

A Code of Practice for Academic Developers?

We are not talking about job descriptions! My survey (Andresen, 1995a) demonstrated how many AD people confuse a code of professional practice with the notion of a job description. They rejected the idea of a code because 'our institutions employ us to do so many different things'; 'we would not want to prescribe what an academic developer should be doing in their job'; and 'standardisation and conformity under any name is abhorrent'. These objections are entirely beside the point.

By 'Professional Code of Practice' I mean an ethical code - a statement about the values on which the profession resides and the major ethical obligations of practice. It will imply nothing whatever about conformity, standardisation, or prescribing the contents of day-to-day practice. It is about the quality of practice - the standards of the profession - not the content of practice. And it is recommendatory - a goal, not a straightjacket.

Why a code of practice?

In his splendid paper *Academic Ethics?*, Passmore (1984) argues that a special moral code can be deemed necessary for a profession for any, or all, of these reasons:

- (a) (if) the members ... may be subjected to particular temptations, against which it is thought desirable specifically to warn them;
- (b) (if they) ... may be called upon regularly to act in ways which would be for other persons acts of supererogation (ie extraordinary moral virtue);
- (c) (if they) ... may be granted exemption, in respect to certain types of actions, from moral demands which are made upon other classes of persons. (If they are) permitted to act as other persons are not

allowed to act, to ignore considerations which ought normally to be taken into account, or to give them a different relative weight. (63-64)

Let us imagine situations like these in day-to-day AD work. This suggests to me things like the following (off-the-cuff examples, you may think of other things entirely, that's why we need eventually to talk and compare notes):

- (a) A Developer might easily be tempted to consider himself/herself in some sense 'superior' as a teacher (relative to academics in general) or at least tempted to adopt a superior attitude, because of his or her expert knowledge of the theory, research and practice of teaching on which the claim to be professionals partly rests.
- (b) Developers may be called upon to exercise quite extraordinary tact and diplomacy in certain situations in which they deal with academics as consultants or advisors, particularly where questions of the quality of teaching are in dispute or under examination (eg when a particularly dismal demonstration of teaching ineptitude has been observed).
- (c) Developers are commonly granted exemption from some of the informal 'taboos' surrounding university teaching - e.g. they may have privileged access to classrooms to observe teaching and learning, privileged access to student evaluation of teaching data, privileged knowledge of certain matters (such as that a Head of Department regards a member of staff to be performing unsatisfactorily, and so on).

Towards an AD code of practice

I believe we need to build an AD ethics upon the base of a *general academic ethics*, because we are (whether or not job descriptions or appointment status acknowledge it) *academics first*. Work on a general academic ethics is beyond our own remit, though I believe it proceeds, if slowly, in some quarters (eg AARE, 1993; AVCC, 1991). Whatever it comprises it must, at its most general level, be derived from some view of what it is (ie what 'goods') that universities themselves are seeking to achieve and foster for society.

We need, in the absence of a full statement of that ethics, to make some reasonable assumptions about what it might be like (eg Andresen 1995b) then proceed to build on those our own AD ethical structure. That means delineating in a broadly acceptable manner (to our own AD community) *what particular 'goods' AD itself offers to academic practice*.

Thinking an AD code into existence (after Passmore, 1984)

Under the categories suggested earlier we should explicate those ethical standards Developers need to meet which are of a kind *everybody* generally needs to meet, but which Developers (because of the nature of their professional work) need to be *especially careful* about.

For example, *respecting others' privacy*. Everyone ought to respect others' privacy, and this is a fundamental tenet of most civilised moral codes. But Developers, for a range of reasons, need to be especially careful on this score - when privacy is understood to mean the right to control information about one's self.

Then we should identify standards for practice that relate to things Developers *uniquely* do (if there are any) that other professionals or lay-persons would not normally have to ever worry about. These are things that derive from the special privileges or freedoms we enjoy as part of our job and that are intrinsically necessary for carrying it out.

For example, *enjoying privileged status* in some circumstances. Developers enjoy an unusual degree of freedom of access to teaching settings so they will need - when in such settings - to consciously develop and act upon a code of ethical behaviour appropriate to their privileged status as visitors. They owe this obligation not only to the teacher but to the students as well. Their ethical sensibilities will influence their comportment whilst visiting the teaching place and will extend to their dealings with data they collect from it.

I envisage a long-term project to explicate a broadly acceptable statement of an AD ethics. One person cannot and should not try to do it - the task is a collective one. HERDSA has in recent years produced some impressive statements about teaching and learning to offer to the wider community. It is time the AD people within HERDSA gave a similar amount of attention to getting their own ethical house in order.

I would be delighted if this article promoted movement into such a project, across the HERDSA domain of Australasia, and across the many varieties and styles of academic development represented within it. Perhaps a mechanism on which to start it would be HERDSA's electronic mail network. I leave it to those in charge of those matters to suggest how the technology could be used to this effect.

4. POSTSCRIPT

Do we really want an ethical code?

Some developers object that we 'don't need' a code of ethics because we're doing a fine job already. The mere suggestion of a code seems offensive, tantamount to an insult. That reaction is, of course, nonsense. The practical outcome of a code is not, in the first instance, to 'make professionals ethical' - much more than a code and its promulgation is needed for that. Nor is a code needed because the professionals are typically unethical; nothing of the sort is implied.

However, if certain unusual but not entirely impossible circumstances were to arise, the presence of a known, promulgated code would do some valuable things. For example:

- (i) If a fellow-Developer were to be accused of dereliction of moral duty or unethical behaviour it would enable us as a community to engage in the kind of internal monitoring, appraising and perhaps - in the end - either exonerating or expelling - that we mentioned earlier, without ignorant outsiders being called in as a first resort. We keep our own house clean and are seen to be doing so.
- (ii) If ever the profession as a whole were put on notice, by some unreasonable threat to a particular Developer and the rest of the profession moved to his/her support, we would be seen to have our own ethical house in order as we took on the enemy - be that a particular manager, a University, or some national body wanting to turn the knife in us as a group.

Two good reasons for action

Beyond those particular benefits, there are some substantial general benefits to us all. The project of developing a code of professional ethics for Academic Developers would be an ideal way to meet each of the features Hirst argued to be necessary for any profession to acquit its obligations both to itself and to the community it serves:

□ As professionals we need to participate in an ongoing, relevant discourse about our theory and practice: a code of ethics is just such a discourse and we have never yet as a group entered into it seriously;

We need to develop the politicisation necessary to promote the best public determination of the range of activities our profession should undertake and the institutional structures and resources essential to those tasks. We also need to strengthen general public (i.e. University) confidence in our profession: developing and eventually promulgating a code of ethical practice, and an institutional base to promulgate and uphold it, would elegantly serve each of these goals.

To me the case for both a better organization and a code of practice for developers is unassailable. What about you?

REFERENCES

Andresen, L.W. (1995a). *The Profession's Next Step - what is it? A preliminary survey of stakeholders' viewpoints*. Unpublished paper distributed at the annual conference of HERDSA, Rockhampton, July 1995.

Andresen, L.W. (1995b). *Reflections on academic development as a scholarly profession*. Paper presented to the annual conference of HERDSA, Rockhampton, July 1995.

Andresen, L.W. (1996, in press). Academic Development - a role chasing an identity? Or a job searching for a profession? *International Journal of Educational Development* 1(1).

Australian Association for Research in Education (AARE) (1993). *Code of Ethics for Research in Education* (draft). Hawthorn, Victoria: AARE.

Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) (1991). *Draft Code of Practice for University Teaching*. Canberra, ACT: AVCC.

Hirst, P. (1982). Professional Authority - its Foundation and Limits. *British Journal of Educational Studies* XXX(2) 172-182.

Passmore, J. (1984). Academic Ethics? *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 1(1) 63-77.

Dr. Lee Andresen
Consultant
Telephone/Fax: 02 371 9570

News from



the Executive

The Executive met at the Professional Development Centre, University of New South Wales on 10 and 11 November. The following is a brief summary of the major matters before it at this time.

■ The Executive is pleased to announce the appointment, from December, of Ms Coral Watson as a half-time Administrative Officer. She joins Heather Koch, the Membership Administrator, in the HERDSA Office in Canberra. We anticipate, with both of these positions operative, that the Society will be able to offer members quicker, more responsive transactions, and, just as important, will be able to service Branches and Special Interest Groups with membership lists and up-to-date information. Coral's position will also, we hope, enable us to be more proactive on the policy-making front in Higher Education.

■ The Canberra Office is now on e-mail. The address is: herdsa@peg.apc.org

■ The Executive continued the work of Constitutional reform which it had foreshadowed at the July Annual General Meeting. You will have in your hands, either with this News or shortly afterwards, a proposal for the re-structuring of the Executive. The proposal is the Executive's preferred

option but the supporting documentation will give you an idea of the kinds of issues which were discussed and contributed to this choice.

■ The HERDSA Visiting Scholar for 1996 is SHEILA TOBIAS. We are extremely thrilled with this appointment and anticipate that she will have much to offer to the whole of our membership. (See details on next pages)

■ HERDSA publications are continuing to expand. Hard on the heels of the Gold Guides initiative comes an idea for an annual compendium of best practice. The idea is not fully formulated yet but has been proposed in order to provide an outlet for studies of innovative or inspirational teaching that have a strong practical value but that seem to have no very established publication options. More news about this as it develops.

■ The Executive farewelled Vic Beasley, who is retiring from the position of Green Guides and Gold Guides Editor. Vic has held this position for many years and was strongly proactive in pushing for new titles, in supporting and mentoring writers in this somewhat unfamiliar type of writing, and in instigating the Gold Guides series to meet more discipline-specific needs. His place as editor will be taken by Dr. Kym Fraser of Monash University.

1996 HERDSA VISITING SCHOLAR

HERDSA is pleased to announce that the 1996 Visiting Scholar will be

SHEILA TOBIAS

Sheila Tobias is an educational consultant specialising in the areas of mathematics and science education. Currently she is an author and consultant for Research Corporation, in Tucson, Arizona. As well, she is a consulting editor and writer to the California State University; she is a summer school lecturer on gender issues in the Claremont Graduate School of Education; an advisor to NSF funded projects; a committee member of the Status of Women Committee of the American Physical Society; and a board member of the American Association of Higher Education. Sheila has a humanities background in history and political science and in order to better understand the difficulties students face in undergraduate science courses, she enrolled as a student in a first year physics course.

Sheila Tobias is the author of a number of well-known books, among them:

Overcoming math anxiety. (1978).
Succeed with math: Every student's guide to conquering math anxiety. (1987).
Breaking the science barrier. (1992).
They're not dumb, they're different: Stalking the second tier. (1990).
Revitalizing undergraduate science. (1992).
Rethinking science as a career: Perceptions and realities in the physical sciences. (1995).

Sheila Tobias will be touring Australia and New Zealand in June-July 1996, and will attend the National Conference in Perth as a keynote speaker.

She will conduct a number of full or half-day workshops in universities and has included in her 'list of offerings' the following topics:

Math anxiety: An update. Sheila Tobias has spent 20 years researching why students fail in mathematics at university. Sheila believes that many otherwise intelligent students avoid and do poorly at maths not because of a failure of intellect, but because of a failure of nerve. The workshop will explore the underlying theory, models for conducting maths anxiety workshops in college, university and continuing education settings; and the complexities of measuring 'math mental health.' It will include a video tape recording of an actual 'math anxiety reduction' class.

The department-based audit. This is a process by which university science departments take back control of their own internal assessment and improvement of undergraduate instruction. Sheila

conducted a research study of 11 US programs that 'work' and this workshop will explore the differences between programs that 'work' and those that don't. Topics to be covered include collective responsibility for instruction; feedback mechanisms; ongoing retreat-type deliberations among department faculty as a whole; planning in conjunction with related departmental faculty; analysing areas that are or are not in the control of science faculty and taking back control of those that are not.

Women in science. This is a lecture presentation which brings to bear a feminist critique not on the methods of science, but on the underlying recruitment and advancement ideology of science. The analysis is particularly helpful for women scientists and women students of science, and for those in administration who are eager to increase the recruitment and success rate of women in science. Sheila Tobias believes that until the questions of who will do science, and at what age, what kind of devotion is required for a career in science, and why science is considered as a 'young man's game' are addressed, women trying to break the barriers must use multiple strategies - some of which may appear contradictory but all of which are 'sensible' from a feminist analytical point of view.

In-class examinations in university-level science. Sheila Tobias's workshop takes science education reform to the next stage. As she sees it, exams drive student behaviour. There is really no point in improving pedagogy, or even curriculum, if exam content, exam format, exam location and arrangements, and exam grading practices remain the same. Even if faculty do not value what they test (but do so for reasons of convenience or exigency) students come to value in the discipline that which is tested. This means that a view of science is conveyed that is neither correct nor appealing. Her forthcoming book on this subject consists of a collection of new ideas in testing in university-level science and gives a noted educator's analysis of the likelihood that testing can be changed in the near future.

In this workshop, the essence of the collection will be shared and participants will be asked to create (in groups) the best and worst examination questions in their field, for purposes of discussion.

Rethinking science as a career (lecture presentation). In this presentation, Sheila hopes to interact with faculty staff members from science and business to discuss productive intersections between the two disciplines.

**Advance Call
for Expressions of Interest
in Sheila Tobias's Workshops**



The dates of Sheila's visit are not yet finalised, but they will probably fall between mid-June and late July. If your school, faculty, university, college or organisation is interested in arranging some workshop sessions with Sheila Tobias, please contact in the first instance, the coordinator of her visit:

Dr Gay Crebert
Academic Staff Development Unit
QUT, Gardens Point Campus
GPO Box 2434, Brisbane Qld 4001
Ph: (07) 3864 2937
Fax: (07) 3864 1805
email: g.crebert@qut.edu.au

**The following persons have accepted the role of Regional Coordinator
and local inquiries should be addressed to them:**

NEW SOUTH WALES:

Prem Ramburuth, Learning Centre,
University of New South Wales
Phone: (02) 385 1150

VICTORIA:

Peter Webb, Faculty of Education, Victoria
University of Technology (Footscray Campus)
Phone: (03) 9688 4404

SOUTH AUSTRALIA:

Jan Orrell, School of Nursing, Flinders
University of South Australia
Phone: (08) 201 3244

WESTERN AUSTRALIA:

Owen Hicks, Centre for Staff Development,
University of Western Australia
Phone: (09) 380 1502

ACT:

John Dearn, Faculty of Applied Science,
University of Canberra
Phone: (06) 201 2237

QUEENSLAND:

Gay Crebert, Academic Staff Development
Unit, Queensland University of Technology.
Phone: (07) 3864 2937

NEW ZEALAND:

Sally Hunter, ERAU, University of Canterbury,
Christchurch, NZ
Phone: 64 3 364 2832.

information about:

**HERDSA membership, and
HERDSA publications**

(the Green Guides, Gold Guides and others)

is available from:

**HERDSA Inc.
P.O. Box 516
Jamison Centre, A.C.T.
Australia, 2614**

telephone: (06) 253 4242

fax: (06) 253 4246

e-mail: herdsa@peg.apc.org

Reporting Up the Line: Subjective Quality Indicators for Staff Development

The work of staff developers is the subject of quite some attention in this issue of the News. Lee Andresen's piece urges developers towards a more explicit professional basis; Graham Webb heralds the setting up of a developers' interest group. This comment, from Neil Fleming, helps to make clear some of the difficulties in documenting and evaluating and claiming credit for the spectrum of work that constitutes staff development.

The current fascination with objective measures of performance does not always suit the types of work which occur in an institution of higher education. The reasons are not difficult to discern. Apart from the difficulties associated with finding objectives for teaching there are the other supportive roles such as counselling, student advising, career advising, course and subject advising which have few, if any, measures of effectiveness or objective outcomes. They are usually highly interactive and the quality of that interaction usually defies quantification.

MAKING THE INVISIBLE VISIBLE

Much of the staff developer's role is confidential. This means that it is not always possible to indicate the members of staff who have stress, or burn-out, or writer's block. In a small institution, individuals can be easily identified by a process of elimination. There is also some concern about quantifying remedial actions or deficiencies because if such details find their way into annual reports they do little to enhance the image of the institution.

Included in the category of difficult roles is that of the staff development officer. The role involves a number of interactive activities:

- organising seminars
- participating in seminars
- evaluating procedures, staff and courses
- consulting with individual staff
- setting up groups, cells, mentors, networks
- attending, organising and writing up meetings
- representing the institution on external sites.

Some of the measures of performance used by staff developers include:

- numbers of staff seen in consultations
- numbers of students seen
- numbers of courses evaluated
- numbers of staff evaluated
- numbers of surveys done
- numbers of conferences attended
- numbers of papers written for conferences, journals..
- numbers of papers published
- numbers of talks given, sizes of audiences
- comments from seminar participants and others
- Likert scores from evaluations of services offered.

While these are commendable attempts to objectify the interactions, they fall short of the richness of those interactions. For example, to state that 86 staff were

seen in a year ignores the variety of reasons that brought staff to the door and the quality of the advice, listening and counselling. Similarly, to record that participants rated a seminar presentation with a mean Likert score of 4.5 on a five-point scale (where 5 is 'excellent') belies the fact that some participants were asleep, some came for political reasons, some will not adopt any new ideas, some will never rate less than a '3' for any colleague's performance.

*If I chose too many successful interactions
I would lead the auditor into believing that
I was infallible. If I chose too many
failures, maybe my job was at stake.*

Faced with these limitations and the persistent requests for more 'auditable' measures of effectiveness, I resolved to capture some of the richness of the interaction that I have with staff, students and community. The turning point was the realisation that in our university, case study teaching is widely used to capture some of the rich reality of a business process, a marketing strategy or a farm or a scientific experiment. If the case study approach could be effectively used for student learning maybe there was an opportunity to capture some of the essence of what I did. Maybe I could use some selected case studies from my work to capture a much wider reality?

BEING PRAGMATIC ABOUT CASE STUDIES

I looked back through my diary of contacts and found many cases that looked like good candidates for a case study approach. Most of my work involved one-to-one or one-to-many interactions. It was not only necessary to select those which would best describe and define the quality of what I did but also to choose those which would be believed.

I faced a professional and ethical decision, I had to choose in such a way that the 'evidence' would not be slanted towards an unfair or uneven view of my roles. As in other research, exactly the same statistical rules of sampling had to be applied but in a subjective manner. The decision was mine. If I chose too many

student interactions I would give a false impression of my workload with students compared with staff. If I chose too many successful interactions I would lead the auditor into believing that I was infallible. If I chose too many failures, maybe my job was at stake. Clearly there had to be a balance which indicated my:

- successes and failures
- relative use of time
- relative difficulties
- frustrations
- routine tasks
- challenges
- value to the institution
- initiatives

One way to resolve the dilemma of what to include and what to omit, was to consult those who read the report and ask them what they would want but that would pose another unanswerable question. If my report is to document the realities of my work I can hardly ask those to whom I report to set the dimensions. After all, 'they' do not know the extent and variety in my job which is the reason for writing the report.

I tackled the selection process with a background notion that I must represent the range of roles listed above. That meant the choices lay within my professional judgement. I realised that any inflation or distortion could escalate into even larger distortions in the following years; that if I wanted to appear as a very valuable staff member this year, it would make growth next year even harder to attain.

Examples had to be a microcosm of my work. They had to have a longitudinal content. A 'day in the life' of a staff developer was insufficient to capture the ongoing nature of some interactions with staff and students. Similarly a photocopy of my diary was an exciting reality for me but an incipherable code for others. My diary listed the staff times for interactions but not the results, or the intensities, or the richness of those interactions. Nor did my diary indicate the levels of frustration, success, elation, depression. . .

My diary listed the staff times for interactions but not the results, or the intensities, or the richness of those interactions. Nor did my diary indicate the levels of frustration, success, elation, depression.

I decided to choose cases which included some staff, some students; some ongoing, some completed; some successes, some failures, some confidential and some public domain. After making these choices, I also resolved that the cases could distort reality if I did not also indicate how often they occurred. A case study provides a rich view of the action but some idea of its frequency was also required. Objectivity entered at this point. To do this I merely counted all the occasions on which I had attended meetings, consulted with staff,

spoken to meetings, met with visitors, sought advice, taught students, advised students... This data was added to complete the picture.

Because my worklife is run from a diary held by the secretary in the Centre it was reasonably accurate. Apart from staffroom conversations and informal chats in the stairwell or corridor most of my interactions appeared in the diary. The major omissions were telephone calls, E-mail sessions, thinking, writing and reading, but these are necessary adjuncts to what I 'really' do in staff development and are no different to what other staff do in the university. It seemed more important to catch the unusual - the essence of my job - the things that I get paid for as a specialist. Remember, I was not keen to prove that I was superfluous to the mission of the university.

THE FINAL PRODUCT

My report had these sections:

- Curriculum Design/consultations with staff
- Consultations with students
- Courses offered, organised, delivered
- Negotiations, committee work and policy issues
- Consultations - outside
- My own staff consultations (I am Director of the Centre)
- Meetings and membership of bodies associated with Lincoln University
- Teaching - my own classes
- Presentations - outside the university
- Presentations - within Lincoln University
- Visitors to the Centre
- Conferences organised

Case studies were not used for all the categories. For many of these, quantitative measures as performance indicators were sufficient and were used. For example, the section on 'Courses' listed the numbers of participants, the hours and the degree of involvement. In future years I would vary the use of case studies so that each section might have a 'turn' with a case study. Case studies were provided for the first two categories because they were the tasks most difficult to capture in other ways. Five (5) were provided for the first and four (4) for the second. Some detail was added for 'Consultations - Outside' but not to the extent of a case study.

An example of a student and a staff case study is shown below.

Consultations With Staff Of Various Topics (N = 155)

(Each session would normally be for at least one hour.)

Quality Indicators

- Staff express thanks for assistance.
- Staff morale is maintained and enhanced.
- Job satisfaction is enhanced for staff.

Ms F

F enrolled for a Ph.D. and was expected (by the industry) to do well. F had difficulties with her HOD and her supervisor both of whom led her to believe that her Ph.D. could not be as practical as the industry would respect. They said that there was to be a heavy insistence on modelling and theory. F wanted her thesis to solve or point to solutions for one central city area.

I arranged for alternative and more supportive views to be put to F from other recent Ph.D. graduates on the staff. I talked at length with her as she complained that nobody heard what she was saying. I opened some doors for further discussion and gave her some help by directing her assertiveness into positive demands.

She has since resigned and leaves the university still believing that it should be possible at Lincoln University to do a 'practical' Ph.D. which focuses on real issues in the commercial world. We lost this one. (5 hours of consultation and representation.)

It seemed more important to catch the unusual - the essence of my job - the things that I get paid for as a specialist. Remember, I was not keen to prove that I was superfluous to the mission of the university.

Consultations with Student
(n = 60 undergraduate and 42 postgraduate)
(Each session would be between 30 mins and one hour)

Quality Indicators

Improved student learning.
Students' expressions of thanks.

NF
This master's student had problems with his academic supervisors. I facilitated his assessment as a dyslexic, wrote in support of his disability to his supervisors, talked with the HOD and arranged for him to have tutoring on gaps in his computer knowledge. NF

(from page 4)

Have departments developed?
We are in the middle stages of the funded part of the project. Only one of seven departments in control of their own process appears to have made any headway.

The three facilitated departments each nominated a perspective that they wished to focus on. For example, one strong research department was concerned about the relationship between postgraduate students and the department. Early data gathering and familiarisation by the facilitator has led to a series of recommendations to be made to two of the three departments. These are currently being considered within the department.

We would appreciate further dialogue on the matters raised together with information about studies that have led other institutions to improved policy and practice.

continued to have disagreements and eventually withdrew. The clash with the supervisor and some other staff in Department W is over the fundamental issue of whether dyslexia really exists as a disability.

An example of a case study for a conference presentation is listed here.

Conferences Organised or Attended
NZ Registrars (Universities) Conference for Staff Development staff.

Quality Indicators

Positive evaluations from participants

"Thank you for your participation in the 15th New Zealand Universities Administration Course. Your presentation added an important dimension to the theme 'Managing Our Resources.' I understand the demands of your appointment and appreciate the time you gave the Course. The ratings given by participants for your presentation were amongst the highest."

CONCLUSION

It would be a fitting end to this paper to report that my superiors read my submission avidly, questioned me at length about its contents, became more knowledgeable and more appreciative of my work and raised my salary without being asked. Unfortunately, none of these things happened. The report disappeared into a black hole until I asked about it. The result was a scurried attempt to indicate that it was read and that it was worthwhile. So why did I bother? Because I am not impressed with a merely quantitative approach and because I believed that my own professional integrity would be enhanced by the approach I took. The report gave me satisfaction and a reinforcement of my own value to the institution. It served to remind me of the positive and the negative things that happened in my year. For these reasons I will continue with it. One day it might be read!

Neil Fleming
Lincoln University

REFERENCES

Arthurson, H. (1995) 'Review of the Ph.D program - Part 1 - Student Statistics and Degree Outcomes 1984-1994' Armidale: UNE, Research Services.
Jones, G. (1995) 'Enhancing Postgraduate Supervision at UNE - 1995', Armidale: UNE, Academic Development Unit.
Jurgs, D. MacKay, A.G. & Jones, G., (1995) 'Review of the Research Postgraduate Experience 1995' Armidale: UNE, Academic Development Unit.
Maxwell, T.W., Hughes, W., Sorensen, A.D., and Owen, K., (1995) 'Research Cultures in Academic Departments', Armidale: UNE, Academic Development Unit.

Graham MacKay, Tom Maxwell, Helen Arthurson,
Graham Jones and Desiree Jurgs
University of New England

Announcing a Special Interest Group for Academic Developers

A new special interest group of HERDSA is being formed. Called the Academic Development Special Interest Group (ADSIG), it will provide a forum for academic developers to discuss matters which are of concern to them and which are relevant to the theory and practice of academic development. It will provide a network of contacts, facilitate professional development, encourage the sharing of research and practice and represent the interests of academic developers. It will seek to support and empower rather than restrict and control.

Academic Developers and HERDSA

For more than twenty years, academic developers have comprised an important and often dominant group within HERDSA. Nowadays, with the growth of geographical branches, special interest groups and specialised electronic networks, there is a diversity of interests within HERDSA. Some academic developers have questioned the relevance of HERDSA and a few have suggested that a new professional body should be formed.

However, HERDSA remains the largest, most vibrant and respected society of its type in the world. It has an enviable reputation and is highly regarded. This is continually reaffirmed by academic developers, practitioners and researchers who visit Australasia.

HERDSA is also qualitatively unlike other societies. It is a family or *whanau* of interests, with all the shades of meaning this suggests. It has managed to maintain both diversity and mutuality. The conversations which take place at HERDSA Conferences repeatedly bear witness to this. Cross fertilisation and the sharing of experience among people coming to higher education from a variety of interests are the hallmarks of HERDSA.

When academic developers have sought a forum and vehicle for their interests and development, it has been to the family of interest represented by HERDSA that they have naturally turned. It is envisaged that the formation and development of ADSIG will be of considerable importance in enhancing the support for academic developers which HERDSA is able to offer.



The Initiation of ADSIG

A group of academic developers has come together to initiate the new SIG. The Convenor is Graham Webb (Otago), and the group includes Phil Candy (QUT), Owen Hicks (UWA), Sue Johnston (Canberra), John Jones (HK PolyU), Peggy Nightingale (UNSW) and Margot Pearson (ANU). Their first tasks are to publicise the SIG and to organise activities for the 1996 HERDSA Conference in Perth. At that time, an election of officers will be held to assume responsibilities.

There has already been a great deal of interest from academic developers who wish to join the new SIG. If you are interested in joining, please email, fax or write to the address given below. Please also indicate if you would like to contribute to the organisation of the SIG and especially to conference activities in Perth 1996.

This is an important initiative for HERDSA and it is crucial that as many academic developers as possible support ADSIG.

Details Required

A list of names and contact details of ADSIG members will be prepared. Please indicate separately if you wish to join ADSIG but do NOT wish to appear on this list. The following details are required
Title, First Name, Surname, Postal Address, Telephone Number (with area code), Fax Number (with area code), Email Address.

Please send these details to:

Dr Graham Webb,
Director,
Higher Education Development Centre,
University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand.

Email: GWebb@Gandalf.Otago.ac.nz
Fax: (+64) (03) 479 8362
Phone (+64) (03) 479 8439



S
I
G

Student Learning

report by

Anita van der Wal
The University of Newcastle

NSW/ACT ACTIVITIES

The NSW/ACT Language and Learning Special Interest Group has held meetings in May (at UWS-Macarthur) and in August (at Sydney University). Discussions and papers focussed on two main areas of interest:

1. The Development of New Programs:

- Janice Catterall (UWS-Macarthur):
Tertiary Preparation Course for Early Childhood Students
- Terri Morley-Warner (UTS-Broadway):
Developing a Tutor-training Package for DEET Tutors of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People.
- Karen Scouller (University of Sydney):
Learning Resources for Students with Learning Disabilities.
- Joanne Tieman (UWS-Nepean):
New Learning Mentor Positions at UWS.

2. Discussion of Language and Learning Programs:

- Andrea Chan (University of Sydney):
Critique Writing in an Honours Course
- Helen Drury (University of Sydney):
Teaching Writing Skills Within the Science Curriculum
- John Grierson (UWS-Macarthur):
Learning from one-to-one Conferences
- Beth Murison (University of Sydney):
Analysis of Students' Lab reports in First Year Biology
- Maurice Neville (ANU):
Articulating Expectations in Political Science
- Karen Scouller (University of Sydney):
Students' Preparation Strategies for Short Answer and Essay Assignments
- Carolyn Webb (University of Sydney):
Faculty Perspectives on Language and Learning Skills in Students.

The October meeting of the NSW/ACT Language and Learning SIG (at The University of Newcastle) was dedicated to the development of a working paper on the position of academic skills advisors in universities. This working paper was submitted to the two-day working conference on academic skills advisors in Bendigo (see following section).

MEETINGS IN VICTORIA, QUEENSLAND, AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The regional coordinators for the Victoria, Western Australia and the Queensland Language and Learning Special Interest Groups are keen to arrange inaugural meetings in their regions. In each of these regions people have registered as members of the Special Interest Group, but to date it has been difficult for the regional coordinators to organise meetings. The coordinators in these three states have asked if people in their regions who are interested in participating in meetings could contact them personally, so that times for inaugural meetings can be arranged:

Victoria: Glenda Crosling
Monash University (Caulfield), Ph. (03) 9903 2793

Queensland: Helen Treston
James Cook University, Cairns, Ph. (070) 42 1153

Western Australia: Sally Knowles
Murdoch University, Ph. (09) 360 2753

WORKING CONFERENCE ON ACADEMIC SKILLS ADVISING

On 6th and 7th December Dr Mark Garner from the Educational Services Unit of LaTrobe University (Bendigo) convened a conference/workshop, during which the position of academic skills advisors in universities was discussed. This particular issue is obviously of concern to study skills advisors throughout the country.

A report on the outcomes of this workshop will be presented in the next issue of HERDSA NEWS. This report will form the basis of a national discussion of the matter. Anyone wishing information about the outcomes before the report appears should contact either

Dr. Mark Garner
Educational Services Unit
LaTrobe University, PO Box 199, Bendigo VIC 3550
Fax: (054) 44 75 65
e-mail: edserv@polly.bendigo.latrobe.edu.au
or
Dr. Anita van der Wal, Learning Skills Unit
CATL, The University of Newcastle
Callaghan NSW 2308
Fax: (049) 21 6994
e-mail: ALAEV@cc.newcastle.edu.au

Book Review

**Pritchard Hughes, K. (1994) How do you know?
An overview of writings on feminist pedagogy and
epistemology.
Victoria University of Technology Monograph Series
Victoria University of Technology: St Albans**

In her monograph Pritchard Hughes is arguing that education is an integral part of the struggle to end the subordination of women. She rejects the nihilism of post-modernism but sees the analysis of power offered by post-structuralism as an important part of the agenda for social change. Pritchard Hughes develops her theory through ideas on feminist educational theory and practice, feminist epistemology and feminist pedagogy. Each section offers a choice of readings which cover a variety of theoretical perspectives, with emphasis on critical theory and post-structuralism.

In the first section Hughes introduces the feminist idea that we live in a patriarchal world where the rationality of science is worshipped. Hughes illustrates how the qualities of science (objectivity, rationality, individuality, competitiveness and abstraction) are valued and labelled masculine, while emotion, subjectivity, co-operation, nature and collectivity are labelled feminine and denigrated. As the educational critique of the position of girls in schools has grown, moves have been made to make the system more female-friendly so that girls could achieve. Hughes sees the post-modern critique as undermining this change as the category woman becomes fractured and multi-faceted. This is where she calls on post-structuralism as an ally of critical pedagogy to critique present educational systems along with those of gender, race and class.

Women's Studies has been noted as the 'educational arm of the women's liberation movement' (Klein, 1990). However, Hughes draws on studies that criticise Women's Studies as dealing with women as a homogenous unity, that is, white, middle class and heterosexual, and as transferring a body of knowledge to students rather than seeing students as producers of their own knowledge. Hughes presents Adult Education, with the lack of constraining curriculum and assessment procedures, as more relevant to the Women's Liberation Movement. She contrasts the Adult Education emphasis on education as a process that systematically analyses regimes of truth and their relationships to regimes of power with the practice in universities where a privileged few can determine a package and deliver it to students.

By this stage in my reading of the monograph I was beginning to be worried by the stereotypes being presented of Women's Studies and Adult Education. My personal experience has not been of Women's Studies pouring knowledge into empty vessels nor of Adult Education as being particularly emancipatory.

Hughes then focuses on the feminist epistemologies underlying feminist teaching practices. She sees the consciousness-raising groups of the 1970s as questioning the production and ownership of knowledge, but emphasises that this cannot be equated with political action. The texts reviewed in this section weave around the discussion of the 'complete woman',

the idea that a person can 'find herself.' Belenky et al. (1986) and Harding (1986) (in her standpoint theory phase) offer ideas of women replacing their former reality with a new one while the other writers argue for fluidity and continuing change (Code, 1991; Lather, 1991a). Lather combines, unashamedly and to the consternation of Hughes, the ideas of post-structuralists, post-modernists and critical theorists and sees pedagogy as being about the transformation of consciousness, and empowerment as a process one undertakes for oneself and not one that is done unto you. Hughes sees post-structuralism as offering the opportunity for women to study their position in the social structure with the idea of transforming that which is oppressive, whereas she sees post-modernism as having an individualistic basis with the only reality being individual experience.

In the section on feminist pedagogy, Hughes sees the bottom line as being an education that empowers students and brings about social justice. She refers to literature that argues that women think differently to men and prefer to work with different classroom modes, for example, small group, interactive or co-operative modes. She then juxtaposes this with literature on Women's Studies courses suggesting their conformity to orthodox teaching methods. The texts in this section cover a wide range of topics with alarming speed. The first three texts (Evans, 1983; Westcott, 1983; Friedman, 1985) suggest a spectrum in the university classroom ranging from 'filling empty vessels' to leaderless, anti-elitist collectivities where no demands are made on students and no academic rigour pertains. Assessment is often aimed at evaluating how well knowledge is absorbed rather than how students have interacted with it. Since this was producing adverse reactions in me I was glad to see it tempered by subsequent texts discussing the teacher as facilitator of a process of education. Even so, there is a problem with the ideology of equality between teacher and learner since it disregards the fact that at all levels of education teachers are paid to be leaders, and that they do have knowledge of and access to a large variety of resources. What is all important is the way they operate in the classroom, how they use their leadership and how they organise access to resources. At this stage discussion of texts on classroom practice would have been enlightening. Lewis and Simon (1986), Ellsworth (1989) and McLeod (1994) all write openly of their attempts at emancipatory practice. These would have provided a basis to start looking at how to put ideals into practice.

Overall the monograph presents concisely some of the main writers in the field of feminist epistemology and pedagogy. Cully and Portuges (1985), Luke and Gore (1992) and Gore (1993) especially should not be missed. However, I felt that Hughes's commentary on the texts would have followed more naturally after the presentation of the reviews. The reviews of the texts were patchy - a book of the density of Cully and Portuges' (1985) work was dealt with in the same space as a journal article. I felt frustrated that when she eventually got on to pedagogical concerns the text was littered with issues that never got discussed. Also, after all the anti-Women's Studies comments it would have been good to have added Kenway and Modra's (1989) acknowledgement that Women's Studies lecturers often have no background in education and could benefit from some practical advice. It would have been exciting to have seen another section added to the monograph
(continued page 24)

Higher Education Research in Progress

Christine Bruce has been the founding editor of this very successful initiative. She is retiring from the role, with our very great appreciation, at the end of this year. We look forward to this exchange of information continuing to grow on the foundation that Christine has established.

In this issue we have an interesting selection of projects for you to peruse. The first is a project that has been set up as an opportunity for people all over the world to become involved in and learn about phenomenographic research. How is it being co-ordinated? – via electronic mail of course! Many other researchers are also using the Internet to share research. In this column some project leaders provide World Wide Web addresses through which you can view their ongoing work.

Details of how to contribute to this column appears after the abstracts.

95.15

Project Title: Partners of mature age students - perceptions of the effects of study on family and relationships

Researchers: Catherine Scott, Steve Dinham & Ailsa Burns

The belief that partners, particularly male partners, of mature age students, are in general hostile to study has achieved quite wide currency. Whilst research on mature age study has suggested that such hostility is a minority experience, Scott and her co-researchers, in their work with mature age female students, graduates and 'drop outs', found that a higher proportion of discontinuers, compared to graduates, report family or partner hostility to study. Some interesting possible predictors of hostility emerged from the original research and the current project aims to explore these possible correlates. A sample of male and female mature age undergraduates and their partners is being surveyed to examine support and perceptions of support from significant others. Experiences of male and female students will be compared and the influence of variables such as partner's occupation and education level, and presence and ages of children on level of support will be explored.

Keywords: Attrition, mature age students
Family relationships

Name and Address for Correspondence:
Dr Catherine Scott
Faculty of Education, UWS Nepean
PO Box 10 KINGSWOOD NSW 2747

95.16

Project Title: Stories from the tower; changes in the academic role in a restructured higher education institution

Researcher: Irene Selway

Higher education in the UK is experiencing massive and unprecedented changes which have largely gone unresearched in terms of their impact on the academic role. A shift in the relationship between the academic

community, society and the economy is taking place. This is a case study of the University of Portsmouth. It is a collaborative enquiry exploring what changes are taking place in the academic role through the 'stories at work' academics tell about their role and identity. In addition, the discourse surrounding changes will be explored in terms of how new narratives displace former ones about the purpose of HE.

The research questions which have underpinned the approach are centred around whether academic labour is being transformed, or deskilled as greater control and standardisation is exerted over the HE curriculum through Credit Accumulation and Transfer Schemes, modularisation, and changes in the funding mechanisms.

Keywords: academic roles, academic life, stories, organisational restructuring

Name and Address for Correspondence:

Irene Selway
E-mail: selwayi@adc.port.ac.uk

95.17

Project title: Student conceptions of assessment at university level

Researchers: Anne Russell, Rod Gerber and members of the Phenomenographic Interest Group

This project has two purposes:

1. To mentor further those researchers who are interested in learning about the phenomenographic approach to research.

2. To discover qualitatively different conceptions university students have concerning assessment at university.

The Phenomenographic Interest Group is commencing this research project which invites interested researchers to collect data pertaining to university students' conceptions of assessment. Researchers from around the world are invited to carry out phenomenographic interviews and/or synergetic focus group discussions with undergraduate or postgraduate university students. Each researcher may use as many or as few students as is feasible, as all data will initially be pooled to find the categories of description and to

identify conceptions of assessment held by university students. Researchers interested in participating should contact Anne Russell, preferably by email.

Keywords: University Assessment, University Students, Phenomenography.

Name and Address for Correspondence:

Dr. Anne Russell
School of Language and Literacy Education
QUT, Locked Bag #2 Red Hill, Queensland 4059
Telephone: (07) 3864 3266
Fax: (07) 3864 3988
E-mail: AL.russell@qut.edu.au

95.18

Project Title: Effective multi-level diabetes education for health professions

Researchers:

Dr A C Lynn Zelmer (Principal Investigator),
Prof Amy E Zelmer (Co-investigator)

This project seeks to reduce the tedium of teaching repetitive materials with a self-paced learning and evaluation tool for introductory-level university students, health workers, diabetics (there are hundreds newly diagnosed each year in Australia) and their families who require considerable information to effectively manage a diabetic condition. A user-tested multi-media teaching program on compact disk (CD) will provide students in pre-professional health programs with a tool for their own learning and for patient education; multiple entry points enable the lecturer and student to tailor the program to meet individual needs. The project has received CAUT funding for 1995.

Funding Body: CAUT

Keywords: Multi-Media; Diabetes; Interactive; Undergraduate; Health science

Name and Address for Correspondence:

Prof Amy E Zelmer, Faculty of Health Science
Central Queensland University, Rockhampton Qld 4701
FAX (079) 30 9871
E-mail: a.zelmer@cqu.edu.au

95.19

Project Title: Towards resource-based learning strategies in Australian fire management

Researcher: Dr Chris Trevitt

There is a critical need for improved education and training for Australian rural fire management. We are developing materials to support this, both for use in ANU and elsewhere (eg TAFE, professional development courses, etc). These materials will help address the need for students to acquire surrogate practical experience in a subject where it is frequently impossible to timetable safe and appropriate field work. We are integrating new and existing course notes with high quality graphics and digitised versions of unique slide libraries held in CSIRO and elsewhere.

These have been structured into a hypermedia library (draft hypertext-book) of text, colour slides and graphics for network access from student computer laboratories, as well as nationally and internationally via AARNet and Internet. Innovative teaching practices are being developed and will continue to be developed in order to make optimal use of these materials for student learning in the undergraduate unit fire science and management taken by Forestry and Resource Management students at ANU. An introduction to some of the teaching and learning issues and materials developed can be viewed on the world-wide web at: <http://online.anu.edu.au/Forestry/fire/IUFRO/IUFRO.html>

Keywords: Rural fire management;
Computer-aided learning; World-wide web;
Resource-based teaching; Problem-based learning;
Hypertext-book

Granting Body: CAUT Teaching Development Grant

Name and Address for Correspondence:

Chris Trevitt, Department of Forestry
School of Resource and Environmental Management
Australian National University, Canberra ACT 0200
E-Mail: Chris.Trevitt@anu.edu.au

95.20

Project Title: Teaching as [Theatre] Performance in Higher Education: An Investigation and representation of best practice.

Researchers:

Dr. Ed Errington, Research & Advisory Section, HEDC (Project Leader)
Robert van der Vyver, A-V Production Section, HEDC
Simon O'Connor, Teaching Fellow, Theatre Studies
David O'Donnell, Teaching Fellow, Theatre Studies
Ms. Janet Yiakmis, Research Assistant
Ms. Julia Sutherland, Student Consultant

Despite a growing volume of popular literature on techniques to facilitate communication between performers [teachers] and audience [students], (eg. public speaking), there is a paucity of material which draws upon the broader range of theatre conventions that could be used to enhance university teaching performance. The applicability of theatre as a metaphor to describe the work of university teachers in relation to notions of 'best practice' have not been explored fully. This project is currently examining the efficacy of specific theatre-oriented techniques which university teachers may employ in the pursuit of best practice. The notion of 'theatre' is a broad one. It encompasses different kinds of teaching performance re: the relationships between performer and audience; ownership of text and knowledge; architectural constraints on performance; and the intentions of all players within the communal act of performance. A case study approach is used to examine the theatrical characteristics of successful university teachers. Which aspects of theatre can usefully describe acts of teaching? Are some kinds of theatre more efficacious than others in reducing student resistance to pedagogy? With the permission of interviewees, text derived from case studies will be used to script a play designed to raise the awareness of the broader university community to issues surrounding notions of 'best practice'.

Keywords: Teaching; Theatre performance.

Granting Body: University of Otago: Internal Grants

Name and Address for Correspondence:

Dr. Ed Errington,
Higher Ed. Dev. Centre, University of Otago
P O Box 56, Dunedin Mail Centre, Dunedin, NZ
Tel: +64 3 479 7522
Fax: +64 3 479 8362
E-mail: ed.errington@stonebow.otago.ac.nz

95.21

Project Title: Students' conceptions of learning and approaches to learning in TAFE & university contexts

Researchers: Denise Chalmers and Richard Fuller,
Edith Cowan University

This project will investigate the conceptions of learning and approaches to learning of students in a training context and compare them with those of university students. It is a new area of research as previous studies have been conducted only in the university context. There is reason to expect that students in a training context might hold different conceptions of learning from university students. If so there are implications for the way in which teaching and learning are addressed in university courses which grant advanced standing to students from TAFE.

Keywords: Conceptions of learning; Approaches to learning; Student learning; Training; Higher education; TAFE.

Granting Body: Australian Research Council

Name and Address for Correspondence:

Denise Chalmers, University Learning Systems
Edith Cowan University
Goldsworthy Road, Claremont 6010 WA
phone (09) 442 1495
fax (09) 442 1483
email D.Chalmers@cowan.edu.au

95.22

Project title: International students learning from academic lectures

Researcher: Alex McKnight

This study aims to discover what a small group of twelve international students from south east Asia and the Pacific Islands learn from a series of first year academic lectures in economics; how they appear to learn what they learn; and what features of the lecture presentation appear to influence their learning. Subjects were pre- and post-tested on key points in the lectures which were audio and video-taped. The lecturer's visuals and notes, and the students' notes were copied and analysed. Preliminary results indicate that subjects appear to have learned relatively little from the lectures, but relied heavily on copying the transparencies. This study is expected to have implications for the lecture method of teaching, for

programs and materials in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) and English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and for the teaching of listening comprehension to international students.

Keywords: Lecture method; Listening comprehension; International students; English for Specific Purposes; English for Academic Purposes.

Name and address for correspondence:

Alex McKnight, TESOL,
Faculty of Arts, Deakin University, Toorak Campus
PO Box 224, Malvern, Victoria, Australia 3144
Tel: (61 3) 9244 5103
Fax: (61 3) 9244 5454
E-mail: alexmc@deakin.edu.au

95.23

Project Title: Cohort Study of Student Attitudes

Researchers: Pheona Selby and Terry Hore

As part of the concern that Monash University should continue to attract high quality students and provide an optimum learning environment, it was decided to monitor a cohort of entering students throughout their first three years. A 50 percent random sample was drawn from the 7500 entering students who were asked to complete an attitude survey and asked whether they would be willing to be a member of the Cohort 94. Over 1000 students volunteered and they proved to be representative of the 1994 entering student population. The second year questionnaire has just been despatched. It is planned to track attitude change over the three year period, and respond to bouquets and brickbats each year.

Keywords: Attitudes; Cohort; First-year

Granting Body: Monash University

Name and address for correspondence:

Prof. Terry Hore, Professional Development Centre,
Monash University, Clayton, 3168
E-mail: Terry.Hore@adm.monash.edu.au

The News is strongly committed to the continuation of the Research Abstracts column. With Christine's retirement, we are planning to use HERDSA's up-graded Canberra office as the collection point. Accordingly, Society members and other readers of this column are invited to send new project details to:

**Higher Education Research in Progress
HERDSA Office
PO Box 516
JAMISON CENTRE ACT 2614
E-mail: herdsa@peg.apc.org**

Conferences

Tertiary Literacy: Research and Practice Conference

Place Victoria University of Technology, Melbourne
Date 15-16 March, 1996
Information Zosia Golebiowski, Dept. of Education, VUT.
Telephone: 03 9688 5026; Fax: 03 9688 4646; E-Mail: tlc96@dingo.vut.edu.au

Second State Conference of HERDSA Inc. (Queensland Branch)

Theme Student Diversity in Higher Education: Implications for Teaching and Learning
Place University of Southern Queensland, Toowoomba.
Date 13-14 April, 1996
Information Brian Fowler, PO Box 25, Darling Heights QLD. 4350.
Abstracts By 19 January, 1996.

International Symposium on Teaching and Learning (College Reading and Learning Association)

Theme Changing with the Times
Place Alberta, Canada: Kananaskis Lodge
Date 18-20 April, 1996
Information Perry Franklin, Learning Skills Centre, Mount Royal College, Calgary, Alberta. T3E 6K6 Canada.
Telephone: (Canada) 403 240 5934;
E-Mail: pfranklin@mtroyal.ab.ca>

ICED: The International Consortium for Educational Development in Higher Education

Theme Preparing University Teachers
Place Vasa, near Helsinki, Finland
Date 13-14 June, 1996
Information Further information about ICED and the conference, including pictures of the venue, can be found on the WWW: <http://www.abo.fi/hied/> Choose >>conference
OR Graham Gibbs, Oxford Brookes University, Oxford.
Telephone: (UK) 01865 750918; Fax: (UK) 01865 744437 E-Mail: ocsd@brookes.ac.uk

Twenty-third Annual HERDSA Conference

Theme Different Approaches: Theory and Practice in Higher Education
Place University of Western Australia, Perth
Date 8 - 12 July, 1996
Information Sarah Mann, Centre for Staff Development, UWA.
Telephone: (Aust) 09 380 1502; Fax: (Aust) 09 380 1156
E-mail: smann@csd.uwa.edu.au

Eighth International Conference on Assessing Quality in Higher Education

Place Pan Pacific Hotel, Gold Coast, Queensland. Australia.
Date 14 - 16 July, 1996
Information David Warren Piper, Tertiary Education Institute, Uni. of Qld.
Telephone: (Aust) 07 3365 2788; Fax: 07 3365
Abstracts By 15 March, 1996.

Fifteenth International Seminar on Staff and Educational Development (ISSED)

Theme Higher Education's Interface with Vocational Training and Business
Place St Kilda Road Travelodge, Melbourne, Australia
Date 8-11 July, 1996
Information Barbara Cargill, Head, School of Management, Swinburne University of Technology. Hawthorn. 3122.
Telephone: (Aust.) 03 9214 8074; Fax: (Aust.) 03 9819 2117

21st International Conference on Improving University Teaching

Theme Lifelong Learning and the Information Age
Place Nottingham, England
Date 22-25 July, 1996
Information Improving University Teaching, University of Maryland
University College, University Boulevard at Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20742-1659 USA
Fax: (US) 301 985 7226
Abstracts Call for papers and workshop proposals by 15 February, 1996.

HERDSA Abstracts

We advise, with regret, that there are no abstracts available for this issue. We anticipate that this will be a one-off omission. Although the position of Abstracts Editor has not been filled, the Executive has agreed to fund the few hours of research assistance per issue that will enable us to continue to bring you this service. We hope that this arrangement will be in place for the next issue. We would still welcome hearing from any member who is in a position - either by virtue of their research or their teaching - to generate these abstracts and to take on the role of Abstracts Editor.

(from page 19)

reviewing some of the texts that put all this rhetoric into action.

The monograph offers an excellent basic reference in the area of feminist pedagogy and epistemology, and will be eagerly sought after by students in the area. It could also be useful to staff who have not explored the pedagogical field for a number of years in that it provides a broad coverage of epistemologies, practices and readings in various areas.

It will be interesting to watch what other projects VUT are planning in this series.

References

- Belenky, M.F., Clinchy, B.M., Goldberger, N.R. and Tarule, J.M. (1986) *Women's ways of knowing: the development of self, voice and mind*. New York: Basic Books.
- Code, L. (1991) *What can she know? Feminist theory and the construction of knowledge*. London: Cornell University Press.
- Culley, M. and Portuges, C. (1985) *Gendered subjects: the dynamics of feminist teaching*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Ellsworth, E. (1989) Why doesn't this feel empowering? Working through the repressive myths of critical pedagogy. *Harvard Educational Review* 59 (3).
- Evans, M. (1983) In praise of theory: the case of Women's Studies. In Bowles, G. and Klein, R.D. (Eds.) *Theories of Women's Studies*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Friedman, S. (1985) Authority in the feminist classroom: a contradiction in terms? In Culley, M. and Portuges, C. *Gendered subjects: the dynamics of feminist teaching*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Gore, J.M. (1993) The struggle for pedagogies. *Critical and feminist discourses as regimes of truth*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Harding, S. (1986) *The science question in feminism*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Kenway, J. and Modra, H. (1989) What is feminist pedagogy? *Critical Pedagogy Networker*. Deakin University, Victoria, Vol. 2, Nos. 2 and 3.
- Klein, R.D. (1990) Passion and politics in Women's Studies in the nineties. In Aaron, J. and Walby, S. *Out of the margins*. London: Falmer Press.
- Lather, P. (1991a) *Getting smart: feminist research and pedagogy within the postmodern*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Lather, P. (1991b) *Feminist research in education: within/against*. Deakin University, Victoria.
- Lewis, M. and Simon, R. (1986) A discourse not intended for her: learning and teaching within patriarchy. *Harvard Educational Review* (56) 4, 457-72.
- Luke, C. and Gore, J. (eds.) (1992) *Feminisms and critical pedagogy*. New York: Routledge.
- Macleod, J. (1994) Voice, difference and feminist pedagogy. *Curriculum Studies* 2 (2).189-202.
- Westcott, M. (1983) Women's Studies as a strategy for change. In Bowles, G. and Klein, R.D. (Eds.) *Theories of women's studies*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Dr Valerie Clifford
University of Otago.

Deadlines for future issues

April 1996:	1 February
July 1996:	1 June
November 1996:	1 October

Editor:	Margaret Buckridge, Griffith Institute for Higher Education, Griffith University, Qld 4111
Production Supervision and Layout:	Ian Dunn
Cover Design:	Carole Griffin
Printed by:	Clarendon Printing, 12 McGill Street, Lewisham, NSW 2049