



HERDSA Member's Survey 2009

by Geoffrey Crisp

The HERDSA Executive meets face-to-face two or three times each year and discusses a very full agenda of items relating to the various portfolio areas and services offered to members. One of the responsibilities of the Executive is to undertake regular reviews of the Executive operations, including the HERDSA Office, the communication channels with members, and the operational aspects of the international journal HERD and the annual HERDSA Conference. Early in 2009 the HERDSA Executive discussed the need for feedback from HERDSA members on the types of services that HERDSA should be offering and the relevance and quality of existing services. An online survey was developed with the generous assistance of Executive member, Deanne Gannaway and the Evaluation Services Unit within the Teaching and Educational Development Institute (TEDI) at The University of Queensland.

The online survey collected some demographic information about respondents, such as their role classification and career stage, their institution type, and their length of time as a HERDSA member; the survey questions related to member's awareness of, and satisfaction with, the various services and activities offered through HERDSA as a professional organisation. It is imperative that the HERDSA Executive is aware of, and

actively uses, members' feedback. The results of the 2009 survey were discussed by the Executive at the November 2009 meeting and will frame further discussions at the July 2010 Executive meeting that will be held as part of HERDSA 2010 conference in Melbourne.

This article summarises the responses from members to the 2009 survey and some of our reflections on members' comments. The official report prepared by the Evaluation Services Unit at TEDI is available on the HERDSA website at http://www.herdsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/HERDSA_FinalRpt_20091111.pdf

HERDSA Member's Survey Results

In late 2009 there were 936 HERDSA members who were invited to complete the online survey; 352 members responded, representing a 38% response rate. Although it would have been better to have received more responses from members, this percentage is sufficient to be able to draw valid inferences from the responses.

The majority of respondents were academic staff members (78% compared to 13% professional staff), mid (43%) to late (37%) in their career, from Australia (73%), working in a university in a major city (70%); a significant majority of respondents indicated that they

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From the Editor

In this issue we are publishing the results of the survey completed by HERDSA members last July, August together with comments on the results by the President of HERDSA, Geoff Crisp. The results indicate HERDSA is providing a valuable service to members particularly through its publications but more visible action needs to be seen in the area of policy advocacy. I am hoping to resume the Policy in Higher Education column in the News as a contribution to this.

No-one will need reminding that research publications play a very significant role in determining the career prospects of academic staff. The article by Roger Atkinson reveals that authors are now very conscious of the ranking of journals as determined by bodies like the Australian Research Council and will try to get their work published in highly ranked journals. The problem for researchers in the fields of education is the low regard the ARC seems to have for their research as compared with say physics. In the light of this it is encouraging that HERDSA'S international journal HERD did have an A* ranking in the 2008 list but which has just slipped back to an A rank in the latest list.

The article by Martin Davies describing his experiences as an editor of a special issue of HERD reveals how competitive it is to get an article published and hopefully gives authors a useful insight into the processes involved in bringing an article to press. At least the increase in the number of issues of HERD per year has cleared a backlog and reduced the waiting time for publication.

Academic development is managed in a variety of ways in universities. The December 2009 issue of the News published a model adopted by the University of New South

Wales and this issue reports the model adopted by the University of the Sunshine Coast in which academic development and research are brought under one administration.

It is encouraging to hear of the revival of branch activities in Victoria and Queensland especially as the 2011 conference is planned to take place in Brisbane. Members in more remote locations of Queensland might consider the possibility of organising small scale activities with the help of funds that are available from the HERDSA office. Contact Jennifer Ungaro in the office for more information.

We have been trying to make news about the Society more easily accessible so that the weekly email News is now available as an RSS feed Check the Newsletter section of the website www.herdsa.org.au

I've been reading a couple of contrasting books recently. The first is "How to get things done" by David Allen. That sounds like one of the myriad time management books but in fact the author presents a system for stress-free productive work which is worth considering in this age of enormous pressure under which so many work. Some brief quotes from the book are scattered through this issue. The second book is "The Power of Pause" by Terry Hershey which encourages us to take time out from the frantic pace to pause and reflect in life by asking questions like "what if life isn't about finishing on top but knowing when to stop?" Here a one suggestion for a "pause". Find a bench to sit on. Practice going to that spot at least once a day, just to stop, to quit, and let your soul catch up.

Roger Landbeck

SEDA Staff and Educational Development Association.

(The HERDSA Association in the UK)

Check out the publications and events on their website

www.seda.ac.uk



HERDSA Member's Survey 2009

from page 1

were likely to continue their HERDSA membership into the following year (84%). The most commonly nominated position descriptions were *Discipline-based academic* (29%), *Academic developer* (24%) and *Educational researcher* (23%). This relatively even distribution of position descriptions is relevant as HERDSA reflects on its role into the future; more discipline-based academics are undertaking educational research in their discipline and more academics are choosing a research path that incorporates educational research. Our international journal HERD was recently awarded an A ranking by the Australian Research Council (http://www.arc.gov.au/era/era_journal_list.htm) and so HERDSA is providing a quality journal for members to publish their research output.

Respondents indicated that 63% had been HERDSA members for less than 3 years with 26% indicating a membership period in excess of 6 years. When asked why they had joined HERDSA, the most commonly nominated reasons were *to network with other professionals* (28%) and *to improve professional capabilities* (26%); the two next most popular reasons were to receive the HERD journal (21%) and the fact that the registration fee for non-members for the annual conference automatically included membership (19%).

The vast majority of respondents agreed that *HERDSA effectively supports a community of scholars in higher education* (84%, Figure 1). Clearly this is an overall endorsement for one of the key roles for HERDSA, to facilitate the networking of scholars and support for a community with common interests. Similarly, 78% of respondents agreed with the statement *Overall I am satisfied with HERDSA as an organisation* (Figure 2). The responses given by *Discipline-based academics* and *Academic developers* showed no significant differences to these two statements.

Only 49% of respondents agreed that *HERDSA is an effective advocate on higher education policy issues*; 39% of respondents were neutral on this question. The Executive will discuss this issue more fully at the July 2010 meeting, but it clearly shows that members are not overwhelmingly convinced that HERDSA is fulfilling one of

its perceived roles as a leader in commenting and advocating in the political space. This is a difficult area for the Executive as individuals or groups may have very strong opinions about educational policy matters, but HERDSA as an organisation needs to represent the diversity that exists in the views of its members. HERDSA has members from numerous countries and the Executive has representation from Australia and New Zealand (the two countries with the majority of members). Past HERDSA Presidents have represented HERDSA at national forums in Australia and New Zealand and *HERDSA News* (published three times a year and distributed to all members and freely available for others in digital format on the HERDSA website) has featured articles on educational policy

matters by HERDSA members and has the regular "Higher Education in the Headlines" section. Nevertheless, the Executive will continue to discuss appropriate avenues to advocate and comment on educational issues at national meetings to ensure we are meeting the expectations of members.

The majority of respondents (72%) agreed that *participating in HERDSA activities enhanced their professional capabilities*. This is a very positive result and reinforces the importance that HERDSA should place on facilitating and supporting networking opportunities and publishing opportunities for members. However, 22% of respondents were neutral on this issue and we would like to reduce this number so that even more members perceive that their association

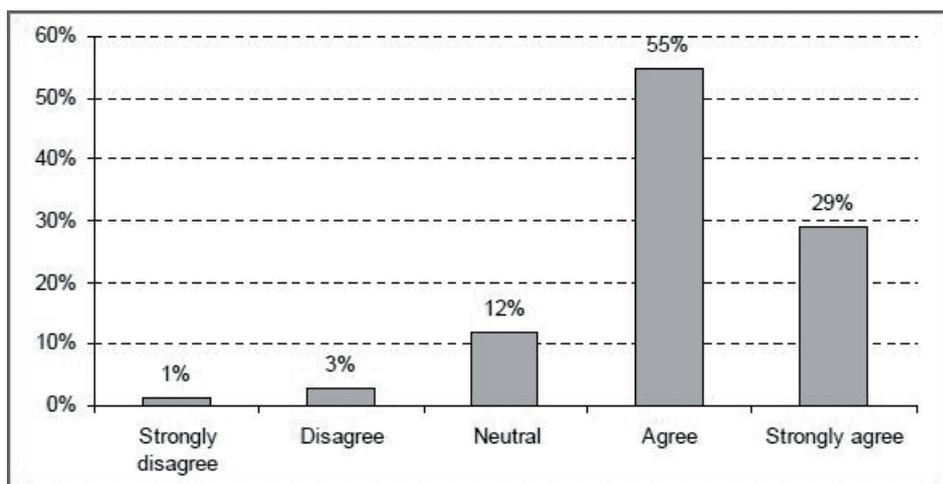


Figure 1 *HERDSA effectively supports a community of scholars in higher education*

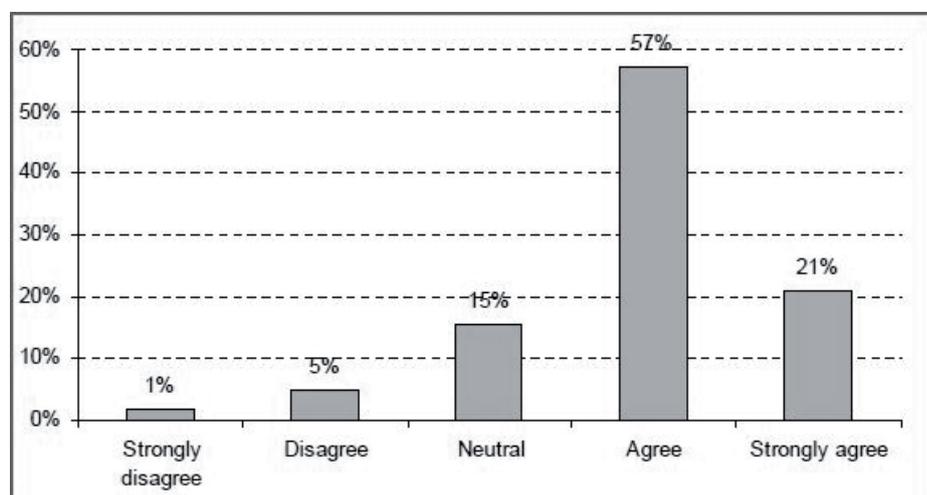


Figure 2 *Overall I am satisfied with HERDSA as an organisation*

with HERDSA is positively assisting them in their professional development.

Of concern to the Executive were the responses to the question *I encourage my colleagues to join HERDSA*, where only 56% of respondents agreed with this statement, 28% were neutral and 16% disagreed. Clearly this indicates some hesitation on behalf of members with respect to the perceived benefits of HERDSA membership, even though 84% thought HERDSA effectively supported a community of scholars. It may be that colleagues are not in the same space in terms of educational practice and scholarship as HERDSA members and so membership may not be as relevant for these colleagues. The Executive will review in more detail the open-ended comments provided by respondents to many of the questions to determine what action might be required on this issue.

HERDSA Activities and Services – Relevance and Quality

As expected, the *HERDSA Annual Conference* was an important activity for the majority of members (68%); equally expected was the fact that all respondents were aware of the annual conference. The annual conference was the only activity or service to receive this level of awareness. Interestingly, only 28% of respondents reported attending the annual conference *Frequently* or *Very frequently*. In the comparisons between *Discipline-based academic* members and *Academic developer* members there was a statistically significant difference detected in the frequency of attendance at the annual conference; *Academic developers* reported attending the conference more often than their *Discipline-based academic* colleagues. *Discipline-based academic* staff might have discipline-based conferences that are attended by more of their colleagues and regular attendance at these conferences may be perceived as more advantageous for discipline-based HERDSA members; *Academic developers* would likely have fewer competing conferences for higher educational research.

The *HERD Journal* is an important service and frequently read by the majority of members (87%). Consistent with this, 68% of respondents reported reading the *HERD Journal* *Frequently* or *Very frequently*. Gaining an A rating from the Australian Research Council for HERD is important for HERDSA members, as was the increase

in the number of volumes published each year. The time from article submission to publication has been significantly reduced over the past two years, thanks to the dedication of the HERD Editors in streamlining the review process and increasing the number of Associate Editors.

The *HERDSA News*, published and distributed to members three times a year, was an important service (73%) and frequently read by the majority of members (62%). The *HERDSA Weekly Email News* was also an important service (69%) and frequently read (64%) by the majority of members. However, 10% of respondents indicated they were not aware of this service, even though all HERDSA members automatically receive the weekly email. This may indicate that HERDSA membership contact details are not up to date for some members and the Membership Portfolio of the Executive is investigating methods to keep the email lists current. Interestingly, *Academic developers* reported a significantly higher level of importance and reading frequency to the *Email News* compared to *Discipline-based academics*.

The *HERDSA Fellowship Scheme* is an important service for only a minority of members (33%); approximately 10% of respondents were not aware of the Scheme. Very few respondents reported joining HERDSA to become a Fellow. The HERDSA Fellowship Scheme is unique amongst such schemes in professional organisations since it is a professional development scheme as well as a recognition scheme. Fellowships are awarded to members who have had their portfolio rigorously assessed by two Assessors; they are then allocated to a Triad with two other Fellows and continue their professional development whilst writing regular updates to their professional development portfolios. These updates are reviewed by their Triad partners in a collegial manner and at the end of three years each Fellow submits a development portfolio that is formally reviewed by members of the HERDSA Fellowship Committee. If members would like to find out more about what is like to apply for a Fellowship, they should consult recent issues of *HERDSA News* where they will find personal reflections of the Fellowship journey from a number of Fellows.

The *HERDSA Website* is an important service for only 44% of members, and is used frequently by only 9% of members; a

small proportion of respondents indicated they were not even aware of the HERDSA website (2%). This is definitely an area where the Executive will have further discussions as the website is an important source of information for members and we will seek approaches to make the site more relevant to members. It is worth noting that 49% of respondents reported using the website *Occasionally*.

The *HERDSA Branch Activities* were important for only 29% of members; additionally, only 12% of respondents reported attending branch activities frequently and 10% of respondents were not aware of the branch activities. New Zealand members reported significantly higher attendance frequencies at branch activities compared to their Australian counterparts. Increasing the profile of HERDSA branches has been one of the priorities for the current Executive. We have seen significant local activity in the Australian Capital Territory thanks largely to the enthusiasm of Executive member Robert Kennelly; Deanne Gannaway has recently organised HERDSA branch sessions in Brisbane and the Victoria branch has been reinvigorated and Melbourne will be the venue for HERDSA 2010. Thriving local branches are important to the future of HERDSA and the Executive is keen to facilitate local activities by members.

The *HERDSA Responses to national policy documents or initiatives* was an important function for 54% of respondents, although 15% of respondents were not aware of this function of HERDSA. The immediate past President of HERDSA, Shelda Debowski, made considerable efforts to project HERDSA as a major player on the Australian higher education stage, participating in important forums and writing submissions to government papers on behalf of HERDSA. In New Zealand the New Zealand branch has done the same, commenting on key policy documents and contributing in parallel fora. The current Executive is keen to continue this trend and to ensure that HERDSA is seen as representing a voice for evidence-based and scholarly approaches to educational policy development.

Conclusions

HERDSA members were generally satisfied with the extent to which HERDSA was achieving its overall objectives. The areas that

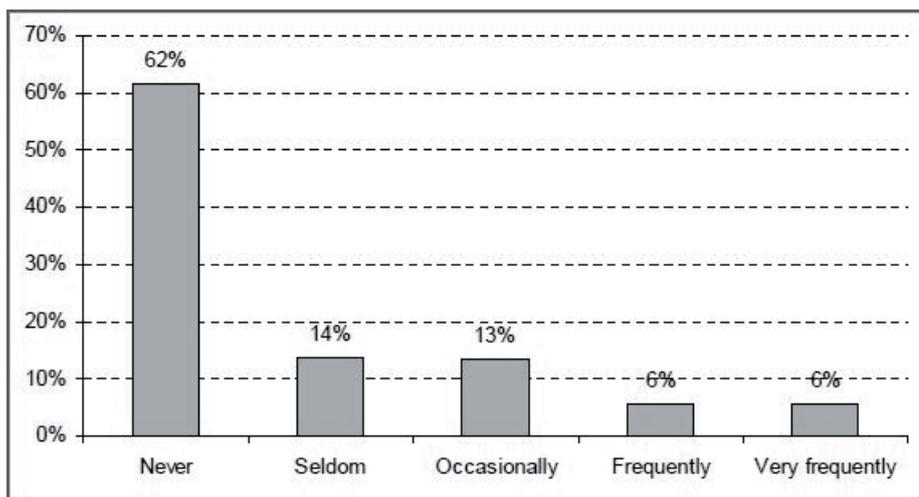


Figure 3 *How frequently do you attend the HERDSA branch activities?*

require further attention from the Executive include how best to support local HERDSA branch activities so that HERDSA is seen as more than an annual conference and an A rated journal, and raising the profile of HERDSA's commentary and advocacy

for higher education policy issues. The HERDSA website still requires more thought in terms of the relevance of the information for members and the ease with which members can find information.

HERDSA will continue to support activities and services that are relevant for both discipline-based academic staff and academic developers. The survey has shown that there are differences in the needs of these two groups as well as those members who identified as educational researchers. I would encourage more discipline-based academics to put themselves forward as nominees for the HERDSA Executive and to participate regularly in local branch activities, in addition to submitting papers for HERD and the annual conference.

I would finally like to thank all members who responded to the survey; your responses have provided a rich source of data for the Executive to discuss at the July 2010 meeting. I would also like to thank Deanne Gannaway and staff at the Evaluation Services Unit at TEDI for developing, analysing and reporting the survey.

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Thoughts of a Special Issue Editor

By Martin Davies

I thought I would write a few lines about my experience as a Guest Editor for a special issue of HERD. I hoped that this might help those who also have the honour of doing a similar task for the society in the future.

I was first approached to be a guest editor at the 2009 HERDSA conference in Darwin. Isabel attended my workshop on computer-aided argument mapping and asked me whether I would be willing to do the job of editing a special issue of HERD entitled "Critical Thinking in Higher Education". I had no idea what it might entail, but I more or less agreed on the spot. It was a good topic for a special issue, very timely, and in my area of expertise. The experience was not a bad thing for my CV either.

After a couple of months of formalities—signing an editor's agreement, deciding on

the text for an advertisement, sending out the advertisement, and being educated about the finer points of Manuscript Central—the process began. There was a short delay before papers started coming in, but by Christmas 2009 I was already at work. Indeed, I spent most of my Christmas break—the month of January—working on the early stages of editorial work, the critical first stage of peer review. At one point, I was fielding editorial questions on my iPhone while on a bicycle ride with my eight-year old son.

I received a total of twenty-two papers for the special issue. Only eight papers could be accepted. Each paper was reviewed by at least four reviewers, in many cases, more. Therefore at least eighty-eight reviewers were involved. That's a lot of people and a lot of collective effort. In one case, a paper

was reviewed by eight separate reviewers (it was a particularly interesting paper on a unique topic). In another case, I could only find one willing reviewer (even though I approached six). But there was an average of four reviewers for each paper.

What follows is a list of points that future editors might consider in terms of managing this process and ensuring that it all goes smoothly:

1. **Send out papers for review as soon as they arrive.** Papers come in thick and fast. It is hard to manage more than one paper well. Selecting appropriate reviewers is the duty of the editor, so one has to devote some time to each paper, ensuring that the authors and reviewers expertise and interests match. You don't want to be rushed in this, so it's best to keep on top of papers as they come in.

(I missed checking my email one day to find three papers awaiting me the next day.)

2. Don't rely on three reviewers.

Three reviews is a good number (two convergent reviews on a paper is also acceptable), but three is expected. Often, however, you will not always get three academics who are willing to review. Academics have busy lives and there is little to be gained from reviewing. Indeed, it is a gratuitous labour of love for the discipline. So expect "declines" more often than not. Editors therefore have to over-compensate by asking more reviewers than they think they need. At one point I asked eight reviewers and all agreed! More often than not if you ask six reviewers, three will agree.

3. Get more reviewers. You are assumed to have some knowledge and expertise in the area of the special issue so soliciting new reviewers should not be hard. The HERD reviewer database is not large and the same reviewers are often (unfairly) used. For a special issue this is inappropriate. A simple search of Google is sufficient to find any number of experts on any number of topics. Add them to the right fields in Manuscript Central and send out your invitation letter. When they agree and login they should be prompted to add their institutional details and fields of expertise. This adds to the HERD database which assists other editors in the future.

4. Resist the temptation to review yourself. As Editor, you are not required to review papers yourself—at least, not during the first round. Of course you are required to make a judgement based on the reviews. I found that I was busy enough fielding papers, finding reviewers, soliciting new ones, inviting reviewers, etc., to comment myself during the first round anyway. In one sense, this is a good thing. It is important that the blind peer review process goes its normal course before the Editor has his or her final say. It is easy to be "tainted" by the views of others and form judgements too early. Naturally enough, in reading the papers I formed a view about which ones I thought I would like to publish in the special issue. But often a paper comes back from the first round of peer review markedly improved. Good papers can be jettisoned too early.

Therefore, I'd suggest that Editors keep any comments they may have until the second round of peer review. This allows time for reflection as well.

5. Don't assume all reviewers are fair. In most cases reviewers are balanced and fair-minded and to be applauded for all the unpaid work they do. In others cases, reviewers can have a "barrow to push", and can be petulant and unreasonable in their demands of authors. For example, a very interesting small scale exploratory paper with interviews with six students was required by one reviewer to have an inappropriate large-scale quantitative methodology. Ignore such demands as you see fit.

6. Not all reviewers write an adequate review. In most cases reviewers do an outstanding job often writing several pages of detailed comments and suggestions for improvement for authors. Some even correct typos and other infelicities. They are to be commended. On the other hand, some reviewers write no more than a few lines of quite unhelpful remarks. As Editor you can make a comment on the quality of the reviewers' comments in Manuscript Central.

7. Reviewers don't always agree. Often there is a large disparity in terms of the judgement of reviewers about a potential article. Kate Chanock received the following two reviews for a piece that she once submitted for publication:

Referee A wrote:

"... the manuscript reads very much like a novel rather than a scientific report. As such the manuscript lacks a theoretical grounding in reading research from which specific hypotheses can be tested. No data is reported, from either standardised or experimental tests, and there was no attempt to measure objectively ... Consequently, as this manuscript is purely subjective in nature I consider it to be totally unsuitable for publication in a prestigious scientific journal such as the *Journal of Research in XX*."

Referee B wrote:

"... ACCEPT – it's a delightfully off-the-piste piece, beautifully written ... and the only effect of trying to insist on more or more scholarly ... references would be to take the bloom off it."

(Kate Chanock, "Some Thoughts about Reviewing", in <http://www.aall.org.au/node/289> Accessed: 8/3/2010).

The diversity of opinion is not always so pronounced, but it can sometimes be surprising just how different the opinions as to the suitability of a piece can be. This is the nature of blind peer reviewing. Submitting a paper to blind peer review is the best measure we have of the value of a piece of work. This is where you come in as Guest Editor of course. The role of the Editor is to adjudicate between these positions and arrive at a fair and impartial judgement.

8. You are not alone. It is important to remember that you are not alone in your deliberations as Editor. The Chief Editors also vet the papers. They generally follow the recommendation of the Guest Editor or Associate Editors, and only if they have questions or concerns, do they approach the Guest Editor for clarification. I have found that Chief Editors of HERD to be very gracious and obliging, and I think we managed the special issue fairly well together (to date anyway, it is far from finished). But before the Special Issue Editor and Chief Editors see papers they are also "vetted" by the HERD Administrator, Meaghan. Thus there is potentially a five or six stage process of review: initial vetting, initial review, Special Editor's recommendation, Chief Editor's recommendations, second round review, final decision by Editor. There were a few times when this three-way editorial review was very welcome. The HERD Administrator picked up on many manuscripts which were over the 7000 word limit and required authors to reduce them in length prior to submission. This saved the Editors a lot of time. The HERD Administrator also picked up an instance of a paper which had been self-plagiarised.

The process of editing a journal is as fair as it can be made to be. It is not free of flaws of other human errors of course, but it is fair. I have found the experience to be an interesting one and I encourage other colleagues, if approached, to give it a go.

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Assessing Students' Web 2.0 Activities

By Jenny Waycott and Kathleen Gray

Web 2.0 tools – or social web technologies – are said to offer great benefits when used to support student learning in higher education. The term Web 2.0 covers a broad spectrum of web-based tools and activities – from blogging and wiki writing to photo and video-sharing, from social networking to social bookmarking, and from creating and sharing podcasts to participating in virtual world environments such as Second Life. These seemingly diverse activities share some important features that make them potentially valuable in a learning environment. User-created content is central to Web 2.0 environments, as are collaboration and open publishing: Web 2.0 content is “co-created by and for the community of connected users” (O’Reilly & Battelle, 2009, p. 1). Users share their work by publishing it in an open forum. Other members of the online community can then comment on and respond to that content, creating an opportunity for dispersed learning communities to develop and flourish. Many educational commentators have suggested that these features could be valuable for supporting learning in higher education (e.g., Alexander, 2006; McLoughlin & Lee, 2008). For example:

e-Learning incorporating Web 2.0 offers the sense of being a contributing member of a learning community, which is one of the hallmarks of higher education. [...] Learning that is active – by doing – undertaken within a community and based on individual’s interests, is widely considered to be the most effective. Driven by process rather than content, such an approach helps students become self-directed and independent learners. Web 2.0 is well suited to serving and supporting this type of learning. (Melville, Allan, Crampton, Fothergill, Godfrey, Haloe et al., 2009, p. 8)

To date there has been much interest in the potential use of Web 2.0 tools in higher education, a number of successful (and not so successful) trials reported in the literature, some scoping of assessment possibilities (Bobby Elliott, 2007), and

pointed observation of the implications Web 2.0 learning activities might have for assessment standards and academic integrity (Collis & Moonen, 2008). However there are few detailed examples of good practices in Web 2.0 assessment available for academics to refer to (see Gray, Thompson, Sheard, Clerehan & Hamilton, in press). A project funded by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council aims to address this gap. The project, led by The University of Melbourne, Monash University and RMIT University, is developing a set of resources for academics who are assessing student Web 2.0 activities. To date, the project has:

- (a) conducted a survey of academics’ use of Web 2.0 tools in assessing student activities in universities across Australia;
- (b) developed a draft framework of good practice guidelines for the assessment of student Web 2.0 activities; and
- (c) embarked on 18 pilot projects that will be used to field-test and refine the draft good practice guidelines.

What Do We Know About Web 2.0 and Assessment?

Web 2.0 tools can facilitate assessment activities that differ substantially from the sorts of assignments students and staff may be used to. For example, students might be asked to: keep a blog throughout the unit of study for others in the class to read and comment on; upload video presentations about their projects to YouTube; use a wiki to construct a new textbook in collaboration with the whole class; or collaborate and share work in progress with professionals from outside the university. The use of Web 2.0 tools in such ways introduces new challenges and issues that may not be clearly addressed by existing guidelines for good assessment practice in higher education. For instance, the public nature of Web 2.0 content raises concerns for both students and staff. Is it appropriate, for example, for lecturers to provide feedback to students in the form of a public comment on a student’s blog posting?

In September 2009 we conducted an online survey of 60 Australian lecturers’ use of Web 2.0 tools in learning activities that form part of students’ summative assessment, supplemented by interviews with 22 respondents. The purpose of the surveys and interviews was to gain insight into issues relating to academic standards, assessment and reporting practices with regards to the assessment of student Web 2.0 activities. Most survey respondents felt that the assignments they described addressed fundamental assessment or strategy expectations, such as developing graduate attributes and encouraging academic honesty and integrity. The interview data, however, reveal more detail about these issues, including concerns about student work and lecturer feedback being publicly available. In many cases, lecturers commented on the positive aspects of enabling students to publish their work in a public forum, suggesting that this promoted authentic writing activities and had a positive impact on academic integrity. However, some interviewees believed there were students who felt uncomfortable undertaking public Web 2.0 learning activities, and there were some concerns about how to manage collaborative Web 2.0 work (e.g., when students could delete other students’ work on a wiki).

These issues, combined with an increasing expectation that lecturers will introduce Web 2.0 activities in a range of disciplines, mean it is important and timely to develop guidelines that focus specifically on good practice when assessing student Web 2.0 activities.

Good Practice Guidelines: Development and Field-testing

In November 2009 we held a National Roundtable attended by members of our project advisory group: academics from across Australia with expertise in student learning, assessment, e-learning, or with practical experience in using Web 2.0 technologies in university teaching. Several

international experts also participated remotely by contributing to the event wiki. The proceedings of this event, combined with an initial summary of findings from our survey and interview data, were used to develop a draft framework of good practice guidelines for the assessment of student Web 2.0 activities. The project reference group, comprising stakeholder representatives from the three partner universities, also contributed to the development of these guidelines. The draft guidelines consist of three checklists for academics to use to consider an assessment activity in relation to the affordances of Web 2.0 tools, the processes of managing assessment, and the academic policy environment.

The draft guidelines are currently being further developed through field-testing in a range of learning and teaching settings in five Australian universities (The University of Melbourne, Monash, RMIT, Swinburne, and Victoria University). The 18 pilot projects come from a wide range of subject areas, and include a variety of Web 2.0 activities, including wiki writing in accounting, social networking in languages, vodcasting in business, role-playing blogs in legal studies, reflective blogs in cultural studies, virtual worlds in business studies, and virtual worlds in language studies. Each pilot project will focus on a particular assignment in which students are assessed for their Web 2.0 activities. We will be examining the processes lecturers and other teaching staff follow when designing, implementing, marking, reporting and reviewing the assignment. The main aim of this stage of the research is to assess the usefulness of our draft guidelines, to determine how the guidelines could be improved, and to provide detailed examples of case studies of the assessment of student Web 2.0 activities in higher education.

The final good practice guidelines will be disseminated to Australian universities at the end of this year. It is anticipated that the documents and findings produced from this project will be useful resources both for those academics who are already using Web 2.0 tools in their teaching, and for those who are interested in developing learning

activities that involve Web 2.0 authoring tools. In the latter case, the resources can provide support for academics designing activities and assessment rubrics that make best use of the technological affordances of Web 2.0 tools to meet specific learning objectives. The resources may also foster new approaches to assessment commensurate with the features of Web 2.0 tools and activities.

More information about this project, including the documents produced to date, is available from <http://www.groups.edna.edu.au/course/view.php?id=2146>

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"Imagination is more important than knowledge"

Albert Einstein

Jointly Advancing Teaching and Research at the University of the Sunshine Coast

By Don Maconachie

Introduction

Academic development in Australian universities differs from institution to institution and tends to be characterised by contrasting approaches on several dimensions. Some academic development units (ADUs) are exclusively or predominantly staffed by academics, others by professional staff. Academic development may be centralised or distributed, or something in between. Some units are relatively large with a full suite of functions, including for instance, responsibility for e-learning, while others are smaller and focus on fewer aspects of the development of learning and teaching. In some universities there is a stronger expectation that the ADU be involved directly in academic work, whereas the emphasis at others is more on service provision. And the delivery of support services may be directed primarily at academic organisational units (faculties and schools), or at the professional development of individual members of staff. At some institutions ADU staff work only with academic staff, while at others they also commonly work with professional staff.

Academic development at the University of the Sunshine Coast (USC) is conducted by both academic and professional staff; is centralised, but coordinated with faculties; the ADU is relatively small but has a wide range of responsibilities; the provision of advice and support is emphasised, but increasingly ADU staff also engage directly in R&D in learning and teaching; the approach to academic development is strategic and oriented towards capacity-building; and academic development activities positively involve both academic and professional staff.

In addition, at USC academic development includes the development of research. One cost centre – Teaching and Research Services – is the location for the Office of Learning and Teaching, and the Office of Research, and the two offices work within a common matrix of corporate, academic

development, and academic administration responsibilities. While this arrangement is partly to do with economies of scale in a relatively small institution, it is influenced by the fact that the one Deputy Vice-Chancellor (DVC) is responsible for both teaching and research, and reflects the fact that USC is not yet a research-intensive university, it is also the result of a view that both teaching and research always need further development, and that similar approaches work well in each arena.

This article describes the institutional conditions that have led to USC's particular mix of academic development activities, especially the combining of teaching and research development, and offers some explanations for the apparent success of the approach.

The Context

When USC opened in 1996, it was the first new public university on a green-field site in Australia for 23 years. Now in its 14th year, in university terms, it remains a very new institution. The campus is still being built, its educational programs continue to develop, its research strengths are just beginning to emerge, and its staff profile is yet to mature. Regional engagement has been a central theme since the beginning and this is the level at which USC has had most impact to date. However, USC is ambitious and the sheer speed of its growth and development lends weight to its aspirations to be a middle-sized high quality teaching and research institution within ten years.

The strategic development of USC's teaching and research profile, performance and culture is primarily the responsibility of the DVC. The DVC's portfolio involves the faculties, the designated research centres, and the areas that directly support teaching and research, such as the academic development unit, the research office, the library, student services and the like. The DVC's role provides a strong steering core for the development of teaching and

research. Driven through the main academic structures of the University – the faculties and research centres – this direction creates opportunities and imperatives for academic and professional staff to engage with the strategic development of teaching and research. This includes opportunities to connect with the development of teaching and research provided through USC's strong academic committees.

The chairs of the Academic Board's standing committees – Learning and Teaching Management Committee; Research Management Committee; and Research Degrees Committee – play major roles in the leadership of teaching and research. These chairs work closely with the DVC in advancing teaching and research performance, and in developing the planning, policy and operational environment for teaching and research. A key component of the leadership provided by the committee chairs is stimulating active staff engagement with the work of the committees. All of the committees provide the Academic Board with a set of annual priorities which depend, for their implementation, on the contributions of members to a range of working parties. In the past three years the standing committees have galvanised the wider university community through the development of a new learning and teaching plan, research and research training plan, professional development plans for teachers, researchers and supervisors, and a complete overhaul of USC's key academic policies.

The intense effort of developing teaching and research in a new university such as USC requires significant support. To provide this, USC not only relies upon the collaborative efforts of both academic and professional staff, but also a coordinated approach to providing advice and support for the development of teaching and research.

Advice and Support for the Development of Teaching and Research

Teaching and Research Services (TARS) is part of the DVC's portfolio, supporting the DVC and the academic committees in the development of teaching and research across the University. TARS comprises the Office of Learning and Teaching and the Office of Research. Its functions and services are determined by the DVC and Academic Board, and are described at Figure 1.

The matrix of functions and services shared by the Office of Learning and Teaching and the Office of Research illustrates the underlying ideas that inform academic development at USC. Key amongst these are:

- That the work of academic development ought to be made explicit and, in order to be strategic, needs to be endorsed by the DVC and the Academic Board;
- That the development of learning and teaching, and of research and research training, can be conceptualised and described within a common framework; and
- That to be effective in the new context, academic development needs to include not only traditional professional development and program development activities, but also a range of corporate responsibilities and academic administration functions.

Why it Works

USC is yet to achieve the scale and quantity of academic outcomes and outputs that will allow it to rise up the national rankings on all scales, but it already does very well on several measures and the rate at which it is increasing its numbers is among the fastest in the sector. For instance, USC has grown at an average of 10% per annum since 1996 and is currently the fastest growing university in Australia. USC performed well in the former Learning and Teaching Performance Fund, and is enjoying success with ALTC programs. And in the period from 2006 to 2009 USC's external research income increased six-fold, its refereed publications trebled, and its research student completions almost doubled.

Clearly, many factors influence the teaching and research profile, performance and culture of a university, and causal links

between these and academic development activity can only be demonstrated through systematic data collection and analysis. However, it is reasonable to suggest that, with the evident rapid development of USC, something about its approach to academic development is working.

The following observations can be made about this apparent success:

1. Academic development at USC is a strategic intervention intended to accelerate the rate at which the University achieves its longer-term goals in teaching and research.
2. The overall design of academic development at USC is led by the DVC, with the support of the University Executive, and is discussed and endorsed by the Academic Board.
3. The academic development enterprise at USC has four critical components: the Office of the DVC; the academic committees and their chairs; leadership positions and structures in faculties and schools; and the functions and services provided by TARS.
4. Combining support for the development of teaching and research in one cost centre provides coherent and efficient service provision and system development.
5. The combination also provides a level of mutual support so that TARS staff can be more effective in key areas such as identifying academic initiatives, providing strategic advice, planning and conducting professional development programs, supporting policy development, managing grants and awards, and in particular, providing advice and support in relation to the national quality agenda in both teaching and research.
6. An increasing focus on quality academic outcomes and outputs as the critical measures of success at the individual, academic organisational unit, and institutional levels, is mirrored by a growing emphasis on these in academic development activities.
7. The academic development effort is reinforced by strong and consistent recognition and reward structures, such as internal awards, professional leave, and academic promotion, with criteria and evidence requirements clearly

aligned with specific academic outcomes and outputs.

Other factors could also be listed, but this is the essential combination of elements that makes academic development at USC somewhat distinctive.

Conclusion

The Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD) is currently conducting a project designed to develop national benchmarks for academic development. Motivated in part by making a contribution to efforts aimed at bringing greater clarity to the work of ADUs, this project has thus far achieved considerable agreement among the Directors about the *domains* of academic development and some of the performance measures. These are informed by similar ideas to those behind the matrix of academic development functions and services shown in Figure 1. A similar project is about to commence that is aimed at drafting national benchmarks for research management, once again informed by ideas about the universality of these matters, despite their obviously contrasting expression at different institutions. The real test, however, of the commonplaces in the teaching and research development of universities may lie in the extent to which the performance measures for teaching and research are viewed as similar. Could the scholarly outcomes and outputs of teaching, such as quality publications and competitive grants, one day play something like the role they now play in research development, management, quality assessment (or standards) and funding? Whatever happens, academic development is likely to continue to become more strategic in nature, and go on being as relevant to research as it is to teaching.

Don Maconachie is Director of Teaching and Research Services at the University of the Sunshine Coast. Prior to this he had a similar position at the University of Ballarat, which followed earlier careers as a teacher and manager in the Victorian Education Department, and as Director of the Ballarat Community Education Centre. Don is currently Secretary of the Council of Australian Directors of Academic Development (CADAD) and convenor of a project to develop national benchmarks for academic development.

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<p>CORPORATE RESPONSIBILITIES Functions performed mainly for the DVC</p>	<p>ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT AND INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY-BUILDING (Functions and services performed through academic committees on behalf of faculties, schools and other cost centres)</p>	<p>ACADEMIC ADMINISTRATION (Functions and services performed mainly on behalf of the University as a whole)</p>
<p>Strategy and Planning Interpretation of the operating environment and provision of advice regarding strategy and planning in teaching and research Provision of advice and support for development of the Learning and Teaching Plan, and the Research and Research Training Plan</p>	<p>Professional Development Provision of advice and support for institutional planning for professional development in teaching and research Provision of professional development programs in teaching and research Management of participation data related to professional development in teaching and research</p>	<p>Teaching and Research Grants Provision of information about grant opportunities Management of major grant round processes Administration of internal and external grants Management of institutional grant data</p>
<p>External Liaison Maintenance of effective working relationships with government departments and other agencies Development of submissions and responses to government departments and other agencies</p>	<p>Program Development Provision of advice and support for program and course design and development Provision of advice and support for research and research training program development</p>	<p>Teaching and Research Awards Provision of information about award opportunities Management of major award rounds Administration of external teaching awards Provision of advice about internal awards Management of Vice-Chancellor's medals processes</p>
<p>Communication Communication about key teaching and research matters Maintenance and development of the teaching and research sections of the corporate web page and portal Provision of regular staff newsletters about teaching and research</p>	<p>Evidence-based Practice Promotion and support for staff engagement with the scholarship of teaching and learning Provision of advice and support for scholarship of teaching and learning projects Promotion and support of staff engagement with evidence-based improvement of research supervision</p>	<p>Research Training Administration of higher degree by research (HDR) candidature Administration of the Graduate Centre facility and research training programs Management of institutional HDR/research training data</p>
<p>Teaching and Research Initiatives Leadership in the development and implementation of institutional projects in teaching and research</p>	<p>Policy and Operations Provision of advice to Academic Board standing committees regarding development and implementation of teaching and research policies and procedures, and academic rules</p>	<p>Publications Management of institutional teaching and research publications data</p>
<p>Consultancies and Outside Work Administration of consultancies and outside work</p>	<p>Quality Assurance and Improvement Provision of advice and support for Academic Board standing committees regarding quality assurance and improvement in teaching and research</p>	<p>Research Ethics Administration of research ethics Executive officer support for the Human Research Ethics Committee and the Animal Ethics Committee</p>
<p>Intellectual Property & Research Commercialisation Management of intellectual property matters, including copyright Management of research commercialisation processes</p>	<p>Academic Committees Contributing to the substantive work of the Academic Board, its standing committees and their sub-committees and working parties</p>	<p>Reporting Management of reporting and other key government compliance requirements related to teaching and research</p>

Figure 1: Teaching and Research Services (TARS): Functions and Services

RESEARCH IN PROGRESS

Serving to Learn and Learning to Serve: An Engaging Experience?

By Lane Graves Perry, III

In the previous “Research in Progress” Kate Thomson identified teaching as one of the “fundamental activities of a university” (Thomson, 2009, p. 22). I would agree with this interpretation of the role of teaching and would further recognise it as an overarching fundamental activity of any education institution at any level. Taking this idea a step further, I believe by considering the activity or process of teaching for its fundamental purpose, which is learning, we could surmise that one of the fundamental activities of a university is learning. Learning is a sort of offspring of teaching. Whether you are teaching yourself, someone else or being taught, it is a process or chain of events that should lead to learning. It is the symbiotic relationship that exists between learning and teaching that initially serves as the departure point for the research I am conducting.

Learning and teaching can be and have been approached from many different paradigms, positions and perspectives. It is this willingness to explore multiple approaches that has influenced the shape of my study on a specific teaching and learning strategy, service-learning. From within the philosophical paradigm of experiential education (Dewey, 1938), which tends to emphasise “learning by doing” to the theoretical underpinnings of Dewey (1933), Kolb (1984) and Stanton (2008), which identifies learning as a cycle that is made relevant through experience, reflection, conceptualization and experimentation, service-learning functions as a vehicle that attempts to do just this. It is an approach that attempts to provide students with opportunities where they are learning to serve and serving to learn. These experiences, which emphasize doing, may lead to a greater degree of learning or at least a different way of getting there.

In a recent article entitled, *More than experiential learning or volunteering: A*

case study of community service-learning within the Australian context, Parker, et al. (2009), found that service-learning has a “considerable value to students and... its theorizing within university pedagogy, is warranted” (p. 586). Taking the latter finding into consideration, currently at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand there are examples of service-learning taking place within the tertiary classroom. Two of these classroom examples (GEOG 309 and MGMT 208) have served as the source of data for my research study entitled, *Service-learning in New Zealand: Is it related to student engagement?* The following brief overview of the concepts of service-learning and student engagement will provide a bit more context for my study.

Service-learning has been defined in many ways. According to Stanton (2008) there are over 165 different published definitions. At the pedagogy’s fundamental level, service-learning attempts to provide students with the opportunity to apply concepts that have been taught and through this application to engage with a community in a way that adds value and perspective to the community being served and the concepts students are learning. Despite the various definitions of service-learning, there tends to be a common set of shared characteristics and elements. This set includes a situational balance of community needed service and relevant in-class curriculum with an intentional focus on the central role of reflection in the learner’s experience (Eyler & Giles, 1999). With a purposive emphasis on service, engagement, curriculum and reflection, service-learning attempts to provide students with the opportunity to demonstrate the value of learning in a realistic environment while meeting a community identified need.

As a potential outcome of service-learning, student engagement is defined as “students’ involvement with activities and conditions

likely to generate high-quality learning” (ACER, 2008, p. 1). Empirical evidence identifies a myriad of positive outcomes associated with an engaged student. From a specific classroom to the tertiary institution in general, a student’s engagement has been identified as an essential element to the development of character (Kuh & Umbach, 2004), personal development and better grades (Astin, 1993; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005) and retention and satisfaction (Kuh, Kinzie, Buckley, Bridges, & Hayek, 2006). The characteristics Zepke et al. (2009) identified as ways for teachers to augment student engagement: building relationships, providing prompt feedback, having enthusiasm for their subjects, challenging their students and providing opportunities for students to apply knowledge to practical problems, are also key characteristics of service-learning.

Along these lines, service-learning has been identified as one of the top ten high impact practices for the creation of conditions conducive for student engagement (Kuh, 2008) and as a catalyst for influencing students’ personal growth, civic engagement, academic experience (Clayton & Day, 2003; Roldan et al., 2004) and access to integrating those experiences into a real world setting (Ngai, 2006; Perry, 2007; Parker et al., 2009). With this being noted, it is important to recognize that much of the research conducted and many of the findings supporting the value of service-learning have not been from a New Zealand context. This reality is what inspired the research study I am currently pursuing.

Methodologically speaking, from my perspective research and the human experience are time and context bound. With this being said, it is important to seek to discover and understand how students and teachers experience service-learning in a New Zealand tertiary environment. From

these experiences it is important to attempt to identify the influence on concepts of student engagement, personal growth, civic engagement and academic enhancement. All of these are outcomes typically attributed to service-learning pedagogy. Once these queries are answered it is possible to identify what influence the lessons learned from this study may have on other tertiary environments in New Zealand, Australasia and potentially, the world.

The students are here. They are waiting to be engaged. Why not seek to engage them?

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I started my PhD in August 2008 and currently work part-time as the Coordinator for Leadership Programmes at the University of Canterbury. For my previous employment, I worked at the University of Central Oklahoma as the Assistant, Executive Vice President. During that time I was in charge of the Leaders of Tomorrow service organization and served as project manager for many different projects.

Please email me at lane.perry@pg.canterbury.ac.nz. Thank you and here's to learning more about the world in order to make it a better place for all. May you continually strive to become a part of something bigger than you, but better because of you.

All Ireland Society for Higher Education(AISHE) is hosting it's 6th International Conference in
Dublin City University, Dublin, 26th and 27th August 2010.

The conference title is:

Designing & Delivering Curricula for the Future.

The conference home page is here: <<http://ocs.aishe.org/>> <http://ocs.aishe.org/>

Registration opens Friday 26th February 2010.

Oral Histories of Teaching and Learning Pioneers in Australian Higher Education: Informing the Present and the Future

By Peter Kandlbinder

Universities have undergone significant change since the 1940s when the Commonwealth Government began to take over funding in higher education. Some of our HERDSA members have witnessed four major reviews of higher education over this period and while the most recent report is being absorbed by Canberra it is a suitable time to reflect on the impact government reform can have on the sector.

On Monday 7 December, 17 people from 3 different universities came to listen to 3 HERDSA life members reminisce on working in universities during times of major reform. Peter Kandlbinder from the University of Technology Sydney introduced the seminar by asking each of the life members to recall the challenges they faced as a result of one of the three major higher education reviews.

The first review, known as the Murray report, was sparked by a dramatic increase in university enrolments largely encouraged by a number of Commonwealth scholarship schemes. Don Anderson recalled the Murray Report as one of the most significant in higher education because it forced the Commonwealth Government to accept greater responsibility for the States' universities. The result was a major increase in number of universities and while working at University of Melbourne at the time of the Murray report, Don Anderson saw the steps taken by universities to reduce

student "wastage", the term used for the high drop-out rates that accompanied this rapid growth. Don thought the Commonwealth Reconstruction Training Scheme for returned service men & women was one of the most influential schemes in Australian history because it broke down many of the barriers that prevented people from attending university.

In 1964 the Committee on the Future of Tertiary Education released the second major review of higher education, known as the Martin Report. It found that the expense of higher education required a change of policy direction and a binary system of existing tertiary institutions plus technical colleges and teachers' colleges that would provide distinctive technical and professional education to university standard, was recommended. Ernest Roe described universities in the 1970s as providing few resources for teaching development. Coming from school education Ernest recalled battles he had with university professors over the value in evaluating the quality of teaching.

An increasing overlap between the two sectors of higher education in the 1980s saw the dissolution of the binary divide and a reunified national system under John Dawkins. Ingrid Moses recalled this as a time of dramatic change with wholesale amalgamations but also one of opportunity, with many people being made professors overnight. Ingrid described her own journey

from research assistant to Chancellor of the University of Canberra as one of developing many lasting friendships.

The seminar was concluded by Coralie McCormack from University of Canberra who, using these memories, considered how the past could inform contemporary challenges in higher education. Coralie remarked that the many successes of our life members was due to the success and importance of their networks and for all our pioneers making a difference still matters.

The seminar was organised by Robert Kennelly from the Canberra Branch of HERDSA to gauge and inspire interest in meeting HERDSA life members and discussing issues of higher education. Each of the life members had been interviewed for the "Making a place" oral history and what we learnt from this seminar is that this kind of interaction works best as a dialogue where presenters can share their stories in response to questions. Having three presenters meant that the dialogue was as much between former colleagues as it was with the participants. We would encourage other HERDSA Branches to make use of the living library of life members who can help us make sense of the changing nature of higher education.

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NOTE: 'Making a Place' is available from the HERDSA office. Copies can be ordered online from www.herdsa.org.au

"People are always blaming their circumstances for what they are. I don't believe in circumstances. The people who get on in this world are the people who get up and look for the circumstances they want, and, if they can't find them, make them".

George Bernard Shaw.

HERDSA FELLOWS COLUMN

“For They Are Jolly Good Fellows ...”

By Maureen Bell



I well remember a ding-dong argument that was going on in a HERDSA executive meeting about the soon to be implemented *HERDSA Fellowship scheme*. It was 2003 and I was not a member of the executive but had been invited to give information about a particular project. The President, Angela Brew, asked me to offer an opinion on the item under discussion which was the use of the term “Fellow”. Some members of the executive believed the term “Fellow” was inappropriate, perhaps considering it gender-specific or even pompous. Some jokingly suggested female “Fellows” could be “Fellowettes”. In the end the argument that the term “Fellow” was so widely used and accepted that HERDSA should join the push to claim the term as encompassing both female and male. As Lewis Carroll’s Humpty Dumpty said to Alice, when I use a word ... it means just what I choose it to mean ... The question is ... which is to be master? (Which of course leads to a similar question regarding the term “master”.)

So here we are in 2010 with 29 HERDSA Fellows listed on the HERDSA website and 2/3 of these are female. I was later to become a member of the executive and over my 6 years I can’t remember any issue being so hotly debated as was the use of the term “Fellow” back then.

Wikipedia explains “Fellow” as a person who is often part of an elite group of learned people who work together as peers in the pursuit of knowledge or practice. Fellows are the highest grade of membership of most professional societies. Lower grades are referred to as “members”. I am sure that HERDSA does not “grade” members in this

way, rather sees Fellows as members who have met a set of criteria, submitted a portfolio for assessment and continue to provide evidence of professional development and scholarly/reflective practice. On the other hand, the term FHERDSA after one’s name might suggest a certain status or importance to some.

For me the holding of a HERDSA Fellowship is an honour that necessitates pro-active involvement in the HERDSA community. We all seek various modes and levels of involvement in our professional organisation. My involvement varies of course however I think of my HERDSA Fellowship as involving me in the following ways.

Supporting HERDSA – helping to keep the HERDSA community alive, alert and involved. I try to keep HERDSA in the back of my mind, refer to HERDSA when appropriate and point out linkages, networks, resources and so on when appropriate. I also remind people to submit material to *HERDSA News* when I hear they are doing something interesting. This is the easy part.

Mentoring fellowship applicants – most of the mentees assigned to me have dropped out of the program before submitting which makes me wonder what I am doing wrong.

Assessing – occasionally there is the serious responsibility of assessing an applicant’s portfolio, and sometimes the difficult acceptance of the views of fellow assessors who of course do not think as I do. There is also the wonder and appreciation of reading what other academics are thinking and doing in their scholarly work.

Staying professionally involved – now that I have reached “a certain age” it would be easy to slow down on my own professional development. This was not to be because I have found the HERDSA Fellowship has pushed me to stay involved in a longer form of lifelong learning than I had planned.

Nominating for a stint on the executive – HERDSA Fellows can make a strong contribution to the HERDSA community and higher education more broadly. The work of the executive is often hidden from members however it is rewarding and provides another supportive and friendly network beyond that of the Fellowship.

Scholarship – researching and writing about higher education through, for example, contributing to conferences, contemplating writing a HERDSA guide or submitting pieces for *HERDSA News* are all part of the Fellow’s role.

Every year “The Fellowship” gathers at the HERDSA conference for a meal, a catch-up and a discussion. At this time I always remember the value of “The Fellowship” and can’t help tweaking the words of that old song and singing to myself: “For we are jolly good fellows ... and so say all of us.” If you are not yet a HERDSA Fellow I recommend both the journey and the (continuous) destination.

Maureen Bell was one of the first group of academics to achieve a HERDSA Fellowship. She worked at the University of Wollongong but is now retired and offering great support to the Editor of HERDSA News. She is currently doing some consultancy work with the University of Bhuthan.

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“The best way to get a good idea is to get lots of ideas.”

Linus Pauling

THE INTERNATIONAL COLUMN EXCHANGE

A Contribution from the President of POD (POD-Professional and Organizational Development Network in Higher Education)

Human and Humane Resources: Matching the Two for Maximum Effectiveness

By Mike Theall

As is often the case in difficult economic times, we hear of positions cut, programs cancelled, and reductions in teaching staff. Especially in these times, it strikes me that higher education has not done a stellar job of protecting its human resources. On occasion, I have even heard policy and practices referred to as “inhumane.” The first question, of course, is “Who are these human resources?”

I believe that we have to answer that question by first considering the primary goals and mission of higher/tertiary education and then, by identifying those who are primarily responsible for carrying out that mission.

Mission statements include language about the production, translation, dissemination, integration, and application of knowledge. Clearly, the faculty are charged with those traditional responsibilities on a daily basis. Others contribute, but not to the same degree of involvement. Other mission statement language suggests responsibility for the personal, ethical, and social development of students who, as a result of their education, adopt a mode of lifelong learning and become informed, productive, and caring members of society. Broad demands for “accountability” have increased the pressure on education to address these goals, and these aspects of the mission require contributions from many staff in addition to faculty. Of course, organizational structure and operational efficiency are required to keep these efforts moving, but ultimately, the success of failure of education depends on the faculty.

I hasten to add that from a different perspective, students are also critical human resources. However, their responsibilities

are different, and their mission is to be engaged in their education and benefit as much as they can from what the institution provides. Thus, I would like to keep this brief discussion to the issues surrounding the faculty.

There is much relevant research that has come from management and related business fields, and we sometimes don't pay enough attention to what it suggests. For example, the work of David McClelland and associates clearly identified the need to consider individual differences and strengths in order to place people in positions where they can be most effective. John Holland's typologies (especially as translated to educational settings by John Smart and Kenneth Feldman) provide strong evidence that when their individual interests and styles match with those of the disciplines, students have greater success. George Mild proposed a similar idea in his discussion of managerial success. He said that one often enters a professional field with high levels of interest, commitment, enthusiasm, and expertise that lead to success. However, success leads to upward mobility into positions that distance individuals from what they liked best and did well. New requirements may not mesh well with the array of skills that led to prior success. The result is often disappointment and a desire to return to familiar ground. Only when individuals have the motivation, develop new skills, and have a need to advance, are these new positions comfortable.

So, how does all this relate to faculty? It begins as one matriculates from graduate school, where the overwhelming focus is on “becoming a _____”, a professional in a discipline. For those interested in

higher education however, graduation means stepping into a new world where one's expertise now seems at entry level and one's disciplinary interests and desires may have to share time and energy with other responsibilities for which one may be ill prepared: for example, teaching, administrative, and service responsibilities. Humane policy and practice require that these issues should be kept in mind.

Lately, colleagues and I have been referring to college teaching as a “Meta-Profession”, one which requires a solid “base profession” (in one's discipline) but which carries the need to be very proficient in a wide array of other skills. When institutions hire new people to enter the college teaching profession, there is often an expectation that they will have meta-professional skills or that they will somehow acquire those skills alone. Research literature in the past two decades has noted an increasing sense of isolation among faculty (especially new faculty), accompanied by increasing pressure to excel in all areas of performance. Some institutions have responded by providing additional resources for professional development, but this encouraging note is tempered by the hard economic fact that many institutions have fewer resources to give.

However, professional/educational development does not need to be costly. One of the most effective mechanisms for promoting improvement and enhancing productivity is simply to insure that our critical human resources have sufficient time to work together to construct shared understandings of their common profession (i.e., being college/university teachers), to build common bonds, to examine their

roles and work, and to identify areas where resources are most needed and can do the greatest good. This does not diminish their disciplinary affiliations, but it does provide an environment where there is a focus on “making our work more effective.” The key word here is “our”, because shared goals promote shared leadership and shared effort. As Jon Wergin notes, “...colleges and universities may be effectively led by emergent acts of leadership from anyone

who chooses to lead.” (p. XVI) In other words, one does not have to be in a formal leadership position to effect growth or change.

In higher education, the group of people most critical in this regard and those most likely to emerge as leaders are the faculty. When we remember our critical human resources, and when we provide humane treatment and opportunities for them to

emerge as leaders, we are sustaining not only our institutions, but education itself.

Mike Theall is the current President of POD, which is a sister organization to HERDSA in the USA. At present it has 1800 members. For further details go to <http://podnetwork.org> He is an Associate Professor in the Department of Teacher Education at Youngstown State University, Ohio, USA.

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New Executive Officer for HERDSA- Alysia Blackham

The HERDSA Executive at its meeting on 8 July 2009, approved a proposal to appoint a voluntary Executive Officer to the HERDSA Executive.

The duties of the Executive Officer would include:

- Liaising with the HERDSA Office on correspondence, Executive papers and the HERDSA website;
- Attending Executive meetings;
- Preparing HERDSA Executive agendas;
- Drafting Executive minutes;
- Following-up on action items from Executive meetings;
- Creating updates for the HERDSA website following Executive meetings;
- Drafting letters on behalf of the President;

- Liaising with Portfolio Managers to coordinate reporting, assist with managing documentation and monitor strategic outcomes;
- Preparing and updating policy drafts;
- Preparing briefing papers and collecting data for new initiatives; and
- Other duties by mutual agreement.

Alysia Blackham has been appointed to fulfil this role until December 2010. Alysia is Executive Officer to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Corporate Services) at the University of Technology, Sydney.

Alysia holds a Bachelor of Laws (First class honours) and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of Melbourne, and a Graduate Diploma in Legal Practice from the College of Law. Alysia teaches Equity for the Law Extension Committee at the University of Sydney and is currently studying towards a



Graduate Certificate in Educational Studies (Higher Education).

Alysia has lived in Perth, Melbourne and Sydney but will not divulge which she prefers. Her long term goal is to move into an academic role following completion of a PhD in constitutional law.

Alysia can be contacted at Alysia.Blackham@uts.edu.au for any general queries related to the HERDSA Executive. Queries about membership should go to Jennifer Ungaro at office@herdsa.org.au

*“If the next action in a piece of work can be done in two minutes or less,
do it when you first pick the item up”.*

David Allen.

THE PHILOSOPHER'S COLUMN

Who Shapes the Shapers?

By Ann Kerwin

The answers you get depend on the questions you ask.

Thomas Kuhn

“Mid 2010, HERDSA will confer on Re-Shaping Higher Education. In this column, I pose a question which has engaged HERDSA long before I knew of the organisation's fine work. The answer, in practice, will shape many lives.

It's a simple query: **WHO SHAPES THE SHAPERS?**

Philosophies of Shaping

Shaping is not new.

Humans shape. We are *homo faber*, beings who make. We make buildings. We make textbooks. We make arrowheads and music. We make meaning and significance. We shape to control and create, implement and express.

Shape gives definition.

The words *define* and *definition* derive from the Latin *de finis*. (*Finis*: boundaries, limits; *de*: of, about). To get a sense of the word, as I did many years ago from a venerable Latin text book, imagine a splendidly-armoured general striding across a gentle valley, claiming it for Caesar. No longer will its stately trees and crystalline streams shelter hostile encampments. Soon, surveyors will scurry to mark boundaries, centurions roster to secure the Empire's enhanced frontier. New maps will announce: the shape of Rome has been altered, its limits extended. Thus we pre-teen barbarians visualised *definition* within the context of power. We learned: shapers with the might to seize and hold had claimed, named and confined a bit of Nature---formerly shaped to someone else's use---for their own.

We learned: shaping includes and excludes. It must.

Geography affords a visual model of shaping. In language, we see how limits, logic and usability link. To define a word or concept is to set its semantic limits: what it means or can signify. According to philosopher Michel Foucault, language insidiously reflects and confers power. Constraints shape intelligibility---what we acknowledge to exist, what we validate and make possible, what we can speak of and how. For all we humans can imagine, encounter or produce, shaping is necessary; just as surely, it limits what can exist within parameters.

To take a homely example, scientists tell us our planet is shaped “just right” for life as we know it. They refer not simply to Mother Earth's lovely, not-quite-spherical conformation, but to the unknowably intricate, interdependent conditions of our own existence. Life on earth, from its inception, has been shaped by the benignant “Goldilocks Zone.” Humans, in turn, exert shaping pressure. Climate change attests: having shaped “modern living” beyond accustomed limits, dominant nations are, unwittingly, re-shaping the congenial conditions of our continuance.

Shaping Humanity

Of course, humans do not shape everything within and without us. But characteristically, we give experience a human shape. We define ourselves: who we are, why we are, whither we tend, and what we should become. Time, place and circumstance shape our grand narratives---our perceptual, conceptual and ethical shapings of “human nature,” science and significance. But what and how we shape also shapes circumstances. I imagine most readers recall diverse constructs of gender, race and culture, of intelligence and learning, taught and un-taught in recent decades---each defining and limiting, including and excluding, reflecting and

conferring value. These, our own odysseys, remind us: potent, persuasive shapings may not be “the way things are and must be” (natural and immutable, necessary and inevitable), but, at least in part, the way we shape things to current use.

The Bradley Report proposes a complex re-shaping of education. In ancient Athens, two philosophers, wary of politics and self-interest but passionate about education, penned their own “Bradley Reports”. Parts are outdated, but others address challenges and opportunities of 2010. First, let's set the sages in context...

Shaping and Craft

Greek philosophers were shapers. Enchanted by the world, they sought to explain it. Distressed by human perfidy, they sought to tame it. Their culture celebrated craft. Poets, playwrights, sculptors, potters, theorists and architects shaped humble materials into superbly functional works of lasting value. We still cherish the Parthenon, the *Oedipus Cycle* and the much-disputed Elgin Marbles. Plato and Aristotle saw Nature as a grand work of astounding craft---an intricate ensemble of parts orchestrated to function as a harmonious whole. They did not celebrate humanity as the centre or apex of being, but as one marvellously crafted member of a complex adaptive system.

Both knew from bitter experience: we are a promising species, but problematic.

We are a part of nature. But distinctive. We are regulated by Nature. But also self-regulating.

We are limited by nature. But shapers of it. We contain within ourselves nascent abilities to behave like animals, infants, or rational fashioners of grand beings, deeds and cultures. For the classical world, crafting and shaping were not the same. Then as now, master crafters marry theory

and technical skill with a firm grasp, and seeming transcendence, of practical limits.

Those who excel in *techne* study, apprentice, practice, experiment, fail and finesse; they innovate, learn and teach by doing. Craft requires respect for aspiration and limits and disrespect for mediocrity and manufacture.

We shape and are shaped. We can't avoid it. But Plato and Aristotle warn: **to shape is not to craft. Craft is shaping *par excellence*.**

Education as Craft

According to Plato and Aristotle, we're too important to shape thoughtlessly. While we begin with the *potential* and innate patterning (*telos*) to become rational, responsible, flourishing adults, we shape the *actualities* we become. Choice by choice. We inhabit communities and, by choice, shape them. Diverse interests shape polities, rarely proportionately; nevertheless, Plato and Aristotle hold us all responsible for statecraft. We choose what we value. Value drives choice. We are all answerable for affirmative decisions about governmental policies in crucial collective arena and for default shaping: failing to oppose harm, choosing not to choose. To shape ourselves suitably is to maximise design potential. To create a good society or a good person is to craft something of exquisite value. It requires education.

HERDSA and Craft

Under happy circumstances, in years past, I met HERDSA members enacting, innovatively and effectively, precepts Plato and Aristotle extol. (In passages to follow, I summarise, necessarily briefly, foundational elements recurrent in many of their writings). I have in mind core ideas, such as...Humans are shaped variously; therefore, education must be. Education worthy of humanity is personal,

experiential. It stokes what Einstein called "a holy curiosity" and *auto-catalysis* (self-inspiration, self-activation). Quality education crafts experiences to actualise valued potential, consonant with the type of excellence desired. Self-aggrandisement and profiteering distort (mis-shape) education's *telos* (overriding aim, end, purpose), which is: to create conditions of development whereby students learn to flourish--- thoughtfully, justly and joyously. This requires wise, skilful mentoring. It demands processes crafted to support individuality and a sense of common good. Education may take shapes no one has yet imagined; therefore, it's unwise to confine it to shapes we now know and cherish. Nevertheless, if students, reflecting on their education, can answer happily three questions Henry James posed for art, they'll render timeless and relevant evaluations of our craft, however we've shaped it. These are: *What was the system trying to achieve? Did it succeed? Was it worth doing?* Finally: education is social. It is absolutely essential to produce everything a good society values.

Shaping Shapers

In Australasian higher education, over the next fifty years, students will be most influenced by those who teach them. Put another way: those who teach will shape profoundly. The vast majority of those who teach will be shaped as professionals by their postgraduate experiences. Their shaping will, inevitably, include and exclude, value and devalue, define, limit and potentiate. I wonder: *Will postgraduate education across disciplines be effectively re-shaped in this powerful context: shaping postgraduate experiences to shape shapers of worthy educational experiences for generations?* In good systems, research competencies will be crafted, not simply shaped. Significant time, space, energy, attention, reward and resources will be allocated to crafting

research excellence. By omission or commission, postgraduate educators will also shape shapers of higher education for vast numbers. If we care about future generations, we have a duty to ask: *When it comes to mentoring future teachers, can we expect superior crafting?*

Craft does not happen by happenstance.

When I ask *who* will shape the shapers of the future, I inquire not about turf or title. Rather, I'm wondering about the "kind of person" to craft foundational experiences for future crafters... *What do they bring to the experience and what do they ask of others? What do they value and respect? What is their excellence? Whom and what do they serve, enable and empower? What do they bring out in others? What quality of thought, attention and expertise, do they give to the many students future postgrads will shape?* I ask institutions: *How will time, space, energy, attention, reward and resources in the postgraduate experience across disciplines be shaped so as to enable future teachers to craft experiences worthy of our vast, varied human potential?*

Higher education will be re-shaped. As Thomas Kuhn wisely notes, questions we ask shape answers likely to eventuate. I ask inquirers I admire:

What questions will we be asking in July 2010 about craft and value?

What answers will we craft?

Ann Kerwin was the HERDSA Visiting Scholar in 1994. Ann migrated from the U.S.A. to be Philosopher-in-Residence at Auckland University of Technology. New Zealanders may know her as Resident Philosopher on Radio New Zealand National, Nights with Bryan Crump, where she speaks on philosophy and philosophers

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All Ireland Society for Higher Education(AISHE) is hosting it's 6th International Conference in Dublin City University, Dublin, 26th and 27th August 2010.

The conference title is:

Designing & Delivering Curricula for the Future.

The conference home page is here: <http://ocs.aishe.org/>

Registration opens Friday 26th February 2010.

Meanderings

Intrigued by Susan Hill's new book, *Howard's End is on The Landing* (Profile, 2009), I decided to do what she writes about, that is, to take a voyage through one's personal library and find books neglected, unread, forgotten or demanding to be revisited.

Looking through my professional library, I found very few books that have had an enduring utility throughout my academic and professional life. Here are four older books that have had a continuing utility and that I enjoyed taking up yet again in my bibliographical meandering.

Donald Bligh's, *What's the Use of Lectures?* 5th edition, Intellect, 1998, is one of the four. It was actually the earlier 1972 Penguin edition that I used most, but I seem to have lost this somewhere along the way. Bligh's work was very significant for me in the early years of educational development. I suppose this was because it was one of the few books of its kind available at that time. It has a strong foundation in research-based practice in addressing the dominance of university lectures and how to improve the quality of learning. In my view, it remains one of the best-presented books of its kind and contains a treasure trove of well-founded ideas and practices.

The second book is less well known. This book is by Michael LeBoef, *GMP: The Greatest Management Principle in the World*, Berkley Books, 1985. This book was a godsend at a time when I was directing a small centre at the University of Adelaide comprising one academic (me) and five technicians. I raise the management issue of technicians here because I was greatly comforted by the observation of Georges Pompidou, who was President of France from 1969 until his death in 1974. Pompidou must have shared a similar experience with technicians to my own during his long career: "There are three roads to ruin," he claims; "women, gambling and technicians. The most pleasant is with women, the quickest is with gambling, but the surest is with technicians." Very definitely in the management quick-fix

genre, LeBoef's small book was nevertheless a great help with my technicians and it built on a solid motivation principle available at that time. That principle is simply "the things that get rewarded get done". This principle echoes the "motivation-hygiene" theory developed by Frederick Herzberg and that is adapted for educational uses in my third book selection, *The Management of Learning*, by Ivor Davies, McGraw-Hill, 1971.

How can I possibly list a book that is almost 40 years old? It has amazingly, outdated statements like this one (and I place the obligatory "sic" at the beginning of this quotation): "Whereas the student is completely programmed or controlled in a conventional programmed text, computer assisted learning gives him complete freedom to select and decide what he will see and do next" (p.171). How many readers actually remember programmed learning I wonder? Nevertheless, this book has remained a valuable resource to me because of its sheer breadth of technical coverage and the durability of many of the basic principles it discusses. It is organised into four main parts: Planning, Organizing, Leading, and Controlling. My favourite chapter is "Harnessing Student Motivation" with its distillation of Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory for use in education. When people challenge me on the use of theory in education and development I always fall back on Herzberg as a fine example of useful theory and the one theory that I would probably rate most highly in terms of its utility in my work in every organization I have been with – military, university, aid agency and private company. *The Management of Learning* also provides a good overview of where we have been and how far we have progressed in educational development!

One delightful feature of these older books in management and education is the frequent use of apposite quotations to introduce a topic. This one in LeBoef's *GMP* really appealed to me having worked in universities, and now UN agencies,

where committees have dominated administration:

"If Moses had been a committee, the Israelites would still be in Egypt." (As usual, from "Anon".)

Finally, Lewis Carroll's classic, *Alice in Wonderland*, is one of the best books of educational philosophy and educational humour available. This book, of remarkable durability, was first published in 1865. The background and academic analysis of this book, available on Wikipedia, is fascinating reading, discussing among others, the personalities and the mathematical, historical and linguistic features of the tale.

What better way to ridicule some of today's quantified performance indicators in education than this? "Write that down", the King said to the jury, and the jury eagerly wrote down all three dates on their slates, and then added them up, and reduced the answer to shillings and pence."

Could there be a worse way to discourage nervousness in anyone who has to speak in public than this from the King in the same courtroom chapter in *Alice*? "... the wretched Hatter trembled so, that he shook both his shoes off. 'Give your evidence', the King repeated angrily, 'or I'll have you executed, whether you're nervous or not.'"

Again, reflecting the book's academic background, Carroll makes fun of the curriculum studied by the Mock Turtle: "I only took the regular course.' 'What was that?' inquired Alice. 'Reeling and Writhing, of course, to begin with,' the Mock Turtle replied; 'and then the different branches of arithmetic – Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision.'" The Mock Turtle later tells Alice what else it learned: "Well, there was Mystery, Mystery ancient and modern, with Seaography and Drawing and Stretching..."

Coming forward 145 years and turning to current writing, Don Watson's recent book *Bendable Learnings* (Knopf, 2009), should be required reading, I believe, for every educator and educational administrator. The dust jacket blurb sums up this book as "...as

By Robert Cannon

a new assortment of noxious management drivels ...” which, as the contents of this book demonstrates, has now thoroughly infected government, management and the health and education professions among others. Watson cites numerous examples of both the funny and the absurd.

One example from Australian higher education is “Concepts relevant to management in the experience economy include time management, mindfulness, servicescapes, enchantment and satisfaction studies” [James Cook University School of Business], p. 74. Here is another: “This is part of the development of an audience-centred information architecture...” [The University of New England], p. 277.

Apart from finding much to wonder and laugh about, for me, the most disconcerting sense I got from reading this book in its entirety is the dishonesty revealed through corporate vision and mission statements and the vacuous *sameness* in what is being sprouted. This sameness can be seen whether these statements come from Hungry Jacks, the local petrol station, from thoroughly discredited international corporations such as Enron, or from some of our universities.

Maybe Watson will one day turn his attention to a similar disease that now infects many academic journals. I have not been able to find too much from recent editions of our own journal, *Higher Education Research and Development*, although one article contains one of the most irritating phrases in current writing: “First, we interrogate the literature...” Interrogate? This raises the “How?” question – Water-boarding? The rack? Sleep deprivation?

One gem of academic “clarity” appeared in *The Australian Educational Researcher*, 36, 2, p.24, August 2009: “In highlighting the spaces of gender justice within this climate, the paper draws on Fraser’s (2007) notion of a non-identitarian feminist politics capable of synergising gender justice remedies of recognition and redistribution.” Struggle as I have with this, I confess to having no idea whatsoever as to its meaning. I would really appreciate a simple translation in less than 100 words; my email address is shown below!

Another – and the winning example for this edition – is a journal article title: “(E)pistemological Awareness, Instantiation of Methods, and Uninformed Methodological Ambiguity in Qualitative Research Projects” which appears in *Educational Researcher*, 38, 9, 2009. (H)aving (t)ried to (r)ead the

(p)aper (sorry, I must not do that ...!), I was astonished to find that the authors have totally ignored their own intentions to “...argue that efforts should be made to make the research process, epistemologies, values, methodological decision points, and argumentative logic open, accessible and visible for audiences.”

I have seen nothing, however, that approaches a bizarre journal article published many years ago in *Psychological Reports*, 45, 1979, 381 – 382 titled “Effect of Holy Water on the Growth of Radish Plants”. In case you wonder what the effect is, the answer is provided in the abstract. This states “Mean growth of 12 radish seeds in peat pots watered with holy water were not significantly different from that of 12 watered with tap water. Limitations on data are listed.” Some of these limitations turn out to be that the holy water was “older” than the tap water (hmm!) and, worse, the person doing the watering actually *knew* which plants were receiving holy or tap water. Readers who teach research methodology may find useful raw material for their students in this paper or they may care to replicate it!

I have worried for some time that engineering is taking over educational development and these journal titles simply confirm my anxieties about this trend.

From the journal *Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education*, 36, 3, 2009 comes this set of papers exemplifying this take over:

“Technography and the technological landscapes of teacher education”;

“Landscaping on shifting ground: teacher education in a digitally transforming world”; and

“Learning by Design: creating pedagogical frameworks for knowledge building in the twenty-first century”.

Landscapes, technography, ground, frameworks, building ...

But the best of this genre must surely be from the journal *Development in Practice*, 19, 6, 2009: 692 – 701: “Development is a bag of cement: the infrapolitics of participatory budgeting in the Andes”. An interesting picture of development indeed!

Maybe we should encourage more word pictures like this in academic writing such as that found in the older journal articles and books. For example, in his introductory message in the first issue of the *Journal of*

Tertiary Education Administration, Colin Plowman wrote:

“The first issue of a journal of a professional institute may not create much of a ripple in the great ocean of journals throughout Australia but it will, I believe, create a considerable and enduring wave of interest among those who have a concern for the institutional health of tertiary education establishments.”

Better than word pictures are real pictures! Back to *Alice* – in the opening paragraph of Chapter 1: “...once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, ‘and what is the use of a book,’ thought Alice, ‘without pictures or conversation?’”

Alice in Wonderland is, of course, full of wonderful illustrations! And, I promise you, illustrations do work in academic writing too! My own book, illustrated by Zig Kapelis and written with David Newble, *A Handbook for Medical Teachers* (Kluwer, 2001), received generous praise from the Journal of the Royal College of General Practitioners among others because “This delightful book fulfils its purpose admirably. Written in a clear and easy style with humorous illustrations ...”

To move beyond this undeniably self-serving reference, it is worth pointing to Alain de Botton’s excellent *The Consolations of Philosophy* (Penguin 2001), which is also richly illustrated and adds to his simple, clear writing style in a way that brings philosophy to life.

Among other “greats”, de Botton cites the writing of the French philosopher, Michel de Montaigne, concerning difficult texts. He gives me great comfort in my views about some of the journal articles I mentioned earlier! De Montaigne wrote: “I am not prepared to bash my brains for anything, not even for learning’s sake, however precious it may be... If I come across difficult passages in my reading I never bite my nails over them: after making a charge or two I let them be ... if one book wearies me I take up another.” (Cited by de Botton, p.157.)

But more on de Botton’s books and education next time.

Robert Cannon is a consultant in educational development currently working with UNICEF in Indonesian education. He can be contacted at: cannon@indo.net.id

I.T. IN HIGHER EDUCATION COLUMN

Bibliometrics Out, Journalmetrics In!

By Roger Atkinson

In my last musing upon this topic only two years ago [1], I used the title “Bibliometrics: An IT perspective”, so I wish to start by giving good reasons for revisiting the topic, and for now declaring “Bibliometrics out...”. Firstly, a revisit is mandated by the ARC’s publication of its “full ERA 2010 Ranked Journal List” [2, 3], a *must read* for researchers who are selecting a journal to receive their work. Secondly, the ARC’s vision of what it can do with citation analyses seems to have moved on since their 2008 version of the ranked list [4], from an orientation towards an earlier and well-known bibliometric, Thomson Reuters’ *Journal Impact Factor* [5], to a newer orientation favouring more recent “journalmetrics” marketed by Elsevier’s *Scopus* [6]. Hence, “Bibliometrics out, journalmetrics in!”

To begin with, Table 1 presents data extracted from three large files, the ARC’s 2008 [4] and 2010 [3] ranked lists, and Elsevier’s *Scopus* 2009 file [7] listing their new “journalmetrics”, SNIP and SJR. Whilst Table 1 seems large, it is only a relatively modest sample from current ranked list of some 20,712 journals, and because the ARC has provided very minimal documentation on its derivation and implications for rank and file researchers, it is necessary to try and work things out by examining groups comprising a reasonably significant number of journals.

Table 1 concentrates upon Australian based educational research journals that may be of interest to *HERDSA News* readers. Recently I prepared a similar table for *AJET* Editorial 26(1) [10], oriented towards educational technology journals, both Australian based and overseas based. If you inspect Table 1, and the table in the *AJET* Editorial if Table 1 is not a sufficient dose, I’m fairly certain that most readers would be a bit peeved. What does it mean? What’s the pattern? What are “they” (ARC, ERA, the “Feds”) up to? Why should I be induced to believe

that my hard work is downgraded because I have chosen to publish in (for example) an Australian or regionally based, open access, professional society journal, rather than an American or European based “for profit” journal?

Well, those questions are very good questions. If you are looking for precise answers, I cannot give them, and perhaps you should rush back to your research work, to put in the extra time you may need in order to get into a *Tier A** or *Tier A* journal compared with a *Tier B* or *C* journal. However, if perhaps you are interested in some reflective thoughts about bibliometrics and journalmetrics, and some guesses about potential avenues for research into research assessment exercises, I invite you to read on. After all, I claim to have done some reasonable guessing into the future with “Bibliometrics: An IT perspective” [1] two years ago!

To begin with, there are some “patterns” or suggestions of patterns emerging from Table 1. The change from the Australian oriented, practitioner oriented, broadly consultative, esteem based ranking processes underlying *Tier 2008* [11] to the unspecified and vaguely defined processes underlying *Tier 2010* [12] has led to a predictable outcome for Australian educational research journals. Whilst lower ranked journals tended to remain at the same ranking, higher ranked journals have tended to fall by one or even two Tiers. The latter category includes *HERDSA*’s, *AARE*’s, *ACER*’s, *ACCE*’s and *ASCILITE*’s flagships. In *Tier 2010*, Australian and regional support for the flagship journals of these societies has been swamped by the big numbers of American and European journals. Another pattern suggested in Table 1, and other extracts from the ranked list, is that open access journals have been pushed towards the lower tiers in 2010 to a greater extent than the for profit journals. That is also a not unexpected outcome from what one presumes

is a “more international” perspective introduced somehow into the ranking processes underlying *Tier 2010*. Open access journals are a new phenomenon, stimulated in relatively recent times by the Internet technologies [13], whilst the for profit journals are mostly older and better established (and therefore are better known and more prestigious), and were purchased by their current owners in pre-Internet times.

However, Table 1 (and other extracts from the 2010 ranked list) is perhaps most interesting for its *lack* of patterns. Maybe I’m getting too long in the tooth for this sort of thing, or perhaps the relevant data has not been published, but I cannot discern any precise relationships between *Tier* ranking and Elsevier’s new “journalmetrics”, SNIP and SJR (Table 1). All I can see is some quite admirable advances in bibliometrics [6], and astute generalship that has enabled *Scopus* to encircle the *Impact Factor* forces with a twin pronged outflanking by its SNIP and SJR divisions. Thus Thomson Scientific, citation supplier for the RQF in 2007 [14] was replaced by Elsevier *Scopus* for ERA 2010 [15] The tactical marketing offensive by *Scopus* has been hard hitting, for example consider these two quotations [16]:

Visionary progress

Thanks to a special collaboration between *Scopus* and two research groups known for their expertise in research performance measurement, a suite of context driven metrics are available that:

- are publicly accessible, free of charge at www.journalmetrics.com
- Apply to 18,000 journals, proceedings and book series
- Are refreshed twice per year to ensure currency of metrics...

More than just a number

The many applications of modern bibliometrics cannot be served by a single tool. Researchers have long demanded the next generation of

Table 1: *Tier* changes 2008-2010 for 20 Australian educational research journals

Journal and URL	Tier 2008	Tier 2010	OA #	FoR	SNIP 2009	SJR 2009
Asia-Pacific Journal of Teacher Education http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/1359866X.asp	A*	A*	No 3	1301	0.553	0.037
Higher Education Research and Development http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/07294360.asp	A*	A	No 6	1303	Not listed	Not listed
Australian Educational Researcher http://www.aare.edu.au/aer/contents.htm	A*	B	Yes 3	13	0.335	0.035
Australian Journal of Education http://www.acer.edu.au/aje/	A*	B	No 3	13	0.296	0.040
Australian Journal of Adult Learning http://www.ala.asn.au/c143/Publications+About+AJAL.aspx	A	A	No 3	1301	Not listed	Not listed
Australian Journal of Teacher Education http://ajte.education.ecu.edu.au/	A	A	Yes 6	1303	Not listed	0.000
Australasian J. of Educational Technology (AJET) http://www.ascilite.org.au/ajet/ [online only]	A	B	Yes 6	1303	0.563	0.041
Australian Educational Computing http://www.acce.edu.au/JournalDB/Publication.asp?JournalID=1	A	C	Yes 2	1303	0.351	0.034
Distance Education http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/01587919.asp	B	B	No 3	1301	0.892	0.048
Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice http://ro.uow.edu.au/jutlp/	B	B	Yes 2	1301	Not listed	Not listed
Australasian Journal of Engineering Education http://www.aace.com.au/	B	B	Yes 2	1301	Not listed	Not listed
Australian Universities' Review http://www.aur.org.au/	B	B	Yes 2	1301	Not listed	Not listed
Issues in Educational Research http://www.iier.org.au/	B	B	Yes 3	13	0.215	0.035
International Education Journal http://www.iejcomparative.org/	B	B	No ?	13	Not listed	Not listed
Evaluation Journal of Australasia http://www.aes.asn.au/publications/	Not listed	B	Part 2	11	Not listed	Not listed
Australasian Journal of Economics Education http://www.uq.edu.au/economics/AJEE/	C	C	Yes 2	1302	Not listed	Not listed
Journal of Institutional Research http://www.aair.org.au/jir/	C	C	Yes 2	1303	Not listed	Not listed
Journal of Academic Language and Learning http://journal.aall.org.au/	Not listed	C	Yes 2	1302	Not listed	Not listed
Studies in Learning, Evaluation, Innovation and Development http://sleid.cqu.edu.au/	Not listed	C	Yes 3	1303	Not listed	Not listed
Journal of Learning Design http://www.jld.qut.edu.au/	Not listed	C	Yes ?	1302	Not listed	Not listed

Notes for Table 1:

- Tiers are defined by http://www.arc.gov.au/era/tiers_ranking.htm [7]
- Tier 2008 values from http://www.arc.gov.au/zip/era_journal_Ranking.zip [4]
- Tier 2010 values from http://www.arc.gov.au/xls/ERA2010_journal_title_list.xls [3]
- OA indicates open access status; # indicates the number of issues for 2010.
- FoR (Fields of Research) data from http://www.arc.gov.au/pdf/ANZSRC_FOR_codes.pdf [8]. These include 13 Education, 1301 Education Systems, 1302 Curriculum and Pedagogy, 1303 Specialist Studies In Education and 11 Medical and Health Sciences.
- SNIP and SJR values from [SNIP_SJR_complete_1999_2009_1_v1.xls](http://www.arc.gov.au/xls/SNIP_SJR_complete_1999_2009_1_v1.xls) [9]; see text for definitions and references.

context-based metrics reflected in SNIP and SJR.

Also noteworthy, the brief quotations above contain the phrase “expertise in research performance measurement”, which brings into mind the fuzzy dividing line between bibliometrics for *analysing a journal* and for *analysing the research work of the authors of individual articles in journals*. The former purpose is soundly grounded in the technologies underlying bibliometrics or journalmetrics, but the latter purpose may be pushing a good technology beyond its limits and into a quite inappropriate use. We may need to remind ourselves, again and again, about the limitations. In the words of a *Scopus* executive who was writing on new alternatives to the Thomson Reuters Impact Factor [5]:

Originally it [the Impact Factor] was intended as a collection management tool, but has since evolved into a metric used for evaluation of science at all levels as well as evaluation of authors. This can have far-reaching consequences for an author’s grant applications, promotion and tenure since the metric is directly influenced by the performance of specific journals and is thus for a large part beyond the author’s control. [17, de Mooij, 2007; quoted also in 1.]

So, “... beyond the author’s control”! This is a prime avenue for further research. What would authors like to do about it? What can authors do? Do researchers feel they will be better off with or without “tiering”

of journals? In my humble opinion there seems to be much more publishing by the assessors about how to assess research, and the justification for their actions, and too little into the impact upon the assessee [18].

Table 2 suggests a second prime avenue for further research. The conundrum is the extent to which the Tiering of journals within specialist areas of educational research may deviate from the overall targets for the Tiers (5%, 15%, 30% and 50% [14]). Given what appears to be an absence of detailed information on the ranking processes underlying Tier 2010, there seems to me to be an opportunity for research into the impact of Tiering upon scholarly publishing processes. In compiling Table 2 and Table 1 in AJET Editorial 26(1) [10], I began to feel that researchers in “130306 Educational Technology and Computing” had been allocated a much smaller percentage of high ranked outlets (A* and A, nominally 20%) compared with researchers in “130103 Higher Education”. To translate that impression into one potential research question, “What is the impact of Tiering upon lower ranked journals?” Presumably, lower ranked Australian based journals (Table 1) will have to increase their reliance upon overseas authors, as Australian authors switch their preferences to higher ranked journals, even if that means migrating from their preferred group of journals to a more distantly related group of journals.

Now, to what extent is that likely to happen? Only time and further research will tell, but just two weeks after the publication of the 2010 Tier rankings [3], I received the first Tiers related withdrawal of an AJET submission made by Australian authors. In response to my acknowledgment, and my expression of interest in “obtaining more details concerning what you and your co-authors perceived about the importance of journal ranking”, one author replied [21]:

In answering your question I must say that two of us the authors are about to apply for promotion and to them the ranking is vital even though we all know that such ranking may not be fair to many good and well-established journals such as AJET. [21]

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4. The earlier ranking, dated 13 June 2008, appears to have been “unpublished”. It was available at http://www.arc.gov.au/zip/era_journal_Ranking.zip (unzipped)

Table 2: Proportions of journals in each tier

Rank (a)	No. journals	%(b)	Overseas examples from higher education research (c)
A*	1,030	4.97	Studies in Higher Education. http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/carfax/03075079.html Cambridge Journal of Education. http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/carfax/0305764X.html
A	3,054	14.75	Journal of Higher Education. http://www.ohiostatepress.org/Journals/JHE/jhemain.htm Higher Education. http://www.springer.com/education/higher+education/journal/10734 Teaching in Higher Education. http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/13562517.asp
B	5,667	27.36	International Journal for Academic Development. http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/routledge/1360144X.html Internat. J. of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. http://www.isetl.org/ijtlhe/ J. of Further and Higher Education. http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/0309877X.asp
C	10,682	51.57	Higher Education Management and Policy. http://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/oecd/16823451 College and University. http://www.aacrao.org/publications/candu/index.cfm College Teaching. http://www.heldref.org/pubs/ct/about.html
Unranked	279	1.35	(a category for journals started in 2008)
Total	20,712	100.00	

Notes for Table 2:

- a. Data for rank (“Tier”), number of journals and percentage is from [19].
- b. For target percentages in each Tier, see [14].
- b. Examples were obtained from [20], proceeding down the order on p.17, “Higher education”, until 2-3 examples had been found for each Tier.

- to ERA Research Journal Ranking Workbook.xls, Excel format, 10.4 MB)
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 21. Email to AJET Production Editor 25 February 2010.
- Roger Atkinson retired from Murdoch University's Teaching and Learning Centre in June 2001. His current activities include publishing AJET and honorary work on the TL Forum and ascilite Conference series, and other academic conference support and publishing activities. Website (including this article in html format): <http://www.roger-atkinson.id.au/>**
- Contact: rjatkinson@bigpond.com**

Announcing MoodleMoot AU 2010 conference, Melbourne

<http://moodlemoot.org.au/>

A conference for educators, researchers, developers and administrators concerned with the very popular open-source Moodle Learning Management System and related topics.

In Melbourne, 11-14 July 2010, immediately after HERDSA 2010.

From a modest beginning in Perth a decade ago:

<http://otl.curtin.edu.au/tlf/tlf2000/dougiamas.html>

Moodle is now used at over 45,000 sites in 208 countries:

<http://moodle.org/community/>

Roger Atkinson and Philip Marriott

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THE HOW TO ...TEACHING SERIES

How to...

Deal with hurtful students' comments in anonymous surveys

By Peter Kandlbinder

Nothing unravels us more than a hurtful comment. For many university teachers the qualitative comments collected from students are among the most constructive aspect of student feedback. Yet, from time to time, students write mean, offensive or malicious comments intentionally aimed at humiliating, undermining or threatening their lecturers. Belittling statements by students about our appearance, intelligence, racial or religious background hurt because we are surprised that some students resent our efforts to help them learn.

Senior Clinical Psychologist, Rachael Murrphy, from the UTS Health Psychology Unit suggests that a lack of inhibition arises from being anonymous. The anonymous nature of student feedback gives some students the confidence to say things they would not normally say if they could be identified. Students may be less inhibited in anonymous surveys because they do not see the hurt they inflict on the reader, reducing the likelihood that they will feel remorseful, as they might in a face-to-face interaction. Furthermore, the audience is unlikely to be the target of their comments as it is more likely that the student wants to denigrate the lecturer to their superiors.

The usual advice for this kind of written harassment is to try to ignore the comments and don't let them get to you. If it is that easy, then this is clearly your simplest option. However, if emotional harm has been caused by something your students have written, then you need to ensure you have effective skills to respond.

You need to be relatively resilient to ignore hurtful comments. That is, you need to feel good about yourself and ensuring that you get plenty of exercise, eat healthy food, get plenty of sleep and avoid excessive alcohol can all help with your self image. Encourage

positive thinking through positive self-talk rather than reinforcing self-doubt by thinking things like "They're right, I'm ugly". Remind yourself of your positive characteristics instead of dwelling on the negative.

It is normal to feel angry when someone attacks you personally. Whatever their underlying cause, hurtful comments are written to produce a reaction and it is best that students do not know that what they have written has hurt you. Don't seek out students in your class to try to find out who wrote the hurtful comments or why. It is far better to express your feelings in more appropriate ways such as writing them down, listening to music or through physical activity.

After you are over the initial shock that one of your students wants to denigrate you there are some further actions you might consider:

Decide whether you need professional counselling. If you are really upset and don't know what to do about it, you should contact a professional counsellor.

Talk to your colleagues. Elke Stracke from the University of Canberra suggests that talking about your experiences and how you felt about receiving belittling statements can be a fruitful way of dealing with hurtful comments in student feedback.

File a complaint with the survey unit. Don't think you have to deal with this alone. Your university requested this information from the students and needs be involved in minimising hurtful comments. Most universities have formal policies and procedures to minimise harassing and threatening comments in the workplace.

Try to short-circuit abusive behaviour in your students. Encourage good communication with your students by

regularly collecting feedback from your class and showing that you take students' comments seriously. Don't expect to be mistreated in student feedback and help students see their responsibility regarding giving constructive feedback.

Don't look like an easy target. Look like a person who is physically and emotionally strong. Bullies are looking for vulnerable people to harass. If you find you are frequently attacked, take an honest look at whether you need to change anything about the way you are treating your students that might contribute to how your students are responding in their feedback surveys.

Add your comment on this issue and other dilemmas of academic practice on the How to... web site of *HERDSA News*: <http://herdsanews.wordpress.com/>

HOW TO... is a series that looks at the contemporary challenges in academic practice facing university teachers. Each issue presents a new dilemma in higher education and explores the prevailing attitudes of HERDSA members looking for solutions to these new problems. You can suggest a modern dilemma of academic practice for this series by emailing **Peter.Kandlbinder@uts.edu.au** and outlining an incident or situation you have come across.

Higher Education in the Headlines. March 2010

By Peter Kandlbinder

A summary of the main stories on higher education from the last 3 months of the Australian Higher Education Supplement (*AHES*), *Times Higher Education (THE)* and the *Chronicle of Higher Education (CHE)* found issues of student demand and performance dominated the higher education press. Other themes included: higher education restructuring, academic salaries, research performance, university funding, the gradual decline of science, alternative energy and a campus shooting in the US.

Student Demand and Performance

In November the *Australian Higher Education Supplement* reported that overseas students are determining the appeal of different Australian universities based on ERA results. International PhD students are falling foul of new migration laws and Australian universities have been told to boost English-programs. The *Australian Higher Education Supplement* also reported that poor students were among the top performers at universities which is good news as many universities adopt the risky strategy of expanding their enrolments. The *Times Higher Education* likewise reported that the gap between rich and poor is narrowing in the UK while measures were being put into place to bridge gap between supply and student demand.

Higher Education Restructuring

In November *Times Higher Education* reported that business approaches will be firmly woven into the new framework being developed for UK universities, which in December was being characterised as including mergers, acquisitions and privatisation with the funding council

seeking powers to remove vice-chancellors. Teaching development was dropping as a priority as the HEA announced cuts that threaten the future of subject-centres. Meanwhile, the *Chronicle of Higher Education* saw for-profit colleges changing the higher education landscape in the US while Australia was resisting change with the States wary of transferring more power to the Commonwealth.

Academic Salaries

In November the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported that private college presidents are now receiving salaries of \$1 million in contrast to public university presidents whose salaries have stagnated driving many academics overseas to find a new career path. In December the *Times Higher Education* reported that teaching had become a poor second in promotions and unions were angry over breaches to collective salary negotiations with *THE* renewing its warnings on final salary pensions

Research Performance

In November the *AHES* reported the University of Sydney was accused of manipulating its research performance data while Curtin had made real improvements research performance. In December this criticism spread to all GO8 universities which wanted to merge their medical research institutes. The UK continues to come to terms with the REF with the *THE* reporting a large number of submissions questioned the weighting of research impact although in later reported that a refusal to comply on impact had failed to sink grant applications and the Tory government pledged it would postpone the REF if elected.

University Funding

In November the *Times Higher Education* reported cost is the big deterrent for would-be students but in February it found that a “reasonable number” of students would accept fee hikes. In December the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported the harsh economy had created a new style of communication for universities as a number of States were reviewing universities’ tax status. In January the *AHES* reported student support was undecided and in February Universities Australia was seeking additional funding.

The Gradual Decline of Science

In February the *Australian Higher Education Supplement* reported that the climate change debate was giving science a bad name and that studying nanotechnology was falling out of favour in number of universities. Meanwhile the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported US colleges were seeking new ways to support female scientists.

Alternative Energy

In December the *AHES* reported on a feasibility study for renewable energy on Australian campuses and in January the *Chronicle of Higher Education* described the pressure coal-burning campuses are facing to find alternative energy sources.

Campus Shooting

In February the *Chronicle of Higher Education* reported another fatal shooting this time involving a staff member who shot her colleagues during a faculty meeting.

Links to individual stories are available at higherheadlines.wordpress.com

Contact: Peter.Kandlbinder@uts.edu.au

HERDSA Branch News

ACT BRANCH

Chair: Robert Kennelly

Email: Robert.Kennelly@canberra.edu.au

ACTU branch hosted a very successful December seminar hosting 3 of our HERDSA life members Don Anderson, Ernest Roe and Ingrid Moses. Our life members provided fascinating oral histories of their time as pioneers in Australian higher educational development. Peter Kandlbinder gave an account of higher education history from the 19th century and Coralie McCormack facilitated a discussion relating these histories to the issues of today. Key issues that emerged included: the need to seek good people then empower them, the importance of networks. Interestingly it was the faculties of Physics, Medicine and Engineering that were behind the push for academic development programs in the early days. The seminar was based on the publication: Making a Place by Lee, Manathunga, and Kandlbinder. For a longer report of this seminar see page 13 of this issue.

Contact Robert for information about 2010 activities. Email: Robert.Kennelly@canberra.edu.au

HONG KONG BRANCH

Chair: Dr Anna Siu Fong KWAN, Open University Hong Kong

Email: akwan@ouhk.edu.hk

HERDSA (Hong Kong) focuses on connecting professional colleagues who work in different fields of university education and providing a platform to share and learn together. Another purpose is to introduce HERDSA and its work to Hong Kong colleagues and build the membership. Colleagues from all Hong Kong universities are warmly welcomed to HERDSA activities.

Four "Dinner Dialogues" were held in 2009: Student evaluation of teaching in Hong Kong; What's next in e-learning?; What do we know about our students?; and Knowns and unknowns about student plagiarism with Jude Carroll of Oxford Brookes University.

Several colleagues in the high education sector have been nominated and invited to join the second HERDSA (Hong Kong) Executive Committee Meeting on 23 February 2010 to discuss plans for 2010 and beyond.

For more information contact Anna, Email: akwan@ouhk.edu.hk or check the website: <http://herdsahk.edublogs.org/2009/11/>

NEW ZEALAND BRANCH

Convenor: Prof Tony Harland, University of Otago

Email: tony.harland@stonebow.otago.ac.nz

Prof Tony Harland has been elected as Convenor, and Stanley Frielick as Secretary,

replacing Alison Holmes and Lorraine Parker respectively. Julia Hallas remains as Treasurer. The committee has grown to 18 people who represent HERDSA in local areas and organizations and promote our activities across New Zealand.

14 people attended the AGM held during the TERNZ conference in Auckland. This is a bigger turnout than usual and covers people from a wider spectrum of organizations

Professor Philippa Levy was a sponsored HERDSA visitor in November and December. Phil is Director of the Centre for Inquiry-based Learning in the Arts and Social Sciences (CILASS) at the University of Sheffield, UK and leads an institutional research/development project at the University, titled "The LRT Project: Integrating Learning, Research and Teaching".

Phil held workshops and invited sessions at AUT University in Auckland, University of Canterbury Christchurch and University of Otago in Dunedin. These events were well attended and she brought an interesting perspective on a range of different topics including student inquiry and research and the evaluation of practice for academic developers.

Two HERDSA-TERNZ Research Medals will be introduced this year. These are to be awarded for:



Phil Hughes, Don Anderson, Ernest Rowe, Ingrid Moses.



ACT Branch: Coralie McCormack; John Dearn; Maureen Bell; Peter Kandlbinder; Robert Kennelly

1. Sustained Contribution to the Research Environment in New Zealand: for outstanding service to tertiary education research and the higher education community.
2. Research of Major Impact: for published research that is original and communicates quality ideas to the higher education community.

The annual awards will be decided by a sub-committee of the HERDSA Executive and presented at the TERNZ conference.

Check the HERDSANZ website to keep up to date with events and activities:

<http://www.herdsa.org.nz/>

SOUTH AUSTRALIA BRANCH

Chair: Dale Wache, University of South Australia

Email: Dale.Wache@unisa.edu.au

Dale Wache, Katrina Falkner from Adelaide University and Fay Patel from Flinders are organising events for April, June, August and October this year. These events will take the form of a 1 hour seminar followed by a 1 hour workshop. At one of these events they hope to have Teacher of the Year Award winner Mahfuz Aziz, University of South Australia, speak on the First Year Experience. Another idea for an event is to invite the the Discipline Scholar team for Health Sciences to speak.

South Australia branch are also planning either a pre-HERDSA seminar event to promote the HERDSA conference and invite individuals presenting at the conference to trial their presentations, or a post-HERDSA event, where presenters at HERDSA present again to the local audience. This could be done as a special stream of the ERGA conference in September and would help promote a collaborative relationship between ERGA and HERDSA SA.

Dale, Katrina and Fay also discussed the idea of having a separate series of events designed to build the network between the academic development units at the three Universities. They also discussed establishing a mailing list for HERDSA members and sending out information about upcoming conferences and seminars. They will create a web page for HERDSA SA.

So get in touch and let them know what you think of these ideas. Email Dale on: Dale.Wache@unisa.edu.au.

VICTORIA BRANCH

Chair: A/Prof Dianne (Di) Waddell, Deakin University

Email: Dianne.waddell@deakin.edu.au

Exciting news from Victoria about the re forming of the HERDSA Vic branch. The new and energetic executive consists of members from multiple campuses of 5 Victorian universities and they are planning an exciting program of events for 2010. Victorian members are invited to attend the launch of the new branch in March which will include an interactive workshop on Team Based Learning with Further activities include a roundtable discussion centred on The Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE); a sponsored event at the July HERDSA conference in Melbourne; and a discussion on ePortfolios and their use as evidence of generic skills development. A pre Christmas event is planned to focus on the issues and opportunities resulting from the Bradley Review.

The executive would love to hear from members of Victoria branch, or potential members who enjoy networking and discussing policy, practice and research in higher education.

Stay informed and updated about Victoria branch activities through the HERDSA website and the weekly email news or contact Di Waddell, Email: Dianne.waddell@deakin.edu.au.

WEST AUSTRALIAN BRANCH

Chair: Rashmi Watson, University of Notre Dame

Email: rwatson1@nd.edu.au

The AGM was held in January as part of the West Australian Teaching and Learning Forum. Several long term members of the committee resigned and we wish to thank them for the fabulous work they have done often over several years. A new committee for the branch was elected. They are: Iris Vardi, Melissa Davis and Colleen Mortimer from Curtin University; Valentina Bailey and Brenda Hamlett from Edith Cowan University; Rashmi Watson and Liz Mortley from the University of Notre Dame; Rob Phillips and Sharon Delmege from Murdoch University; Lee Partridge from the University of Western Australia.

In 2010 the branch will continue its highly successful Scholarship Profiled series. Details will be available through the branch news email.

Check the HERDSAWA webpage to keep up to date with branch events: <http://www.tlc.murdoch.edu.au/asd/herdsa.html>



HERDSA Victoria branch executive: Front Row – Peter Ling, Di Waddell, Catherine Lang. Back Row – Elizabeth Santhanam, Liz Levin, Yvonne Hodgson, Joan Richardson, Judy Lyons, Robyn Benson, Susan Mayson; missing: Muyesser Drur and Jan Schapper.

QUEENSLAND BRANCH

The HERDSA Queensland Branch has been inactive for several years and so to try and get it going again Deanne Gannaway from the University of Queensland decided to try an activity which has been successful in a number of branches, namely a seminar in which participants present papers from past HERDSA conferences for the benefit of colleagues who have been unable to attend the conference.

In the event 48 people from University of Queensland, Queensland University of Technology, University of Sunshine Coast, Southern Cross University, University of South Queensland, Griffith University and even James Cook University came together on 19 Feb to revisit presentations from

colleagues who had presented at either a HERDSA conference or elsewhere.

Ten presentations were offered after a keynote presentation from Professor Geoffrey Crisp, University of Adelaide, ALTC Fellow, HERDSA President on the topic "Using Web 2.0 to align assessment with learning and teaching". This presentation was recorded and will hopefully be added to the HERDSA website. In the meantime the presentation can be viewed at <http://www.transformingassessment.com/moodle> under Presentations on Assessment.

The event was attended by a number of people who were HERDSA members as well as those who were not. The day concluded with a meeting of those interested in

supporting the conference committee for HERDSA 2011 to be held in Brisbane.

The feedback from all those who were there was very positive and a number of people contacted Deanne who could not make that event offering support for future activities. It is hoped to make this an annual event!

HERDSA sponsored the morning tea. There are funds available centrally to support activities like this and members should contact Jennifer Ungaro in the HERDSA office for details. Email office@herdsa.org.au

Contact: d.gannaway@uq.edu.au

News prepared by Maureen Bell <mbell@uow.edu.au>

Coming Shortly

New HERDSA Guide

"Designing and Using E Assessments"

by

Geoffrey Crisp

Watch for announcement of publication in the weekly

Email News

Pedagogical Research in Higher Education (PRHE10) Conference

“Research-Teaching Linkages to Enhance Student Learning”

October 25-26 in Liverpool, UK

(Following the ISSOTL conference (Oct 19-22) in the same city)

The PRHE10 conference is a biennial event which brings together, in an intimate and welcoming environment, researchers and practitioners to share research findings, promote rigorous pedagogical research and build collaborative research networks.

Bringing together practitioners and those who are beginning their pedagogical research with experienced researchers in an open and supportive environment has been a consistent and much valued feature of PRHE. As part of this endeavour, we are delighted to have confirmed the following four keynote speakers:

- **Professor Randall Bass, Georgetown University, USA;**
- **Professor Mick Healey, University of Gloucestershire, UK;**
- **Professor Jan Meyer, Durham University, UK; and**
- **Professor Keith Trigwell, University of Sydney, Australia.**

The deadline for abstract submission is April 30, 2010.

EXPLORING TRANSFORMATIVE DIMENSIONS OF THRESHOLD CONCEPTS –

SYDNEY, 1–2 JULY 2010

The University of New South Wales, in collaboration with the University of Sydney, is hosting the 3rd Biennial Threshold Concepts Symposium. This will take place in Sydney, Australia on July 1 - 2, 2010.

This symposium will build on the previous two symposia to further explore practice and research into threshold concepts and the changes these are bringing across the higher education sector.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Professor David Perkins

Harvard Graduate School of Education

David is a senior professor of education at the Harvard Graduate School of Education and a founding member of Project Zero. David was an international consultant to the ETL project which provided an impetus for research into the area of threshold concepts. His research – in particular in describing the notion of “troublesome knowledge” (knowledge that is conceptually difficult, counter-intuitive or “alien”) has played an important role in informing the development of the notion of threshold concepts.

Full Details of Symposium from

<http://www.thresholdconcepts2010.unsw.edu.au/index.html>