President's Message

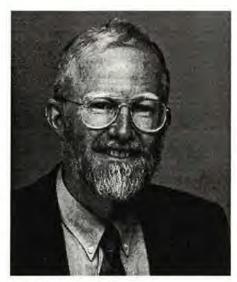W*ho is your new president? With a first degree in science education, an honours degree in social work and a masters degree in social policy and planning, I have teaching experience and a broad first-hand understanding of academic life in a range of disciplines. I have worked in the secondary school system, for the State Government and as a consultant. With three children, all university students (the eldest completing a PhD, the youngest in first year), in disciplines as diverse as medieval history, electronic engineering and cognitive science, the realities and the complexities of student learning in higher education are often the subject of mealtime debate in the Hicks household.*

As Director of the Centre for Staff Development at UWA, I have responsibility for the provision of a broad range of services to university staff including core programmes in areas of teaching and learning, research and academic leadership; the provision of self-directed development packages and resources-based learning facilities for staff; student evaluation of teaching services; and individual, department and work group consulting services. My particular interests currently include co-ordination of academic leadership development initiatives across campus, the exploration of flexible programme delivery and contributing to the setting of university strategic directions in this area, and research into the extent and effectiveness of discipline-based academic staff development in Australian universities.

It may be of interest for me to share some of my early experiences and impressions as HERDSA President. Very briefly:

Owen Hicks

- Many people have offered congratulations and offers of assistance since the elections. My sincere thanks to you all.

- It's a big job! One could work at it full-time! I am thankful for the strong institutional support I have received from The University of Western Australia on taking on this responsibility.

- HERDSA needs a higher profile in the sector and in the media. There are many areas where the Society could be contributing to direction setting and so many issues the Society should be commenting on in the press. Earlier in the year the Society sent a detailed submission to the West Committee which was followed up by a meeting with the Committee. We have recently issued two

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HERDSA Office

Editor Alison Viskovic

President's Message

press releases, one on the Dearing Committee, the other announcing the HERDSA discussion paper on accreditation of university teachers. To date (early August) there has been no national coverage but two-thirds of a page in the Western Australian local weekend press. The discussion paper was sent to key interest groups in the sector and a dialogue encouraged. I will be putting considerable energy into this area of HERDSA activity.

- HERDSA is not a union; it is not an employer body; it is not part of government. It is a learned society and as such has a vital and unique role in the higher education sector.

- HERDSA is a sizeable organisation but has great potential for an expanded membership. I believe we need to look at how we currently serve our members and how we might better serve them in the future. I would like to see a situation where the majority of our 'target group' need little encouragement to join because the appropriateness and benefits of membership are obvious.

- HERDSA includes broad interest groups and dispersed geographically defined groups. I am particularly concerned to see active branches and branches in localities where none currently exist. I am interested to meet and interact with members at branch and interest group level and will be trying to participate in local activities where

interstate and international travel on other matters can be arranged to make this feasible.

- Internationally, I think HERDSA, and more broadly Australasian higher education, has much to contribute and to learn. I see value in strengthening our links with colleagues around the world through the International Consortium for Educational Development and through contact with national organisations such as STLHE, SEDA and SAAAD.

- The membership includes people who are engaged in teaching, researchers in the fields of learning, teaching and policy in higher education, and groups involved in the support and improvement of higher education. Balancing the sectional and collective interests of the membership will remain a challenge.

Thank you in anticipation of your continuing support. I would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of colleagues on the Executive, as well as officers of HERDSA carrying editorial responsibilities for our high quality publications, and the vital role of the HERDSA Office staff in Canberra. I think we have a great team and while the times may be difficult in higher education, the Society can look forward with some optimism. Particularly in times of change we have a most significant role to play in Australasian higher education.

Owen Hicks,
President

Advancing International Perspectives

The HERDSA 1997 conference in Adelaide was a superbly organised event. The thoughts, ideas and discussion that were stimulated were extremely valuable. It was timely for HERDSA to consider the implications of globalisation for teaching practice, management and policy development as part of its major focus at an annual conference.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

I am just back from a weekend meeting of the Executive in Canberra, and feeling refreshed by the luxury of spending two days focused on just one main area of interest - so different from my typical workdays that are filled with such a mixture of planning, admin, meetings, consultation, teaching and assessment. It's hard to believe that in 1991 I was able to fit in being convenor of the annual conference, with the help of a hard-working committee, but before the days of contracting an external conference organiser.

These are times of continuing change in higher education, on both sides of the Tasman Sea. While the West Commission has kept people busy in Australia, in New Zealand we are seeing a series of Green Papers on the post-compulsory sector. A paper on the Qualifications Framework has been out for some time, and the next on Tertiary Education came out just last week. There is talk of mergers between institutions, and some of the polytechnics are seeking university status.

It is good to see that topics are being actively discussed by HERDSA members on the SIG listservs, with a current example being a flurry of messages about the HERDSA paper on Accreditation of University Teachers. This paper is included in this issue of the News, as well as being on HERDSA's website. Also in this News issue is Maureen Bell's related article about the ITT course at Wollongong, where all new academics are involved in some teacher education. My own department at Wellington Polytechnic is heavily involved in tertiary teacher education (for qualifications) and has just completed the SEDA accreditation process, so we have a real interest in seeing how the accreditation issue develops in Australia.

You will know by now that the next annual conference is to be in New Zealand, hosted by the Auckland-based New Zealand Branch Committee. Tony Morrison has recently been appointed Convenor of this conference. In preparation for an increase in the New Zealand activities of HERDSA that is likely to come with the conference, I intend the next News issue to include a section focusing on New Zealand higher education issues and activities. I therefore invite contributions from New Zealand members for the November issue, with a submission deadline of 31 October 1997. Others will also be welcome, of course - it won't be a takeover!

Alison Viskovic

News from the Executive

The Adelaide conference in July saw a new executive elected for a two year term.

Keen to get on with the job, the new executive brought forward the face-to-face meeting (normally held in November) to early September. A number of telephone conferences and email updating sessions are planned between now and the 1998 conference.

The structure and membership of the Executive were reviewed and, consistent with the Constitution, through co-option the Executive will now include an editor of HERD, the editor of the Newsletter and the editor of the Green and Gold Guides. We are also seeking a South Australian member and considering the need for an additional NSW member to give better geographical representation on the Executive. Branch and Special Interest Group interests are strongly represented on the new Executive.

The September meeting of the Executive saw a restructuring of Executive portfolio groups. The old Member Services portfolio was re-named the International Events Portfolio (still convened by Gay Crebert) to better reflect the responsibilities it carries (eg. the Visiting Scholar Scheme and the HERDSA Conferences). The Policy Advisory portfolio was re-activated and re-named the Higher Education Policy Portfolio (convened by the President, Owen Hicks) signifying a greater emphasis to be placed on HERDSA's role in this area. Research was separated from the old Research and Publications Portfolio, with Kym Fraser convening Publication. The new Research Portfolio (convened by Angela Brew) will seek to develop a range of strategies for putting the 'R' back into HERDSA such as a Visiting Higher Education Researcher Scheme to run in parallel with the Visiting Scholar Scheme and the co-sponsoring of research by HERDSA.

The Treasurer, President and Canberra Office have absorbed the work of the Administration Portfolio, and this portfolio will no longer function. Branches and Special Interest Groups Portfolio (convened by BJ Hamilton) continues as before. And finally, to give focus to the public face of HERDSA and to increase membership, a Promotion and Development Portfolio (convened by Rick Nunez Vaz) has been established. We believe this will give us the structure to work effectively for the life of the current Executive.

Plans for the Auckland Conference in 1998 are progressing well and the Executive was pleased to accept bids from Victoria and Queensland for the 1999 and 2000 conferences respectively. Interest from Hong Kong in hosting a conference was received with thanks and is being considered further.

The September meeting was held in Canberra as the most economical location for the Executive to meet on this occasion. This gave the Executive the opportunity to visit the Canberra Office and get a better feel for the work environment of our creative and hard working office staff, Coral and Heather.

Please note:

Publication price rise

The price of Green and Gold Guides has been set at $10 for members and for bulk orders of 10 or more copies, $15 for non-members. Prices include postage within Australasia; there is a 20% surcharge for overseas postage.

Checklists

HERDSA has two excellent teaching checklists which are available at no cost, and do not have copyright; so you are welcome to download them

1. http://www.acs.uwa.edu.au/ csd//HERDSA/conceptions.html

2. http://www.acs.uwa.edu.au/ csd//HERDSA/checklist.html

They represent a policy statement by HERDSA on vital issues; and are about to be reviewed.

A complete index of HERDSA News authors and articles

Alan Prosser has completed indexing all issues of the HERDSA News by

- Abstract author
- Abstract subject
- Article author
- Article subject

These will soon be published on the HERDSA website. Your comments on the further usefulness of a printed version of this index would be appreciated.

HERDSA membership

The AGM agreed to a $10 increase in membership fee, which is the cost of the extra (third) issue of the HERD journal that members now receive annually.

Thankyou Peggy!

A hearty thankyou to the outgoing President - Peggy Nightingale - whose acheivements in her three year term moved HERDSA into a new era. ●

Check out the HERDSA Web Site hosted by the Australian SunSITE:

http://sunsite.anu.edu.au/ education/herdsa

IDEAS EXCHANGE

Can the university ever again achieve a genuinely shared conversation?

When I first read the epithet "stuttering ineptitude" applied to contemporary universities, regarding their performance in answering their critics, it seemed like a lapse in academic taste. Further into Alasdair MacIntyre's tenth Gifford Lecture of 1998 ("Three Rival versions of Moral Inquiry": University of Notre Dame Press, 1990) I warmed to the description.

Myself a stutterer as a child, I recall the agony of knowing what one should say but being incapable of saying it, becoming sidelined, never a real participant, conversation impossible. An apt description of Australian universities (and maybe those in the UK, New Zealand, Canada and elsewhere)?

The accusation is not, MacIntyre insists, an attack on individuals. There have been individuals - many of whom we know and respect - who have spoken loudly, clearly, and with courage and wisdom - in response to all the mud heaped on Australian universities since Dawkin's time and even before. Thank heaven for them. No, the stuttering ineptitude is not theirs as individuals; they have done us well.

The description belongs to the university as a late-20th century Institution. It has shown itself constitutionally incapable of finding a coherent answer to the most pitifully banal and elementary attacks from its illiterate, untutored, Vanstone-dimensioned critics. This - the institution housing our intelligentsia, nurturing our highest forms of intellectual life!

Take a few other examples of glaring ineptitude. It's odd how, working inside the system, these were all pretty obvious as "problems needing attention" yet they never struck me as connected parts of a systemic malfunctioning. Are they really connected?

There's the institution's longstanding ineffectuality in ever answering its own fundamental curriculum question: precisely what should be taught? I refer to the current UK inquiries into the meaning of "graduateness" (Higher Education Quality Council at www.lgu.ac.uk/ deliberations/). All strength to their efforts - but isn't it a bit like the medical profession conducting an inquiry into the "meaning of health"? What scam have they been up to taking my consultation fees all these years if they didn't have even a working notion of what their own business was - what I was supposed to look like after they had healed me?

Then there's the university's impotence in resolving the oldest and most central question in teaching: why do we lecture? Still far and ahead the most widely used method, the veritable armies of practitioners who employ it have no shared view whatever of why it is used or what they all think it is good for. This is not a mere technical question of "teaching method". The genre signifies the nature of the discourse.

Not long ago HERDSA News ran a series of pros and cons that highlighted the irreconcilable dispute splendidly. To use the medical analogy, it's as though doctors everywhere, generation after generation, were to employ for virtually all medical conditions a standard therapy about which there is no general agreement whatever regarding how it is justified, what it achieves, or why it should be continued.

David Boud raised this issue recently ("The End of Teaching as We Know It?" UTS Public Lecture, 1997). Boud identified, correctly I believe, the perpetuation of lecturing with a need for authority. Lecturing panders to the need by insecure (arrogant?) academics to parade their private ideas and personal values as though they were authoritative, and (more insidiously) for immature students to look up to authority figures and avoid autonomous responsibility for their own learning.

What Boud doesn't address is the question of whether acknowledgment of authority of at least one kind not be an indispensable component of intellectual and moral development. Without prior agreement on how to adjudicate between

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contrary opinions, how can any judgement ever be made that what one has taught (or learned) is worthwhile, that it is a step forwards rather than sideways or backwards?

Finally, there is the university's inability to conduct any kind of productive conversation amongst the warring viewpoints held within the academy regarding central issues of epistemology (truth) and morality (good and bad). This one needs explaining. It is not, the argument runs, that there are opposing viewpoints - all strength to that. The problem is that what passes for disputation, for debate and dialectic, is the mere expression (ever more vehement) of diametrically opposing opinions. The tradition-centred versus post-modern debate in the humanities might be a good instance of this.

What would a proper disputation, a true debate, look like - if what we have at present is not a "real" one? The answer MacIntyre gives is that it would be one in which whatever the parties' opposing positions might be on the matter under disputation, they would have prior agreement on the criteria, the grounds, the values, on which the better case might be eventually decided. Or, if it were not "decided", agreement on how to know whether the discussion had at least taken things forward, or advanced our common understanding of the issues at stake.

The university's "stuttering ineptitude" is displayed nowhere more glaringly than here. There is no agreement, nor does any seem possible, on how a superior argument, a better case, a step forward, might ever be decided. But without that shared culture of values by which to determine which of two positions is superior, what passes as disputation becomes merely the pantomime of screeching voices whose evermore shrill statements of their respective positions pass one another in mid-air without ever making contact. Hardly a conversation.

This particular ineptitude, it is suggested, prevails right across the institution and is in fact at the root of each of the others. HERDSA members, however, will be familiar with its

expression closer to home. Don Margetson puts his finger on how the ineptitude operates at the level of Academic Development Units, and their management in particular ("Ethics in assessing and developing academic quality" in Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education 22(2), 1997). This is a microcosmic representation of the problem prevailing right across the institution.

"Academic development work could, then, reasonably be expected to lead by example in practising such qualities as reflective practice, the search for truth, curiosity, critical appraisal, and the use of sound evidence ... A great deal of emphasis may be put on social courtesies, in public, where image is at stake. When, however, this is not backed up by a willingness to address serious academic and professional issues ... epistemological and ethical virtues constitutive of academic work are being subverted rather than practised ... In private there may simply be a flat refusal to engage in necessary discussion. When there is an

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attempt to bolster refusal inappropriately by invoking administrative power, moral authority is lost ... Through its dangerous combination of a purely subjectivist view of value-judgements with the power residing in managerial positions, it creates the conditions in which arbitrary and self-serving exercises of power, non-accountability ... inequitable practices ... may all be presented as unobjectionable."

I would shift the critique one level higher than managerial style. Even an ethical, non-technicist manager would falter when faced with presiding over a genuine dialogue amongst irreconcilable, probably incommensurable viewpoints. From where can that manager - from where can any of us - locate a neutral ground of shared, agreed and committed

values on the basis of which the parties in dispute would (on pain of irrationality) be bound to accept the outcome? We have no such shared values within our Units, because there are none in the academy itself.

What does an institution do under such circumstances? Either it continues in its stutteringly ineffectual way and perishes, by slow decay from within or rapid onslaught from anti-intellectualists without (probably both). Or it pulls its thumb out and invents a way of surviving. What are academic development units doing - what are HERDSA members doing - to help find that way? MacIntyre's closing pages are poignant, if not doom-laden. Can anyone handle their challenge?

"... the structures of present society have exempted themselves from and protected themselves against being put in question by ... systematic and moral inquiry. What are accepted as the de facto standards of argumentative justification in the established forums of political and bureaucratic negotiation are to a remarkable degree now protected against subversive challenge because the legitimacy of any particular challenge is measured by those self-same standards. The student radicals of the late 1960s and early 1970s failed to understand many things, but their own intellectual poverty reflected the intellectual poverty of much, if not all, of that against which they rebelled. But they had understood this, and those who defeated them by the use of political as well as academic power still fail for the most part to understand it. The rejection of the liberal university which was signalled by that revolt of the 1960s was a response to the barrenness of a university which had deprived itself of substantive moral inquiry ... That such ... critic(ism) still cannot be heard in any authentic and systematic way in the central forums of our cultural and social order is a mark, not of (its) irrelevance, but of the importance of the task now imposed upon us, of continually trying to devise new ways to allow these voices to be heard." (MacIntyre, 1990, 235-6).

Eidos

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Corrections:

1. The editor's note with Eidos' previous column wrongly attributed the comments that were added - they arose from discussion on the ADSIG LISTSERV of that April column, during its development, not the first column that was in the November 1996 issue of the News.

2. In the last issue of the News (April 1997) some electronic footnotes were unfortunately omitted from Eidos'

column. We reproduce them here to fill the gap, and apologise for the error.

1. Rowntree was a founding member of the UK Open University and is often credited with having been largely responsible for bringing the educational version of behaviourism from its birthplace across the Atlantic into the UK. Perhaps his best book is Assessing Students: How Shall We Know Them? - a must for any teacher's library.

2. Schon, author of "The Reflective Practitioner" and "Educating the Reflective Practitioner" is generally credited with being responsible for the introduction of the notion of reflective practice into educational vocabulary.

3. Berlin is perhaps this century's outstanding philosophical writer in the History of Ideas; he is particularly noted for his studies regarding Marxism, Fascism and Nationalism.

ANNOUNCING

Role-Play

by Dr Edward Errington

Green guide no 21

This guide aims to explore current practices and some potential uses of role-play in higher education, to explain how role-plays are organised, to describe the different approaches, and to offer some advice on how it may be used successfully. It is designed to provide both experienced and inexperienced role-play users with sufficient detail to enable them to plan, operate and evaluate their own individual programs within higher education settings.

The structure of the guide is based on responses to questions commonly asked by teachers about the efficacy of role-play. In particular:

What is role-play?

Why is it used in higher education?

How is role-play usually organised?

How can role-play serve specific educational purposes?

How can we optimise success in role-play?

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Scholarship, Creative Work and Research Outputs

*Paper prepared for Auckland
HERDSA Seminar Series, 1996*

By Mary Melrose

*This is the second part of a paper which
last issue examined the current NZQA
meanings of the terms, and began to
explore the past meanings of scholarship
and creative work. This article connects
these ideas to government and
organisational directives about research
outputs.*

Scholarship and Creative Work through History

"Schola" is Latin for "school", derived
from a similar Greek word. In Greek
history, learned men such as Aristotle
were those who studied the writings of
others, reinterpreted them, wrote about
new ways of looking at the world and
often taught their new ideas to others. A
"school" was sometimes defined as a
group of philosophers or artists following
the same principles (Compact English
Dictionary, 1972). Greek and Latin
"schools" were established where young
people could in turn become scholars,
studying bodies of knowledge in a range
of topics. In order to study, budding
scholars first had to learn how to read and
write. These schools or institutions for
educating the young were usually
established on a user pays principal
around one or two notable scholars.
However "scholarships" were sometimes
established where a rich merchant or
noble paid for a slave to become
educated, often so that they could become
a scribe or an accountant for the
household. Patronage by the corporate
wealthy of the worthy and talented poor,
who would otherwise not have the
opportunity to learn to read and write let
alone pursue a deep study of classic
writings and the thoughts of previous
philosophers, still survives today. An
outstanding scholar became the holder of
a scholarship. Patronage included the arts
and music as well as academic book -
orientated scholarship. Young achievers
awards (where potential achievement is
judged on past form) and patronage of the
artist and artisan (musician, singer,
painter, potter, poet) are "scholarships"
which persist today.

Scholarship in both its meanings, an
award or assistance towards achievement
and the pursuit of study of previous
writings and ideas or "great learning", was
later translated into the English setting. In
the Elizabethan era, schooling provided
basic reading and writing skills for many
of the middle class and encouraged study
for as long as they could be spared by
their parents from the farm or the family
business. William Shakespeare's father
was unable to write although he held
several well paid positions in Stratford
town. Shakespeare himself remained at
school just long enough to learn to read
and to "write a good hand". His "learning
was very little" and he was often referred
to as "gentle" but never as a "scholar"
although he was also considered to have
"an immense mind" and "creative powers
of the mind" (Heminge and Condell,
1930). The term "quality" was coined and
used in the vernacular of Shakespeare's
time to refer, not to research or
scholarship but solely to acting which,
along with playwriting, was Shakespeare's
profession. Shakespeare had patrons,
very often lords and ladies of the royal
court who commissioned a particular play
or poem to be written and performed.
Shakespeare therefore obtained the
Elizabethan equivalent of scholarships as
a part of his income.

The Victorian era in England was
famous for its salons where talented
individuals presented their latest new
poem, musical composition or ideas to the
assembled privileged audience. A
Victorian male would sometimes be
referred to positively as "a scholar and a
gentleman". Biology was becoming
popularised as a field of study through the
activities of naturalist scholars. The
development of scholarship by these
individuals seemed to follow a pattern
similar to that below:

- displaying an early interest in
  catching, killing and preserving
  butterflies (or other animals or
  plants) coupled with the
  development of an ability to read
  and write (sometimes in Latin and
  Greek as well as in English)

- dawning knowledge about the
  literature already existing about

butterflies, library and museum
visits, exchange of letters with other
naturalists

- discovery of Linneaus's system of
  classification of animals and existing
  literature describing "types" and
  "species" and "habits"

- identifying "old' species of
  butterflies by looking at "types" from
  museum collections through lenses
  or microscopes and reading
  explorers journals with original
  drawings and deducing that some of
  the trapped butterflies had never
  been described before

- naming some new species, drawing
  them and parts of them with the aid
  of lenses and microscopes,
  observing their habits and writing
  copiously about them in private
  journals

- becoming a member of the Royal
  Society or the Institute of Biology in
  London, getting others to agree with
  a new classification, writing a paper
  about the new and old butterflies for
  a nature journal.

- such an individual had then become
  a recognised expert and a scholar in
  the field of British butterflies.

This seems to be the pattern that
Charles Darwin followed with orchids and
earthworms, when he was not writing
about evolution. Where Charles differed
from the average gentleman and scholar
was that he collected so much data over
so long a period and came up with so
many new ideas; he was carrying out long
term research. His rival, Wallace, not only
studied butterflies and other insects, but
also wrote letters to Darwin about
mimicry and natural selection. This led to
both gentlemen jointly presenting their
ideas to the Royal Society. Darwin was
then stimulated into public print with his
controversial theories (verging on heresy
in the perceptions of some prominent
churchmen) in his book about the Origin
of the Species.

The development of creative work in
history became possible only after
permanent settlements arose, where
division of labour occurred and wealth
accrued to the extent that some talented

individuals could be freed from the "daily grind" of hunting and gathering and grinding food for their families consumption. Craftspeople and artists then created works which could be bartered or sold (after the invention of money) for adorning dwellings or, in the case of jewellery, adorning individuals. The richer the patron or purchaser, the grander became the adornment of the person and of the home or castle.

Artists are interestingly associated with "academian" and "royal academian" in Roget's Thesaurus, which was first published 120 years ago (p171, para 559 in the revised 1952 edition). Artists could be painters, sculptors, carvers, modellers and gold or silversmiths. Academian painters were themselves classified as historical, landscape, portrait, miniature, etc. This was not a hierarchical classification but a way of categorising those who were accepted as worthy of being "hung" or displayed in the Royal Academy - a sign that their creative work had been recognised by the academians who were members of the royal society rather than by their patrons or paying public. Academians were not necessarily the most popular artists but they were recognised in a form of peer review as being the highest achievers.

Scholars are given, in Roget's Thesaurus, synonyms such as student, savant, scientist, humanist, grammarian, intellectual, pundit, schoolman, don, professor, lecturer, reader, demonstrator, graduate, doctor, philosopher, encyclopaedist, linguist, pedant, and less favourably bookworm, swot, bluestocking and bibliomaniac. The overwhelming impression of the scholar in history is of someone who pursues book learning, and usually occupies a position of instruction in an educational institution of some type.

To relate these ideas to the TAG definitions, early scholars were not all systematic in their studies. Many were simply "keeping abreast in subject areas that interested them" and certainly not carrying out "research" in TAG terms. Creative workers were often immersed in the production of creations which to come into existence had first to appeal to the creators. If these works of art appealed to the peer group or consumer, that appeal

paid the bills. The meaning of scholarship has narrowed from a broad concern with schooling and the accruing of knowledge, if we are to accept the TAG definition of scholarship as a type of research. In contrast, the definition of creative work from TAG seems broader than the historical meaning. Creative workers in the past had some tangible product for exhibition or use rather than just an idea or hypothesis.

How do we currently turn scholarship and creative work into research outputs?

Scholarship and creative work seem to be natural extensions of the human psyche, as extensions of a need to know, an urge to impart that knowing to others and an urge to invent and create something which we or others admire.

Research outputs seem to be a formalisation of these needs and urges. A modern method to spread new ideas, instruct the masses or produce an artifact for public consumption is to publish it in a book (or on Email or the world wide web!). Sometimes patrons will still pay for the products or for the opportunity for an individual to pursue their own dream of learning, scholarship or creation. There may well be a saleable product at the end. Modern "research" seems to have a more orderly and methodical flavour to its meaning than either "scholarship" or "creative work". Much of the early historical development of scholarship and creative work was haphazard, snatched up as a pursuit whenever individuals had the time to read or create, over a long period in their lifetime. In the modern world we are expected as academics to have research projects which are finite, timely and annually converted to research outputs. Research revolves around a set hypothesis or focus question or problem, results from a proposal, is funded internally or externally, involves systematic data collection and analysis and interpretation and results in a conclusion or outcome or resolution or recommendation or change. Outputs include interim reports, monographs, notes accompanying an exhibition, an argued thesis, public presentations, and published papers or "peer reviewed articles in a prestigious journal."

The educational worker is now expected to seek ways of recognising in their everyday life the opportunity to turn their scholarship and creative practice into research outputs. Only then can they be sure of retaining their positions in institutions where accreditation and some government funding appears to be contingent on a sustained record of research outputs. Substantial contestable funding for research has already been introduced by the government in England. The message there seems to be that there will be two classes of Universities, an upper class which undertakes research and a lower class which does not have the funding to do this. To receive research funding, the University has to maintain a good research output. In NZ, research funding from government and non-government sources usually depends on the research teams having a good research record.

Today's tertiary teachers need to think of scholarly and creative activities in which they are already taking part which can be converted to a research output, by planning the collection of data in a regular, ethical manner around a focusing question or problem. Early in the process each teacher should consider the type of research output they desire, for example which journal is suitable for the subject and research treatment and what sort of article is expected. Some examples follow of activities which can be converted to research and research outputs:

- teaching in an innovative way
- evaluating, developing or redeveloping curriculum
- developing and trialling new student materials
- Investigating student perceptions and values
- a staff development project
- study of an area or field new to you
- application of a relatively new technology
- policy development and implementation
- the work of a new committee or a new management structure
- comparison of old and new knowledge, skills or attitudes
- a quality assurance project

- a discovery about an "old " subject area; a new perspective on the old
- a new theory or idea or model emerging from your practice
- a new application of an old theory or model
- group or individual practice in context
- links to industry
- comparison between countries
- a prediction based on the extrapolation of "old" facts
- a new interpretation of current events
- internal or external consultancy
- a literature review
- a historical treatment of the development of a concept

One cannot help believing that life was simpler for the scholars or creative workers in the past, provided they could fund their scholarship. Their main worry seemed to be dying before they had finished discovering the universe and writing it all down or interpreting it in some new way.

In the words of Keats, a poetic creative worker himself:

"When I have fears that I may cease to be
Before my pen has gleaned my teaming brain
Before high-piled books, in charact'ry
Hold like rich garners the full ripened grain."

The modern researcher has to glean ideas and concepts from everyday life, reap them like grain from the sheaves in the field of education and capture them as a research output.

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DESIGNING AND USING A LEARNING PACKAGE FOR A TERTIARY TEACHER COURSE

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By the year 2000 it is likely that at least 30% of all undergraduate teaching in Australian universities will involve the use of resource based learning (RBL) (NCODE, 1996). According to the literature one of the benefits of RBL is the facilitation of autonomous, reflective learning (NCODE, 1996). The **Introduction to Tertiary Teaching** *(ITT) subject for academics at Wollongong University aims to facilitate reflective learning, and the subject is presently being redesigned to provide a modular program with RBL as one of its features. The intention is to satisfy the diverse needs of participants and to encourage the 'deep approach' to learning identified by Marton & Säljö (1976) such that participants are motivated to seek meaning rather than simply reproduce information.*

This article describes some of my experiences in the design and implementation of the first ITT module and offers some suggestions to staff interested in integrating RBL into their courses.

The ITT Module

I designed the RBL module *What is Teaching? What is Learning?* as an introduction to some of the basic issues, principles and theories of tertiary teaching. The intention was to provide a self-paced, participant-centred learning experience that stimulates participants to think about their own experiences and link these to the literature on teaching and learning. Participants work through the module at their own pace after negotiating a time frame for completion.

The module provides a specially designed resource package comprising:

- a handbook of exercises and information
- a book of readings
- an in-house video
- electronic discussion (online forum)
- one 3 hour face to face workshop
- regular written feedback

Six tutors piloted the module at the end of 1996. Reactions were extremely positive and included comments such as:

> "I liked having the time to think about things";
>
> "It was a revelation, I really enjoyed it"; and
>
> "It worked well as an individual process".

I had not intended to introduce the module into the ITT until the redesigned program began in spring semester '97, however as the pilot response was so positive I decided to include it during the autumn '97 semester.

At the time of writing there are nine ITT participants working with the module and their responses vary from being extremely positive to positive with some reservations. This variety of responses is to be expected from a group comprising very experienced academics and lecturers who have never taught before. Yet it is this variety of responses that I believe poses one of the greatest challenges for RBL methodology. How can a single learning package meet the individual needs of a variety of students?

Initially I had thought to 'individualise' the module by providing a choice of pathways within it but I soon became concerned that these choices might be illusory. After all there is a limit to the number of options that may be provided and the available choices would still be predetermined by myself as the module designer. Rather than providing choices I tried to 'individualise' the module by designing exercises in which participants reflect on their own learning experiences and teaching practice, and link these reflections to theoretical approaches.

Advantages and Disadvantages

The pilot study indicated that the major advantages of this RBL module were related to the provision of written feedback by the module facilitator, the opportunity to spend time thinking deeply about issues, and the individual applicability of experience-based reflection. Some participants indicated the

suitability of the RBL approach to their own perceived learning style.

Disadvantages were seen as minor, however two participants did not appreciate the 'flexible delivery' provided by RBL and said they would have preferred the direction and motivation provided by weekly sessions and regular deadlines. One participant said, *"I found not having deadlines difficult."* This participant also said, *"I'm a real class attending person. I love interaction".* The lack of face to face interaction between participant and participant as well as between participant and facilitator was a negative point for most people, yet none of them was particularly motivated to use the electronic discussion forum on the internet. Two participants had no access to the internet so the online forum was an optional activity and this may have contributed to the lack of apparent interest.

From a facilitator's point of view the main problem I found during the pilot was that most participants waited until they had finished the module before submitting work for feedback. Even though the module contained specific exercises for gaining facilitator feedback, most of these exercises were not submitted because participants "forgot" or "didn't realise" or "didn't get round to it".

When I was writing the module I tried to avoid a situation where a lot of material might be covered at a superficial level, where participants might learn a little about a lot rather than anything in depth. I was also concerned that the provision of small chunks of information in sections with associated exercises and readings might suggest that when the exercises and readings were finished there was no need to learn further. Such exercises have an obvious end from which it is possible to infer a 'you can stop now' signal. Despite my concerns the pilot group felt that they had been working at depth and were keen to follow up on the work they had done.

One of the academics who is presently completing the module for the ITT has suggested that the provision of more divergent exercises would be useful for more experienced teachers. Exercises such as complex case studies or lengthier explorations of problems should reveal pathways for further exploration of the topic after module completion. I am considering this provision in the next draft of the module.

Effective Resource Based Learning

If we are to ensure that RBL does not become a set of simplistic, take away, pre-packaged training programs then RBL may be much more time consuming for the lecturer than conventional teaching ever was. Designing modules requires hours of work, and redesign is necessary until it is as close to 'right' as possible. Providing written feedback to participants is ongoing and time consuming.

The first ITT module has provided a highly effective learning experience for a number of tutors and lecturers. From my work in RBL so far it seems that if packages are thoughtfully designed and implemented on sound teaching and learning principles, RBL may have a useful place in the educational environment of the future.

As an appendix I have listed some of my concerns in developing and implementing the ITT module and some ideas for overcoming these.

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APPENDIX: WRITING AND USING MODULES - CONCERN AND SOLUTIONS

POSSIBLE CONCERN	POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS
The lack of opportunities for interaction with other participants and development of collegiality	• Set up an electronic forum and an email group if possible. • Monitor and encourage use of electronic communication. • Include a face to face workshop.
The lack of personal interaction between participant and facilitator	• Maintain email and phone contact. • Monitor and comment on the online forum. • Treat your written feedback as a teaching and learning dialogue.
The need to make the material relevant to all students	• Include open questions. • Have participants link their learning to what they already know and have experienced. • Provide opportunity to complete at least one 'divergent' exercise, eg explore a case study or problem in depth. • Where possible provide a project-based exercise such that participants choose their own topic for exploration. • Consider providing optional pathways through the materials where possible.
The need to keep participants on task	• Negotiate individual time frames for completion of sections of the module. Write this as an 'agreement' and keep records. • Provide regular written feedback on sections to support their progress through the module.
The need for realistic and valid assessment of learning outcomes	• Use criterion referenced assessment linked to module learning objectives. • Include self assessment as one of the assessment components.
Non-use of the online discussion medium	• Ensure participants have computer access and required skills and make participation a requirement. • Get the online discussion group started with a controversial statement or question. • Insert reminders about the electronic forum in the handbook. • Suggest that participants place relevant sections from their written work on the forum. • Encourage one or two participants to start a debate.
Packaged instructional material may appear didactic and patronising	• Explain to the reader that pre-written, self instruction modules cannot be tailored to each individual so there will be some information they are already familiar with. • Ask them to reflect on and critique familiar material. • Use a conversational writing style.
The lack of time available for provision of written feedback	• Set aside a specific time during the week to write responses.

BRANCH REPORT

ACT

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There was a great attendance at the last ACT HERDSA event which featured Roderick West, Chair of the Committee of Review of Higher Education Policy and Financing in a frank and personal discourse on students and fees, happiness and personal advancement in higher education.

In August we have two guest speakers, Associate Professor Susan Lever (ADFA) and Mr Jack Waterford (Canberra Times) to talk about higher education and the media: how each perceives and portrays the other; how each thinks it is perceived and portrayed by the other; and what issues are of interest to both.

REFLECTIONS ON ORGANISING AN ONLINE SEMINAR

Beatrice Hamilton
Australian Catholic University
and
Dr. Kym Fraser
Monash University

The executive of HERDSA Victoria annually organises two or three topical seminars/workshops, as well as an annual conference to provide both professional development and networking opportunities for members. To date these activities have been organised in a face to face mode. This year the authors chose to organise an activity on teaching online and conducted it entirely online. We are delighted to report that the activity seemed to take on a "life of its own" and recommend the medium as a means for providing distributed professional development for members.

The June online seminar "Online Teaching" was designed to provide participants with opportunities to reflect upon and discuss the potential and actuality of teaching online in higher education. Lin Padgham, Peter Jamieson and Peter Ling of the Flexible Learning Unit of RMIT prepared a web site which provided participants with access to articles, online subject sites, and presenter facilitated discussions. The topics for the discussions included the evaluation of online teaching, the transition to online teaching and group interactions in online teaching. Participants generated several other discussion topics during the course of the activity.

Logistics

We chose to advertise the activity entirely through listservs as it was apparent that those likely to be most interested and able to partake in the activity would be electronically "connected". The response was both surprising and very pleasing. The branch tends to organise activities which are physically attended by twenty to thirty people. Just under one hundred people signed up for this online activity with approximately seventy-five percent being HERDSA members. Ten of these were from overseas, including members and non-members from New Zealand, the USA and Canada.

Ironically payment for the activity ($5 for members and $8 for non-members) had to carried out via Australia post! We did manage to use another organisation's credit card account for payment from overseas participants. Seamless electronic invoicing would be a benefit for this type of activity. Once signed up, participant's email addresses were added to an electronic list. On the first day of the activity, this list was used to send participants the address for the website.

Issues and responses

Originally we had planned for the activity to run for five days, not including a weekend. Participants were asked to spend three or more hours exploring the website in the first few days and then encouraged to join the discussion groups in the latter part of the week. However, unlike face to face professional development, many participants did not access the website immediately and the activity was extended to two weeks. Several people who signed up did not participate in the two week period. We are still struggling to identify ways in which we, as organisers, can increase the likelihood of people making the time to participate. For instance, we chose to conduct the activity in June because we believed that it might be easier for people to participate if they were not teaching. We suspect that like many professional development activities, even though people want to participate, many other things are of a more pressing nature and take priority when the time comes.

However, many people did participate. Initially many of the participants did not take part in the discussions, so Lin included an introduction board for people to log in and indicate their background/interests. This appeared to act as an ice breaker and we recommend its use in these professional development activities.

Conclusion

We are most grateful to Lin, Peter and Peter for being willing to develop the website and facilitate the online discussions. Participants who chose to evaluate the activity found it to be very valuable, both in terms of the pragmatics of teaching online and the discussion of the educational issues involved. We intend in our next foray into online professional development to incorporate, for those people working in the Melbourne area, a face to face discussion in conjunction with the online work. We have taken this cue from Russel Glover at UNE. Russel signed up 16 people from UNE to take part in the online activity and organised a face to face session for those participants. We would appreciate hearing from anyone who has ideas for improving HERDSA Victoria's use of online technology to provide online professional development opportunities.

BRANCH REPORT

NEW ZEALAND

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The HERDSA NZ committee members are all are working extremely hard planning for the July 1998 conference which will be held in Auckland.

The first flyer has been prepared for distribution, there is now a home page, on http://www.cce.auckland.ac.nz/herdsa 98 and the conference timetable and speakers are being finalised.

"Novice to Expert - Tadpole to Frog": A recent seminar focused on the research transition. The four speakers entertained us with insights, reflections and advice from their development as researchers in their very different disciplines. After dinner, Mary Melrose linked the speakers' ideas to literature about the novice to expert transition and presented a reflective tool based on eighteen constructs about the research transition. It was especially pleasing to see HERDSA members from out of Auckland attending.

The next and last seminar in the series, on Friday 31 October will have Professor Reynold Macpherson from the University of Auckland as guest after dinner speaker on the topic of the leadership transition from novice to expert.

The Curriculum Special Interest Group of HERDSA uses the email and snail mail systems to conduct wide ranging discussions on curriculum matters. During 1997 one of the concerns that we have discussed is the implications for curriculum development of moves, in some universities, towards open access policies. What follows is an edited version of a document prepared to initiate discussion on the topic.

Many Universities across Australia and New Zealand are facing challenging times in terms of their enrolments. An increasingly volatile student population, an improvement in the employment opportunities for secondary school leavers, a diminution in the value of obtaining a tertiary qualification in the minds of many young people, a reduction in the financial rewards of obtaining a degree and the increasing cost of attending a university have all contributed to a lack of students in some universities in some areas of study. The potential for the current Australian Government policies to enable the 'big and powerful' universities to severely affect the intakes of the newer, and often less popular universities by overenrolling, adds to the challenges faced by some.

In this context, a number of universities have recognised that the change in the nature of the students that have been seeking enrolment in their courses, which they have observed over the last few years, is likely to continue, if not accelerate. Universities, such as my own, have recognised that an increasingly diverse range of students are applying for our courses and, in some areas, these students are less than well prepared for their studies.

In addition to this has been the ongoing concern at the use of the Tertiary Entrance Rank, or other form of end of secondary school assessment, as a measure of 'quality' of intake and a useful predictor of satisfactory performance in university studies.

Accordingly Victoria University has announced "Australia's First Personalised Access and Study Program" which guarantees entry to the university to any

OPEN ACCESS
The Challenge
for Curriculum

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qualified applicant. Such open access does not mean access to the course of the student's choice but it does mean access to programs that will take students down a pathway that will lead to the course of their choice. This may involve completion of bridging or TAFE programs before degree course enrolment or other preparation. It will mean that, theoretically, each student of the university will have an individualised course map prepared for them and the challenge of the university will be to provide a teaching and learning environment which can recognise a large variety of input levels whilst maintaining the quality of its output.

Such a move has very significant implications for the development of curricula to support such an initiative. The purpose of this short dissertation to is raise questions about what needs to be thought about in this area of open access and what steps need to be put in place to make such an exercise a success. Following are some questions which, it is hoped, will galvanise discussion of the challenges that open access policies will have on the development of appropriate curricula. This list is by no means exhaustive. I would welcome input from other HERDSA members with other areas for consideration.

QUESTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Is it reasonable for subjects to continue to be offered in semester-length blocks requiring all students to reach the same point at the same time or should a significant amount of mastery learning be a feature of courses? If so, what are the implications for assessment and evaluation processes? What implications would this have for university timetables, examinations, enrolments, graduations etc?

2. Is there a role for increasing use of intensive teaching and learning patterns where whole subjects are offered over a very short period of time?

3. In a situation where a large range of entering abilities are evident how does the curriculum cope other than to adopt a 'sink or swim' approach?

4. Can course designs continue to be prescriptive or should they be opened up to student choice in a much larger way?

5. In this context how do you continue to motivate and develop well prepared and enthusiastic students whilst you wait for the others to "catch up".

6. How do you avoid devoting the majority of your resources and time to the weaker students who clearly need the most help?

7. Is there a possible continuing role for traditional teaching methods of lecture - tutorial - laboratory in the situation of open access?

8. Do all courses have to become individualised in an open access situation and, if so, how can this be handled in this time of diminishing resources?

9. If a wider range of students are entering our courses could it not be argued that we need to increase the range of delivery methods to cater for an increased range of learning styles?

10. How could a wide range of delivery methods be incorporated into a

course given the expense of developing such methods. Should we 'buy them off the shelf' and rely on others to prepare the material for us?

11. What implications do the global communication systems now available to us via the Internet and World Wide Web have for open access situations. Can we - and should we - use computer mediated courses from other places in place of developing our own?

12. Is there an increasing role for collaborative curriculum development between universities, especially in the early years of courses, minimising differences and maximising commonality? What implications would such a move have for diversity (and for our continuing employment!!!)?

13. What are the implications of open access for the teaching patterns of lecturing staff. Can most staff adapt to a situation where they fulfil a much more guiding role than a delivery role? How can quality of presentation be maintained in a more diverse situation and how can good educational practices be properly rewarded?

14. Outside the direct implications to subject and course content does the different range of students entering under open access pose different challenges to the support mechanism of the universities such as student counselling, welfare, finance etc. What implications are there for pastoral care activities of the university or does it matter?

15. Lastly, but by no means least, how do you persuade staff that you are not lowering standards and asking them to teach a lower level of student who is going to fail anyway!

Happy thinking.

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The Accreditation of University Teachers: A HERDSA discussion document

Subject to minor redrafting this document was endorsed by the HERDSA Executive at its meeting of Friday 11 July, 1997.

It should be noted that this document is a discussion paper and does not present a preferred position for the Society.

Introduction

This document explores issues concerning the accreditation of university teachers in Australasia. It has been produced by a working party of HERDSA with the intention of informing debate. It is for general distribution.

Although the accreditation of university teachers has been talked about for several decades, it is currently receiving renewed attention. It will be argued that a number of general trends lie behind this. However, there are differing opinions about what is meant by accreditation, whether or not it is possible to implement, and whether or not it is a good thing. This document attempts to provide back-ground and perspective to assist in locating some of the arguments involved.

What is accreditation?

The answer to this apparently simple question is far from simple. Much of the heat generated in discussions concerning accreditation can be traced to the different uses, meanings and intentions with which people ascribe the word. Accreditation is a difficult word to pin down. And whether one thinks it is a good thing or not can depend on such things as: the body responsible for accreditation; how it is proposed a scheme will be organised; whether it will be voluntary or not. There are many possible permutations and therefore interpretive possibilities.

There are also some other words used in association with accreditation, such as **registration** and **recognition.** For example, practitioners in a professional area may have to gain *registration* from a professional body in order to practice. The professional body holds the right to maintain a register of practitioners. On the other hand, a professional program (such

as a certificate or diploma program) may be *recognised* by a professional body. Those completing the program may be admitted to the profession automatically, or may have to apply for professional status separately. Among the variety of meanings in use for accreditation are those concerning the registration of university teachers and the recognition of teaching programs.

In this document 'accreditation' will be used to refer to the formal acknowledgement of professional status achieved by individual university teachers.

This meaning assumes that a body charged with the responsibility for accreditation will maintain a record of individuals meeting the requirements. While this may be seen as a register it is not meant to be understood as an exclusive list of those permitted to practice. Under this definition, individuals may apply for accreditation through a recognised pathway. There may be multiple and quite different pathways. For example, completion of a certificate or diploma program could represent a recognised pathway, but so too could the submission of an accreditation portfolio.

In summary, this document defines accreditation in terms of individuals and as something akin to registration. An example of a recognised pathway leading to the accreditation of individuals may be a certificate program. If such a program meets certain criteria, it is referred to as a recognised pathway.

Why has accreditation become an issue at all?

There is little doubt that the recent history of higher education in Australasia has been one of unprecedented change. University teachers have borne the brunt of this change.

The enrolment of far more students has been accompanied by an increase in diversity. The student population is now more differentiated in many ways, including gender, ethnicity, age, disabilities, international status, part- and full-time, on- and off-campus. 'Massification', 'internationalisation' and

'encouraging diversity' have occurred at the same time as the 'reduced unit of resource'. University teachers have experienced such change in terms of increasing workloads, stress, and a common perception that they are less valued than was once the case.

There is every likelihood that the pace of change will quicken, rather than slow. The impact of information technology and associated moves toward flexible learning are beginning to have a significant effect. The norm of teacher centred methods such as the lecture based course is being challenged as more and more courses are converted to student centred and flexible methods. New ways of working are being demanded of academic staff as course development increasingly comprises many people including the academics themselves, short term contract academics, educational developers, instructional designers, multi-media producers, directors and technicians, copyright people and others. The onus is on staff to produce courses which are of high quality content, soundly based on learning theory, student centred, flexible and cost effective.

The training that academic staff receive in order to meet the challenges posed by massification, diversity and the move to flexible learning, is scant. Most universities have an educational development unit which offers an induction program for new staff, together with workshops, developmental projects and individual consultations. However, the point has often been made that university teaching is perhaps the only remaining 'profession' not to have developed a professional structure.

Much of this can be traced to the research ethos of the university with the PhD often being considered as the professional qualification for the job. 'Teacher training' is sometimes considered demeaning for university teachers with high level subject knowledge, hired to 'profess' their area of expertise rather than teach. On the other hand, many have experienced the self-doubt and anxiety of preparing for the daunting task of teaching, with little training or support.

Those opposed to accreditation suggest that it will further erode the research ethos of the university by channelling resources into teaching. Those in favour of accreditation suggest that academics are credentialed for their research role by the extensive pathway of the PhD, but are not credentialed at all for their teaching role. While agreeing that research is important, they argue that there is also a need to develop and assure the quality of teaching in universities, and point to the bad press, loss of public sympathy and pressure on public funding if steps are not taken to develop and assure the quality of university teaching.

There is likely to be more agreement concerning accreditation if it is clear at the outset that accreditation is not about reducing the importance of research in universities generally, nor about denying the entry of researchers to the field of university teaching. Instead, the argument in favour of accreditation is that it should skill university teachers to succeed in their work under rapidly changing conditions. The future success of higher education demands both high quality research and high quality teaching.

Why now?

"The introduction of a national standard of teaching in higher education is widely expected to form a key element of Sir Ron Dearing's inquiry into higher education" (Alison Utley, Times Higher, 2nd May, 1997). Graham Gibbs has been commissioned by the English Higher Education Funding Council to prepare a National Strategy for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education by the end of June 1997. The project is concerned with how teaching can be improved in higher education in the UK. One consideration is said to be compulsory teaching qualifications to a nationally specified standard for all new university teachers. Moreover, in the UK, both the Association of University Teachers (AUT) and the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals, (CVCP) supports the establishment of a national body for accreditation.

The West Review in Australia is taking an active interest in this area and New Zealand is also about to become engaged in a Tertiary Education Review. Neither the National Tertiary Education Industry Union (NTEU) in Australia nor the Association of University Staff (AUS) in New Zealand presently has a formal policy on accreditation. However, both are well down the track in developing position papers and policy, and as with the AUT in the United Kingdom, both see accreditation as a priority area. HERDSA, also, as the main professional association for higher education, is now considering its position with regard to accreditation.

Arguments **in favour of the active pursuit** of the accreditation of university teachers are various. Some believe that there is urgency associated with this issue. The fact that accreditation may become mandatory in some countries, or that some institutions have it and others do not, creates issues of transferability and flexibility when it is not available everywhere. Moreover, the production of an appropriate scheme, designed by those who are involved in academic work, may forestall the external imposition of an unsuitable scheme by others as an outcome of national reviews. It is also argued that the business of universities is to accredit students according to certain criteria and standards and that failure to participate in a similar process internally is hypocritical. The increasing complexity of academic work and the need to demonstrate accountability and quality assurance with regard to teaching are further factors that make accreditation desirable. For university teachers, portability across institutions and countries is important, as is the recognition, support and protection of professional status. The bottom line is that the practice of teaching will be improved by the accreditation of its practitioners, both at the level of the individual teacher and in terms of the overall understanding of good practice throughout the system.

Arguments **against actively pursuing** accreditation are similarly various. There is no proof that accreditation in any form will be imposed from outside the sector, so why should university teachers participate in what could be interpreted as their own oppression? The possibility of mounting a general program for teachers from diverse discipline areas and institutional contexts appears daunting, as does capturing the research ethos incumbent within each discipline area's knowledge and teaching structures. Some will see the need for 'teacher training' as trivialising academic work, while others will have fears as to

the academic credentials of those offering programs leading to accreditation. Not only that, but the programs themselves may be little more than 'tips for teachers': trivial or irrelevant. The programs might also be captured by a particular view of teaching and thus be used to control teachers. Such control could be perceived to inhibit diversity and be anathema to academic freedom. Rather, than a generalised teacher training that has little relevance, what should be considered in any discussion of accreditation is the achievement of high quality teaching through programs or pathways aimed at work that is embedded in the academic's immediate context.

Is there a discourse of university teaching?

While some of the fears concerning 'teacher training' programs may be legitimate, it should also be acknowledged that the theory and practice of higher education has developed considerably in terms of sophistication over the past 30 years. There are now at least a dozen highly reputable international refereed journals with university teaching as their focus. Almost every discipline has at least one major journal which has the teaching of that subject area as its focus and there are dozens more educational journals accepting articles on a multitude of topics concerning teaching and learning in higher education.

This extensive literature includes internationally recognised contributions concerning learning theory and practice. A number of foundational books have developed ideas associated with reflective practice, deep and surface approaches to learning, lifelong learning, self direction for learning, problem based learning, action research, adult learning theory, and the scholarship of discovery, integration, application and teaching.

This knowledge area, the discipline or discourse of university teaching, informs graduate certificate, diploma and masters' programs which are now offered at many Australasian universities. Graduates of these programs are assuming academic leadership roles. Heads of Departments, Pro Vice-Chancellors, Deputy Vice-Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors are adopting the language and ideas of

university teaching in their everyday work. Institutional teaching and learning plans are often based on the literature. HERDSA has produced guidelines for valuing teaching and for good practice at the institutional and individual level, which have been endorsed, for the most part, by the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee.

However, after acknowledging that all this is happening, the scholarship of teaching and learning in higher education is still far from being cemented into the normal academic work of many university teachers. Many do not know of its existence. The point needs to be made, therefore, that while it is legitimate to disagree with parts of the literature and knowledge of teaching and learning in higher education, it is not legitimate to claim that this broad discourse is not available.

The argument that 'teacher training' is trivial and technical is also hard to sustain. Where once some saw learning to use an over-head projector as the pinnacle of professional development, such trivialisation should no longer be the case. The mastery of technical skills now takes a back seat to the development of the teacher as a self-reflective, ethical and continuously developing, competent practitioner. Far from providing 'tips for teachers', professional programs emphasise the value laden nature of teaching and the ethical position of the teacher.

If there is a sophisticated discourse concerning teaching and learning in higher education, why is it that many practitioners never appear to interact with it? A likely reason is that academics see themselves as professionals in their own discipline-based research area, rather than as professionals in the area of university teaching. They qualify and are credentialed by research in a discipline area and they undertake continuing professional development in that research area by reading relevant journals and attending relevant conferences.

There are academics who take a formal, professional interest in their teaching: more than half of HERDSA's members, for example, are 'practitioners' rather than from areas such as academic development or learning support. The

promotion of good teaching is a central mission of academic development units which have been in existence in Australasia now for over twenty years.

However, it is still true to say that there is a long way to go before all academics consider themselves to have a dual professional allegiance: to their professional (disciplinary) responsibility as a university researcher and to their professional responsibility as a university teacher.

How has accreditation developed in the United Kingdom?

The United Kingdom has a developed higher education accreditation scheme and so a little time will be taken to examine how this came about and to outline its essential elements[1].

In the early 1990s, a group of educational developers meeting under the umbrella of the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA) tried to design an "ideal typical course ... (for) a basic grade, professionally competent, full time academic, in relation to their teaching role, at the end of the first full year." Many institutions were developing such programs and it made sense to pool resources. After a year of research and development, the outcome was an accreditation scheme rather than a particular course. This was to allow flexibility in meeting the conditions for accreditation. For example, some institutions would want to mount a postgraduate course while others would use informal sessions and formal probation requirements. A Steering Committee was also appointed including representatives from national bodies and individuals with professional standing in the area of teaching in higher education.

Progress was slow but steady with a number of programs applying for recognised status in the early to mid nineties. A boost was received when the Higher Education Quality Council (HEQC) audit reports commented favourably on recognised programs and also as Vice-Chancellors increasingly realised the necessity of training for their staff.

In 1996 the Association of University Teachers (AUT) circulated a paper to its

members suggesting a formal scheme for national accreditation. So when the Dearing Commission met in 1997, AUT, HEQC, and SEDA together with the National Union of Students (NUS) and the University and Colleges Staff Development Agency (UCoSDA) were all speaking in favour of accreditation for university teachers. The mechanism for this still has to be worked out. However, with 35 programs in 35 institutions already recognised (25 more working towards recognition) and 332 teachers having gained accreditation (several hundred more preparing for accreditation), it seems likely that the principles of the original SEDA scheme will play an important role.

SEDA's accreditation philosophy rests on three principles:

- that staff deserve recognition for the skills they have acquired
- that good practice requires more than skills and competencies (that these should be underpinned by values)
- that the process of accreditation should itself be developmental and collegial

The developmental focus means that those joining the scheme become part of the peer assessment process. The SEDA scheme therefore rejects a model of accreditation which is external, inspectorial and purely competency based.

In the SEDA scheme, the accredited teacher demonstrates how the following principles and values underpin their work:

- an understanding of how students learn,
- a concern for students' development,
- a commitment to scholarship,
- a commitment to work with and learn from colleagues,
- the practising of equal opportunities,
- continuing reflection on professional practice.

They will show that they have:

- designed a teaching program or scheme of work from a course outline, document or syllabus;

- used a wide and appropriate range of teaching and learning methods effectively and efficiently in order to work with large groups, small groups, and one-to-one;
- provided support to students on academic and pastoral issues in a way which is acceptable to a wide range of students;
- used a wide and appropriate range of assessment techniques to support student learning and to record achievement;
- evaluated their own work with a range of self, peer and student monitoring and evaluation techniques;
- performed effectively their teaching support and academic administrative tasks;
- developed personal and professional strategies appropriate to the constraints and opportunities of their institutional setting.

Again, it is likely that the SEDA scheme will have a major role in influencing the shape of accreditation in the UK. However, as other agencies such as the Association of University Teachers (AUT) and the Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP) become involved in accreditation, it is perhaps unlikely that the SEDA organisation will itself maintain control of accreditation. A means of running a national accreditation scheme that is acceptable to all parties will need to be devised.

What challenges face an accreditation scheme in Australasia?

The next sections examine the possible shape of an accreditation scheme in Australasia if this course of action is considered to be desirable.

The first and greatest challenge to an accreditation scheme leads on directly from where the UK finds itself presently. Although the UK has more experience of accreditation than Australasia, the movement to a national scheme which involves major sector interests has still to be negotiated. The message for Australasia therefore seems clear. If national schemes are to be introduced, major sector interests should be involved

from the start. In Australia, this probably means at least the National Tertiary Education Industry Union, representing staff; the Australian Vice-Chancellor's Committee, representing employers; the National Union of Students and the Council of Australian Post Graduate Associations, representing students; and HERDSA representing professional experience and knowledge in the area. In the New Zealand context, similar sector interests would need to be involved. The first challenge is thus to negotiate sector wide acceptance.

The second challenge is to allow multiple pathways to accreditation. The varied contexts and disciplines within the sector are a source for creative difference. An accreditation scheme should allow university teachers a variety of ways in which they can demonstrate that they have fulfilled the requirements for accreditation. Examples of varied pathways include the completion of a recognised certificate or diploma program, or the submission of an accreditation portfolio.

The third challenge is to build on the considerable work already in place. There are now certificate and diploma programs in many Australasian universities. This experience needs to be included and used as a solid base upon which to build.

The fourth challenge is similar in that it centres on the need to utilise the knowledge and experience available. Australasia is a recognised world leader in research and development for the improvement of teaching and learning in higher education. That research has demonstrated the futility of purely instrumental approaches to the development of teachers. Teachers need to consider the underlying values, ethics and scholarship of teaching. They need to be reflective and adaptive in their teaching practices, rather than simply apply the prescriptions of others.

Principles concerned with the recognition of prior learning (RPL) need to be incorporated into any proposed scheme. It is important that prior learning be rewarded, but in terms of demonstrated learning outcomes, rather than time serving. **The fifth challenge** is to work out procedures for RPL.

Who could accredit?

This is a vital question for an accreditation scheme. Among the options available are the following:

HERDSA

In the UK, SEDA (HERDSA's counterpart), has set itself up as an accrediting body. While SEDA was vital in getting the process of accreditation started in the UK, and for ensuring that the accreditation scheme was based upon progressive educational values, it now seems likely that movement towards wider sector involvement is inevitable. For HERDSA to fulfil this role it would need to transform itself from an organisation that is purely developmental or formative to one that assumes full responsibility as a professional body, along the lines of other professional societies. This could well include roles of standards setting and gate keeping. There would also be serious resource questions. Taking all this into consideration, although HERDSA may play an important role in the process of accreditation, it is unlikely that it could be the accrediting body.

NTEU / AUS

It has been claimed that the AUT in the United Kingdom has moved some way towards positioning itself as a professional society along the lines of the British Medical Association. It is possible that the NTEU or AUS may wish to move in this direction: a shift that would require a change in focus from an industrial/workplace perspective towards a greater concern for professional interests. It would require other professional expertise, for example, the kind of input that HERDSA is able to contribute. Such a change may also provide a number of issues for Vice-Chancellors' Committees. However, if a union developed into a professional society along the lines of a medical association, then, potentially, it could act as an accrediting body.

Vice-Chancellors' Committees

Just as a union assuming the status of accrediting body could provide issues for Vice-Chancellors, so too could an employer's group act similarly. And, like the NTEU/AUS option, professional expertise should be sought. However, an accrediting body formed from Vice-Chancellor's is likely to be perceived as an employers' initiative that lacks ownership from the sector as a whole.

A new professional society or institute

If there is no move by a union to transform itself into a professional society, there is the possibility of a new society or institute being formed. There are issues here to do with acceptance and whether academics would actually join and resource such a society, especially as many are already members of a discipline area society. However, the creation of a new professional society remains a possibility.

A national accrediting agency

A national body could be set up and charged with accreditation and regulation of the area. Without sector involvement, such a body could be remote from the profession itself and assume an inspectorial rather than developmental role. There would be little sector ownership. Such a body could also be politically vulnerable. On the other hand it could be seen as objective and accountable, being largely independent of sector interests. Those who fear this kind of model argue that in order to avert it the sector needs to come together and develop a more acceptable one.

A national committee for accreditation

Such a committee would have representation from the main sector interests. There would be difficulties in bringing these groups together and having them work past their own agendas. However, if this could be done, there would be good sector ownership.

How could accreditation work?

Just as there are many possibilities for the accrediting body, there are also many possible models of how an accreditation process might work. Among these are the following.

Model A

Individuals apply for accreditation to an accrediting body which provides the necessary resources to directly verify the case. Individuals are accredited.

Model B

An accrediting body recognises pathways (eg certificates, diplomas, portfolios). When individual teachers satisfy the requirements of a recognised pathway application is made to the accrediting body for accredited status. Individuals are accredited.

Model C

Programs only are accredited. Individuals are not directly accredited but gain accredited status by completing an accredited program. Individuals are not directly accredited.

Model D

Self regulation. An accrediting body creates criteria by which either programs or individuals may self-accredit if they wish. There is no external monitoring and no formal accreditation.

What is the best scheme for accreditation?

Having just identified six potential accrediting bodies and four models, there are obviously many possibilities for accreditation. The UK experience outlined earlier started with option one (SEDA as the accrediting body) using a version of Model B: recognition of programs upon completion of which individuals are accredited. The current debate in the UK is about ownership of the scheme, with the most likely outcome appearing to be option six (a national accrediting body with representation from sector interest groups). This arrangement responds to the first challenge identified above, namely, sector wide acceptance. The other challenges (ensuring multiple pathways to accreditation; including the experience of certificate programs already in place; incorporating the knowledge, research and values already identified as important; ensuring recognition of prior learning) could be included to a greater or lesser extent through various arrangements. However, if sector wide acceptance by participation in an accreditation scheme is of fundamental importance, then option six, with sector interests forming a national accreditation committee and using a variation of the Model B procedure, would appear to have some advantage.

What are the practicalities?

Again, irrespective of the accrediting body and model of accreditation, a number of practical issues can be raised. Here are some of them.

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Would all university teachers have to be accredited right away?

It is unlikely that anyone would want to insist on all university teachers gaining accreditation immediately. The resources required for this would be large. In fact it may be argued that accreditation should at first be purely voluntary. On the other hand it could be that new staff entering university teaching for the first time could have an accreditation requirement, and this could be written into their employment contract. Existing staff may be excluded, or a moratorium of a certain number of years may be given before they are required to gain accredited status.

Would new university teachers have to be accredited prior to employment?

If new staff are required to be accredited, does this mean that they have to be accredited prior to employment (ie, to have undertaken pre-service training) or can they be employed on condition that they complete accreditation over a given period (ie, in-service training)? Both options are possible and are not mutually exclusive. However, the pre-service model is not common in the university context, and more importantly, programs for university teachers tend to integrate and utilise educational theory with 'on the job' experience. It is presently the case that new academics are employed with the condition that they undertake/complete a research program (such as PhD) before their position is confirmed. If care is taken to avoid overload, similar conditions could be attached to accreditation.

Who needs to be accredited?

There are interesting questions posed in trying to define who should be accredited. For example, should it apply to part-time staff, fixed term positions, mainly research or clinical staff who also have a teaching role, and so on. While these issues are not insurmountable, there is scope for much variety and inequity in the absence of clear and agreed guidelines.

How long does accreditation last?

Many professional associations have a requirement for registered members to demonstrate continuing professional development in order to remain on the register. This might be achieved by attending recognised workshops or conferences, or conducting and publishing research in a relevant area. Does accreditation last for life, or should there be a requirement to demonstrate continuing professional engagement in updating and professional development?

Should there be different levels of accreditation?

Should the initial level of accreditation be the only level? For example, in Australasia a recognised graduate certificate program would generally require the equivalent of a half year of full time study. A graduate diploma program requires double this, the equivalent of a year of full time study. A year of full time study is a normal requirement of teacher training for the school sector in many parts of the world. So, should a requirement for accreditation at the initial level be augmented with the possibility of accreditation at a higher level such as 'senior' or 'career' teacher?

These are some of the practical problems which await an accreditation scheme. Again, while none is insuperable, each raises important questions to shape and define the accreditation process. The balance between consistency and compliance with overall aspects of the accreditation scheme, and flexibility allowing for different interpretations and practices in different contexts, will be of major importance.

What happens next?

This discussion document has been developed in order to stimulate thought and debate on the issue of accreditation in Australasia. HERDSA is interested in receiving comments from members and others regarding accreditation.

If you wish to make a submission to HERDSA please send it to the following address by 31 October 1997:

HERDSA Inc (Accreditation)
PO Box 516
Jamison Centre
ACT 2614
Australia

or email to:
coral.watson@anu.edu.au

HERDSA also operates a moderated email discussion group for members. To include an item on this list please send to:
herdsa@listproc.anu.edu.au

[1] **Note** This section is based on a short paper titled *Accreditation of teachers in higher education: the UK context*, prepared for the HERDSA Accreditation Working Party by Dr Liz Beattie, Accreditation Co-ordinator, SEDA. Quotations are taken from the paper. It may also be noted that two Australian programs have been recognised through an accreditation scheme run by the Staff and Educational Development Association, (SEDA) in the UK.

Special Interest Groups

Academic Developers SIG

The 1997 Conference in Adelaide saw a discussion about the future of the SIG. The 30 or so people who attended strongly endorsed the continuation of the SIG so we are hopeful of a more active year, with the central activity of the SIG being to initiate and maintain discussion about issues in Academic Development via email by means of the ADSIG-LISTSERV.

The meeting floated two issues for discussion:

1. Teaching Qualifications for Tertiary Teachers?

2. Qualifications/Accreditation for Academic Developers?

We are most grateful to Erika Martens, who offered to take over as list moderator, and we are hopeful that, through Jonathon Marsh from the University of Hong Kong, a Web presence for the ADSIG will be developed. Both Mary Melrose and Lee Andresen will continue to be involved with the 'steering group'.

In her opening message to the group, Erika asked members to send her materials which would start the debate such as existing position papers or summaries of these as well as summaries of recently held discussions on the issues etc so they could be circulated via the mailing list for discussion. As soon as her institution is able to place the mailing list on its server she will inform the members about LISTSERV conventions and start the ball rolling using the materials she has received.

If you indicated at the Adelaide meeting that you want the ADSIG to continue, please contribute to this discussion. If you weren't at the Adelaide Conference, please join us and encourage colleagues who are interested in academic development to subscribe to the ADSIG mailing list.

Convenor: Di Thompson
Email: diana@deakin.edu.au

List Moderator: Erika Martens
Email: E.Martens@latrobe.edu.au

Electronic membership:
Individually subscribe to the ADSIG email mailing list by sending an email message to:
LISTSERV@latrobe.edu.au
Leave the subject line blank and write into the text area:
subscribe adsig end

Curriculum SIG

The Curriculum SIG has been in existence for a number of years, mainly due to the continuing efforts of Margaret Kiley of Adelaide. Margaret is now committed to her PhD study and the convenor's position has been handed on.

There is a great deal of expertise and opinion latent in the group. The meeting in Adelaide determined the following possible actions:

- a curriculum SIG Homepage on the HERDSA site

- bio data to be collated on each member, including recent or current projects, so that others would know who to contact in the group for particular questions

- an electronic Discussion Group linked to the to be established Home Page (with hard copies going to members without electronic mail).

- the Discussion Group could be used for question and answer on specific topics - the sort of thing which might only require a quick comment

- in addition, the Discussion Group would have, throughout the year, 3-4 discussion questions/issues 'posed' by specific members of the group. Initially, a discussion on 'graduate issues'.

- the annotated bibliography would be attached to the SIG Home Page at the next HERDSA conference (Auckland, on the theme of Transformation) there will be a curriculum symposium and the SIG meeting time will be devoted to a problem sharing session.

Co-convenors: Judith Townsend
Email: j.townsend@usw.edu.au

and Douglas McMillan
Email: dmcmillan@csu.edu.au

Electronic membership:
send your email address to Douglas

Higher Education Leadership and Management SIG

An interesting facet of the Leadership and Management SIG meetings at conferences is that they attract an almost entirely new group of people each year. This means that we are basically having to re-establish ourselves annually. This year the group decided that we need to focus on "What are the major questions concerned with LEADERSHIP that need to be studied." We also wanted to get to know each other and each other's work.

To this end we urge everyone to sign up on the Siglead listserv so that we can talk to each other, then post research you are doing, research you have heard about, references, anything in the area that you think may be of interest to kindred spirits. Then we can start to debate what are the major questions and, hopefully, start developing some research ideas.

Electronic membership
To subscribe to the listserv send an email message to:
listproc@listproc.anu.edu.au

leave the subject line blank and in the body of the message put:
subscribe siglead@listproc.anu.edu.au
yourfirstname yourlastname end

Student Learning SIG

This SIG met for the third time at the conference in Adelaide; there were over 30 people present.

1. The meeting began with a summary of activity to date, including earlier meetings, the establishment of a listserver and a database of journal abstracts, across disciplines, of research in student learning.

2. Discussion then took place concerning future activity. It was suggested that we attempt to put the database on the Web, that people be informed again about how to

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subscribe to the listserver and be encouraged to do so; that members should use the listserver to tell each other more about their research and interests in student learning; that SIGs should be more involved in conference planning, eg in perhaps organising a series of papers in a session or sessions; and that there be adequate time at future conferences for delegates to attend meetings of BOTH of the SIGs to which they belong.

3. The second half of the meeting was taken up with brief summaries from about 12 of the members of research they were undertaking in student learning. These included learning and discourse analysis; instruments to measure conceptions of learning and teaching; social concepts and science learning; learning and assessments; learning in discipline areas; learning about design; chemistry and conceptions of science held by PNG students.

The summaries provoked lively discussion and were most productive. There is a wealth of expertise held by members of the SIG. If you want to know more about any aspect of the above, ask on the listserver.

Convenor: Gillian Boulton-Lewis
Email: g.boulton-lewis@qut.edu.au

Electronic membership:
Individually subscribe by sending an email message to:
    mailserv@qut.edu.au

Leave the subject: line blank and write into the text area:
subscribe HERDSIG your email address

Snakes Alive! But no poison here!
Introducing VIPASIG

A new Special Interest Group is currently being formed under the name Visual and Performing Arts Special Interest Group (**VIPASIG**, pronounced viper as in the snake). It has been initiated by Nancy de Freitas, School of Art and Design, Auckland Institute of Technology. The catalyst for this new SIG has been provided by recent developments in the postgraduate sector, including the emergence of several new M.A. and PhD programmes in the visual and performing

arts, and the widespread emphasis on upgrading of qualifications for lecturers working in these fields.

There is a particular need now for academics associated with the visual and performing arts to encourage more debate on notions of scholarship as they apply to the so called "creative" fields. There is a need also to broaden the general understanding of the wider academic community in relation to what consititutes the documentation of scholarship in these fields. Without this, it is difficult to secure contestable research funding within our institutions, and to build confidence in the work produced. More collegial dialogue will also lead to a wider and better informed pool of support for co-supervision and examination and will allow us to be better informed and able to advise our students on postgraduate options.

Over the short term, VIPASIG is expected to take shape as an electronic, Email forum. It will be established as a listserve based at the Auckland Institute of Technology. Anyone interested in subscribing should contact Nancy de Freitas at the address below. Once established, members will be able to play an active or passive role in the electronic dialogue and will be able to unsubscribe in the usual way. Members will be encouraged to participate at the 1998 HERDSA International Conference to be

held in Auckland, New Zealand, as a way of consolidating the group. At this conference, VIPASIG will provide a focus for the presentation of papers dealing with a broad range of issues, research and scholarship in the visual and performing arts. It is hoped that this new group will facilitate dialogue and collegiality between academics working in art and design fields, and in the performing arts.

Convenor: Nancy de Freitas
Email: nancy.defreitas@ait.ac.nz

Electronic membership:
Individually subscribe by sending an email message to:
    MAJORDOMO@AIT.AC.NZ

Leave the subject: line blank and write into the text area:
    subscribe vipasig

Language and Learning SIG

Convenor: Anita van der Wal
Email: alaev@cc.newcastle.edu.au

Electronic membership:
Individually subscribe by sending an email message to:
    localist@unsw.edu.au

Leave the subject: line blank and write into the text area:
    subscribe UNILEARN your firstname your lastname

BRANCH REPORT

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Contact:
Richard Fuller
Ph: 08 9370 6487
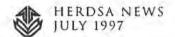*Email: r.fuller@cowan.edu.au*

Since we reported last time, the WA Branch has held three seminars, each of which was very well attended.

In May, Simone Volet of the School of Education, Murdoch University, discussed the academic adjustments faced by South-East Asian students and staff in Australian universities.

In June, Andy Kirkpatrick and Denise Mulligan of Curtin University addressed the issue of tertiary literacy particularly as it relates to critical reading and thinking.

In August, Tony Bates of the Open Learning Agency (British Columbia) discussed both the cost effectiveness of telelearning and the impact of technology-based teaching on adult learners.

Further seminars are planned for the rest of the year. Planning is well under way for the 1998 Teaching and Learning Forum to be held in the first week of February

Research in progress

The Student Experiences Study: Understanding the Factors that Affect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Students' Academic Success

Researchers

Sally Farrington, Susan Page, and Kristie Daniel DiGregorio

Funding body

Yooroang Garang: The Centre for Indigenous Health Studies and the School of Community Health, University of Sydney

Short description

For the past year, Yooroang Garang: The Centre for Indigenous Health Studies at the University of Sydney has been involved in a study of diploma students' academic success. The setting of the study is unique not only because it is a program designed by, for and about Indigenous Australians but also because it is offered in block mode where the academic year consists of four, intensive two-week blocks of instruction.

The initial questions for inquiry are, 1) what are students on- and off-campus experiences related to their academic outcomes? 2) what are the factors that challenge students' study on and off campus? 3) what are the factors that enhance students' study on and off campus? 4) what effect do study groups have on Indigenous health students' study? In the context of this research project, "study" has been defined as students' ability to perform the tasks required by the program, such as reading, attending class, and completing assignments.

The number of Indigenous university students has doubled in recent years, but the gap between Indigenous students' attainment and the attainment of other Australians has remained consistent. Clearly, in order to adequately meet the needs of Indigenous students and to support their educational aspirations, there is a need to elucidate the indicators of success, not in order to justify the exclusion of Indigenous students from tertiary education, but to refine and develop culturally relevant strategies for promoting student learning.

Key words

Indigenous Education, Adult Education, Block Mode, Academic Success

Contact information

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Stress in Academia

Researcher

Professor Terry Hore

Funding

Supported by study leave time and money from Monash University

Description

This project looks at the broad topic of stress in academic settings, in the academic and general staff populations, both in Australia and overseas.

There is little doubt that the problem is growing in all tertiary institutions. As this problem is a relatively new phemomenon in higher education few institutions have developed comprehensive policies/procedures for preventing the onset of stress. Occupational Health and Safety groups have done an excellent job at preventing physical injury, but the psychological health on the workplace has not received such detailed investigation.

My task is to examine all the literature I could find on the psychological health of the academic workplace and to discuss these issues with people around the world who are developing techniques to prevent the occurrence of stress. Finally, to develop a system which would be suitable to implement in a large multi-campus institution.

Key words

Staff; Faculty, Stress; Burnout, Psychological Health

Contact

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Conceptions of Research in Three Academic Domains

Researchers

Dr Angela Brew, Frank Phillis, The University of Sydney

Funding body

University of Sydney Research Grant

Project

The study aims to investigate the way in which academics conceptualise the research process. It is also investigating the perceptions academic researchers have of the relationship between their research and their personal learning as well as their perceptions of the relationship between their research, their teaching and ultimately their student's learning. The project is considering conceptions of academic researchers in three academic domains, derived from Habermas' (1987) Technical, Communicative and Emancipatory Knowledge Interest Domains.

Research is central to academic life. If more was known about academics' perceptions of research and its relationship with learning, it would be possible to exploit that knowledge in teaching and learning situations with students. Yet the process of research and how researchers view it have not traditionally been subjects for investigation. This means that there are many unanswered questions concerning the way research is perceived by academic researchers. The questions which this study addresses are: How do researchers' conceptions reflect the changes said to be taking place in academic disciplines in the late 20th Century ? To what extent do researchers perceive a relationship between their personal learning and in what ways do they perceive their research to have an effect on their teaching and on their students' learning?

In Phase One of the project, researchers who hold ARC research grants have been invited to participate. In Phase Two, the study is being extended to academic researchers holding other kinds of research grant.

Key words

scholarship, research, knowledge, phenomenography

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BRANCH REPORT

VICTORIA

Contact:
Di Thompson
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A/Prof Bernie Neville, Acting Dean of La Trobe University's School of Graduate Education was the guest speaker at the recent AGM. His topic, "Mythology of the crisis in higher education", stimulated a lot of discussion that has continued past the presentation.

The "Teaching Using the Web" on-line seminar was very successful with approximately 100 participants exploring the pedagogical and logistical issues of using the Web to teach. The second,

"Assisting Beginning Research Students from Non-Traditional Backgrounds", will be held at the RMIT City Campus on October 10, 1997 from 9.00am-noon and we are hopeful that a publication will come from this.

We are delighted that Prof Ingrid Moses, Chair of CUTSD, will join us on October 22 from noon-1.30pm.

As announced earlier this year, we are offering Meritorious Service awards which will recognise exceptional service to Higher Education in Victoria and beyond. Awards will be granted to an individual who has demonstrated leadership and excellence in higher education in the past five years. If you know anyone who should be considered for such an award please contact Dr Tony Owens, HERDSA (Vic) Secretary by

October 1, 1997 - email: jesse@rmit.edu.au - and a nomination form will be sent to you. Alternatively, use our Web-site:

http://sunsite.anu.edu.au/education/herdsa/vic/

Our annual State Conference "Academics and Universities: Partners in Business?" will be held on November 20 and 21 at the Rockman's Regency Hotel, Melbourne City Centre. This conference is to help each of us decide our position on key issues facing tertiary education, as well as help us construct our future collectively and individually. We look forward to another stimulating conference.

CONFERENCES ORGANISED FOR 1998

Adult Learning Cultures: Challenges and Choices

Theme: Adult Learning Cultures: Challenges and Choices
Place: Wellington Polytechnic, New Zealand
Date: 3 - 5 February 1998
Information: Conference Convenor: Anne Wicks,
P O Box 48139, Silverstream,
Upper Hutt, New Zealand
Phone/Fax: +64 - 4 - 527 9380
email: alconference@wnp.ac.nz
http://www.wnp.ac.nz

7th Annual Teaching & Learning Forum

Themes: Teaching and Learning in Times of Change. The Forum will provide opportunities for teaching staff to share teaching and learning methods, problems, projects and research with their colleagues. Conference organisers are now calling for contributions
Place: The University of Western Australia
Date: 4 - 5 February, 1998
Information: Barbara Black or Natalie Stanley
Tel: 08 9380 2136
email: nstanley@csd.uwa.edu.au

Learning Together - Collaboration in Open Learning. A Regional Forum

Themes: Adapting learning to local cultures and regional needs; International, inter-institutional and inter-sectoral cooperation; Alternative modes of delivery to ensure equity and quality; Technology and resource-based learning; Adapting business approaches to educational delivery.
Place: Curtin University of Technology, Perth, Australia
Date: 20-22 April 1998
Information: John Curtin Centre home page:
http://www.curtin.edu.au/curtin/centre/jc/

UNESCO Asia-Pacific International Conference

Themes: Education for the 21st Century. The conference will address the educational needs of the participating countries from the Asia-Pacific Region, and will be a forum for those who can influence policies.
Place: Melbourne, Australia
Date: 30 March - 3 April, 1988
Information: Geoff Haw Tel: +613 9628 4958
email: geoff.haw@dse.vic.gov.au
http://www.dse.vic.gov.au/cis/unesconf

The International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED) in Higher Education 2nd annual conference

Themes: Supporting Educational, Faculty and TA Development within Departments and Disciplines.
Place: Austin, Texas
Date: 19 - 22 April, 1998
Information: Karron Lewis
email: kglewis@mail.utexas.edu

3rd Pacific Rim Conference: First year in Higher Education

Place: Auckland, New Zealand
Date: 5 - 8 July 1998

25th Annual HERDSA Conference

Theme: Transformation in Higher Education
Place: Auckland, New Zealand
Date: 7 - 10 July 1998
Information: Barry Williams
Centre for Continuing Education
Email: b.williams@auckland.ac.nz
http://www.cce.auckland.ac.nz/herdsa98

Open and Distance Learning Association of Australasia (ODLAA)

in association with the Australasian Association of Distance Education Schools (AADES)

Theme: Open, Flexible and Distance Learning: Education and Training in the 21st Century

Place: University of Tasmania, Launceston

Date: 29 September - 3 October, 1997

Information: Conference Design P O Box 342, Sandy Bay 7006, Australia
Tel: +61 - 3 - 62 243773
Fax: +61 - 3 - 62 243774
email: conf.design.hba@trump.net.au

http://www.comm.utas.edu.au/Notices/odlaa.htm

1997 International ASHE Conference

Theme: Globalization and Change in Higher Education

Place: Albuquerque, New Mexico

Date: 5 - 8 November 1997

Information: Ms Billie Jones
email: bjones@acs.tamu.edu

Victorian HERDSA Branch Annual Conference

Theme: Academics and Universities: Partners in Business?

Place: Rockman's Regency Hotel, Melbourne City Centre

Date: 20 - 21 November, 1997

Information: Tony Owens,
Tel: 03 9468 2803
email: jesse@rmit.edu.au
http://sunsite.anu.edu.au/education/herdsa/vic

The Ethos of the University: a critical response to the West Review

Theme: An interdisciplinary conference to address issues arising from changing Government policy to funding of Higher Education. What is the ethos of the University? What do universities offer society? How does reduced public funding impact on what universities do? Invited speakers: - Ian Chubb, Eva Cox, Rachel Sharp, Simon Marginson.

Place: Organised by the Centre for Applied Philosophy and the Flinders Institute for the Study of Teaching, to be held at Flinders University, Adelaide

Dates: 23 -24 November, 1997

Information: Sandra.Egege@flinders.edu.au

SEDA Second Annual Conference for Staff Developers

Themes: Institutional change as a vehicle for promoting staff and educational development; identifying motivating and developing the next generation of staff and educational developers

Place: Birmingham, UK

Date: 1 - 2 December 1997

Information: SEDA administration
email: office@seda.demon.co.uk

The Postgraduate Experience 1997

Theme: Approach, Access and Management

Place: Capetown, South Africa

Date: 4 - 5 December 1997

Information: Deborah McTeer,
Postgraduate Conference Division,
UCT Medical School,
Observatory 7925.
Tel: 021 - 448 6348; Fax: 021 - 448 6263
email: deborah@medicine.uct.ac.za

Third National Information Literacy Conference

Organised by the University of South Australia Library in association with the ALIA Information Literacy Taskforce

Theme: Information Literacy: The Professional Issue
Keynote speakers:
Phil Candy, Barbara Lepani

Place: CIT, Canberra

Date: 8 - 9 December, 1997

Information: Irene Doskatsch
Tel: 08 8302 6219
email: irene.doskatsch@unisa.edu.au

Society for Research into Higher Education: Beyond the first Degree

Themes: Life-long Learning; Graduate Employment; Postgraduate Education

Place: University of Warwick, United Kingdom

Date: 16 - 18 December 1997

Information: SRHE '97 Conference Secretariat
Tel: +44 - 131 - 556 9245
Fax: +44 - 131 - 556 9638
email: 100256.1750@compuserve.com
http://www.srhe.ac.uk/srhe/