

HERDSA

news

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The magazine of the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia



Inside

Educating for uncertainty, Teaching in Vietnam and global rankings, Awards, Meanderings, Metrics, A decade of transition pedagogy, Higher education student evaluation, Communities of practice, What is the future of tertiary education?



From the Editor

Maureen Bell

The cover of this edition of HERDSA NEWS reflects the international nature of our HERDSA community. We present two features in this edition. Gardner Campbell from Virginia Commonwealth University urges us to rethink the increasingly regimented and packaged learning environment of higher education. Our second feature is the final in a series from the indefatigable Owen Hicks now stationed out in Tuyen Quang, Vietnam; without cheese, peanut butter and Australian wine. Owen's adventures in education in China and Vietnam have made fascinating reading. In his final article Owen challenges the global representation of the various university rankings systems.

Allan Goody's *From the President* also reflects the international scene as he considers his own and his international colleagues' thoughts on the shape of higher education across the regions. *PERSPECTIVES* writer Bob Cannon meanders through his own brain space pointing

out potential problems and failures in systems that are increasingly focused on testing and evaluation and echoing Campbell Newman's ideas on standardised education. Roger Atkinson casts his scholarly eye over the research and commentary on bibliometrics and on the changing approach to metrics over the last half century.

We have two *SHOWCASE* articles in this edition. Ron Oliver offers some challenging points from Australian Learning and Teaching Fellows on the future of tertiary education. Ariana Henderson and Simon Evans explain a useful community of practice approach to achieve consistency in programs.

REVIEWS includes our regular review of an article from the *HERDSA Review of Higher Education* by Executive Editor Peter Kandlbinder and Edward Palmer explores a new OLT funded website on student evaluation.

Our *COMMUNITY* section presents Kelly Matthews from the University of Queensland who has been awarded an OLT National Teaching Fellowship. On a sadder note we farewell two staunch and respected members of our HERDSA community; John Panter and Faith Trent; and we acknowledge their contributions to higher education.

We have received some positive feedback on the new look and content of HERDSA News. Please let us know what you think of your magazine. We are always open to suggestions for improvements and ideas for new columns, features and showcases.

I look forward to catching up with you at the forthcoming *HERDSA 2016 conference* in beautiful Fremantle. Please do come and chat about HERDSA News.

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From the President

Allan Goody

With the 2016 conference quickly approaching and the paper review process underway, my thoughts turn to the conference theme *The Shape of Higher Education*. I asked a few colleagues in other parts of the world to share their reflections on the shape of higher education.

We share a number of themes in common. Together with greater mobility of the globe's citizens, this reinforces the notion that higher education is now a global enterprise. Many countries are competing for the lucrative international student market. Putting aside the financial benefits to the host institutions, this mobility surely is a good thing in promoting greater understanding of cultures and the commonalities we share. Widening participation, financing higher education and enhancing quality particularly in teaching and learning were the main themes running through all reflections. While higher education is seen as a social good there is a need to balance accessibility, affordability and quality.

There is evidence in our region of countries including Singapore, China and Malaysia, developing a greater understanding of the value of higher education and the importance of quality teaching and learning and committed resources. In other systems including the US, Canada, Scandinavia and our own, there has been reduced funding and calls

for greater reliance on other sources of funding. In Australia we have our innovation agenda with the promise of a billion dollars to support it. But where is the funding for teaching and learning? Are we serious about improving quality when our national body that promotes teaching and learning has a budget cut, with a similar situation in New Zealand? Funding cuts were a common story from Scandinavia with some of the largest universities facing massive staff cuts. Education funding is a target even though an educated and innovative workforce is perhaps the best path through tough economic times.

To ensure quality teaching and learning, teachers need assistance to develop their approach based on sound research. In Germany and Asia money goes into improving teaching and learning through academic development. But are the academic developers adequately prepared for and sustained in these roles? In Australia the role of an academic developer is changing yet there is little in place to support the developers.

Another common reflection is the debate about what higher education could and should be. Is the emphasis on employability preparing students for jobs that might not exist in the near future? How do we teach our students to be responsible citizens in a world we can't fully imagine yet? Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths appear to be a

common focus sometimes at the expense of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences. Let's hope we don't lose sight of their complementarity.

So how best to harness the range of technological possibilities and create appropriate learning spaces? Infrastructure funding is not keeping pace with demand. Revolving management means there is never enough time to develop sustainable structures before the next idea pops up. What about those new ideas that don't match expectations? Dare I mention MOOCs?

Has higher education now become just another corporate entity rather than a genuine concern for preparing young people to thrive in society? Am I imagining an increasing lack of differentiation between providers?

And does everyone need a university education? The well intentioned aim of widening accessibility (that I support) widens accessibility and increases diversity of the student population. But is there adequate funding to support these students; are we building false expectations along with debt? Are we using appropriate criteria for admitting students to our programs? What is the opportunity cost of choosing a program that the student eventually realises is a poor match? Is it time to review criteria for admitting students to our programs? Is the valuing of work-integrated learning signalling a return to the apprentice model in the professions that we ditched years ago?

The final theme is the student voice, as witnessed quite dramatically of late in South Africa with students successfully demonstrating against rising tuition fees. Protests in the US resulted in the resignation of a university President. In Chile, students are integral to the movement to radically change higher education to be more inclusive. We too often overlook the student voice or see it as too radical. Can we be more inclusive of the student voice in their education?

So many questions and more not asked here. Maybe we can answer some in Fremantle. See you there.

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Educating for uncertainty

Gardner Campbell

A prescription for how we should educate for uncertainty would appear to be a contradiction in terms. Instead of 'takeaways' or 'immediate, practical steps' then, my gentle manifesto offers three calls-to-action that may provide a compass but decline to draw a map. I do not pretend to be exhaustive or comprehensive. Rather, I hope to elicit thought and stimulate practice within a context of great urgency. If you ask *What urgency?* my response is to echo Sir Christopher Wren: "circumspect."

Engage with complexity

The 'learning outcomes' of which higher education is currently so enamored assume a more-or-less direct path from syllabus to achievement that need only be followed faithfully for the desired result to occur. A corollary promises that a good syllabus arranged along these lines should be a template (sometimes called a course 'shell', one inevitably made of 'modules', a word echoing the earlier word 'units') that can be spread easily and reliably among as many instructors as needed. This logic suggests that in good instructional design, we can and should know the answers before we ask the questions. This logic also suggests that the cognition, experience, and expressiveness of the

instructor and learner are of no essential relevance. Nice, but not required. Inquiry thus becomes a kind of simulacrum, one that's easily managed, easily measured, easily replicated. That such design flies in the face of everything we're learning about the true complexities of human learning and cognition, particularly the way affect and emergence shape our unique interactions with our shared world, seems to have escaped the planners' notice. In the name of workforce preparation, competency-based education, the 'completion agenda', or whatever the latest slogan might be, we risk turning higher education into what the earlier years of schooling have become: institutions in which measures taken to encourage learning resemble Stalinist 'five-year plans' that encourage—indeed, practically require—brute-force quantitative 'metrics' in the pursuit of empty 'outcomes' that are inevitably subject to the corrupting pressures described in Campbell's Law (no relation):

The more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision-making, the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes it is intended to monitor.

By contrast, true complexity makes new life possible, as noted by Eve Mitleton-Kelly. Complexity looks to biology for its metaphors, not to the mechanical engineering of outcomes, tests, and so-called dashboards. Complexity in learning is essentially relational, as Chris Dede insists: It's a messy business, complexity, a world of emergent outcomes and unscripted problems requiring 'double-loop learning', a kind of learning in which notions of error extend not only to outcomes, but also to the very conditions of the trial itself. In other words, education for complexity must always examine and reframe the reflexive question of what constitutes education—and it must *teach each learner in various strategies, both straightforward and oblique, for examining and reframing that question for themselves*. We must learn from each phase of trial-and-error, but we must also learn *about* the ideas of trial-and-error underlying each moment in the inquiry (Smith, 2001, 2013).

Rethink credentials and curriculum

Much has been made of the need for 'stackable' and interchangeable credentials in higher education. It's important that the credit hours one earns at one institution be easily transferred to another. Unfortunately, the logic of this need can amplify the same linear, industrial models of individual learning outlined above, only now at the institutional, credential-granting level. Degree programs and paths must be made uniform across institutions. Strict models of equivalence among courses are adopted to generate easily transferable credits. Those equivalences are constituted by common syllabi and uniform 'learning outcomes'. For those 'learning outcomes' to be counted, tracked, and managed, the unit of learning becomes 'competency', typically measured by tests or 'calibrated' graders. And we are back again in the situation outlined above, but worse, as the institutional differentiation no longer signals creative inquiry or innovative ideas about credentials, but only status or the endless array of amenities associated with 'branding'.

This structure seems to me to be exactly opposite what's needed for education to engage with uncertainty born of the increasing complexity of our world. How can a curriculum of 'stackable

credentials' generated by linear 'pathways' among 'nanodegrees' asserting various 'competencies' encourage or even permit the kind of antifragile stochastic tinkering advocated by the philosopher Nassim Nicholas Taleb? Instead, curriculum and credentials must be devised to promote what Taleb terms "the rational flâneur" who:

unlike a tourist, makes a decision at every step to revise his schedule, so he can imbibe things based on new information.... Tourism, actual or figurative, is imbued with the teleological illusion; it assumes completeness of visions and gets one locked into a hard-to-revise program, while the flâneur continuously and rationally modifies his targets as he acquires information.

For Taleb, education for uncertainty must be built on the principle of "antifragility". The truly "antifragile" benefits from "randomness, uncertainty, chaos." Like a fire we must "wish for the wind" of "volatility ... disorder, and stressors", the wind that brings "adventure, risk, and uncertainty".

My own immodest proposal is that every phase of every curriculum should somehow include itself among the objects of inquiry proposed for student work. *Students must always be thinking about the structures of learning provided by the courses of study they undertake, the credentials those courses of study constitute or lead to, and ways in which institutions of higher learning construct and manage these processes.*

Consider flight time

I taught a fully online course in 2014, an experimental version of the standard introduction to research writing. The course was called *Thought Vectors In Concept Space*, in homage to Engelbart's idea of networked computing as a platform and amplifier for what he called "collective IQ", the synergies released by human beings thinking and working together in a manner that stimulated and permitted true complexity.

What I discovered was that many students wanted to treat the course as a set of assignments they could complete, not as a process of generating complexity and double-loop learning. The logical consequence was that these students sought to avoid the daily writing explorations we built into the syllabus,

and instead to complete what they took to be the major assignments as quickly as possible, leaving the rest of the course for vacations. The term was eight weeks long, and more than one student told us they would be on vacation during that time and would simply 'make up' the work upon their return. How does one 'make up' emergence or double-loop learning? One could no more 'make up' that experience than one can 'make up' a missed conversation.

What I saw, unfortunately, was yet another failure of our increasingly regimented learning environment, a failure to engage with the complexity of experience itself during the learning process. I call the temporal mode of engagement with complexity 'flight time', and it is the opposite of the 'seat time' that often defines credit hours. Instead, the duration of the learning experience, if that experience is thoughtfully and complexly imagined, is itself part of the learning. The duration represents an ongoing encounter with emergence, with serendipity, with uncertainty (which means some part of the syllabus must always read 'To Be Determined'). In the US, the credit hour's integrity depends on the principle of roughly two hours outside of class for every hour inside class, a principle routinely flouted by students and teachers alike. As one student told me recently, "we have lives". Indeed so, and hyper-managed linear educational structures make it clear that the commitment of one's life—the time of living we devote to an experience—is not the point of schooling at all. Instead, the point is so-called 'self-paced learning' that dramatically collapses the 'time to degree'.

Yet what is learning without this commitment of life? How can one learn the art of flying a precision aircraft without the hours aloft in which emergent situations reveal themselves? What is the metacognitive richness of the human mind, if not the most finely tooled and breathtakingly capable engine of flight we possess? We never speak of time-to-completion when we speak of gourmet meals or lingering romantic encounters. We do not try to accelerate these processes unless we are foolishly focused on completion in ways that turn fine dining into a hot-dog-eating contest. Higher learning affords each citizen of the world time aloft among the

processes, products, and uncertainties of civilization itself. Can we not afford a little time to linger in wonder, and to reflect on our lives as something more than gobbling up the dog food of a managed, predictable, easily sorted sequence of packaged experiences?

I close my gentle manifesto with an observation by a theorist of learning and curriculum, Laurence Stenhouse (1975):

Education enhances the freedom of man (*sic*) by inducting him into the knowledge of his culture as a thinking system.... This is in the nature of knowledge—as distinct from information—that it is a structure to sustain creative thought and provide frameworks for judgement.

Education as induction into knowledge is successful to the extent that it makes the behavioural outcomes of the students unpredictable.

Uncertainty is another word for possibility, the condition that all education seeks to fit us for—or should, if it is truly education for deeper learning devoted to the expansion of human capacities. Freedom to imagine possibility, and to inquire within it: this is the foundation for education for uncertainty, and all our structures should support that freedom as well as the uncertain complexities to emerge from within it.

Gardner Campbell is Vice Provost for Learning Innovation and Student Success at Virginia Commonwealth University. His blog is at:

www.gardnercampbell.net/blog1

Links

Campbell: http://portals.wi.wur.nl/files/docs/ppme/Assessing_impact_of_planned_social_change.pdf

Dede: <https://davidtjones.wordpress.com/2009/09/12/dedes-sleeping-eating-and-bonding-metaphor-and-the-diversity-of-learning-and-its-impacts-for-e-learning/>

Engelbart: <http://dougengelbart.org/library/engelbart-archives.html>

Mittleton-Kelly: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b03ls154>

Smith: <http://infed.org/mobi/chris-argyris-theories-of-action-double-loop-learning-and-organizational-learning/>

Taleb: http://cpor.org/af/Taleb_Antifragile.pdf



The very long tail that doesn't wag the dog

Owen Hicks

How many universities are there in the world? What image do we have of the broad spectrum of institutions in the higher education sector, worldwide? In this my third and final reflection from a different corner of the globe I want to share something of what I think is a truer world view of higher education than typically presented in the West. This may be worth contemplating as your institution is either priding itself on scrambling up some rankings ladder, exclaiming loudly about the invalidity of the measures used as it slides down, or making questionable claims to greatness.

Let me first go back to my time working in central Vietnam and preparing a paper for the Hong Kong HERDSA Conference. My university library had no relevant English language background material on the topic, 'globalization and learning across the higher education sector', and probably nothing relevant in Vietnamese. Accessing the internet on campus was pure frustration. Keen students would sit at the institution's main gate trying to poach wifi from the cafe over the road. While attempting to review the literature on-line, using

a 3G internet connection and my laptop, I came across the *Handbook on Globalization and Higher Education* on Google Books. This was offered as an ebook for 1,041,453 VND (then approximately US\$50), about equal to a week's pay for a junior academic at the institution. I also found reference to a relevant article titled 'Globalisation and the university: Myths and realities in an unequal world.' The abstract was available online and sounded promising. Clicking the 'Download full text' button produced the response, 'Sorry you don't have access to this article', and suggested that I either 'Recommend to your librarian that your institution purchase access to this publication' or 'Add to cart' at US\$37. The recommendation to the non-English speaking librarian of our modest library (dominated by well-used class sets of texts) would likely have been the first ever request for an online publication and simply not understood. The 'cart' amount was equivalent to three or four day's salary or a night's accommodation at the best hotel in town. These were, of course, English language websites containing not only language

barriers but also cultural and cash transfer barriers to most non-English speakers.

At my current place of employment in the north of Vietnam, I have recently spent time assisting a staff member to submit a paper and register to attend a conference in Europe. Aside from the enormous amount of work expended by the author of the paper to bring an English language version up to an acceptable standard, cultural differences relating to the extent of confirmation required and the need for detailed formal acceptance of registration (carrying some form of official institutional seal) presented considerable difficulties. The language difficulties and idiosyncratic protocols, quite familiar to Western academics, made the challenge almost insurmountable.

Now to 'How many universities are there in the world?' Definitional difficulties aside, one indication can be found from the *Universities Worldwide* website, currently listing 9,385 institutions drawn from what appears to be close to all countries across the globe. An alternative and much larger figure can be found on the *Ranking Web of Universities* site which claims 23,720 institutions. It is difficult to identify the data sources and collection processes used to generate these figures, but they are worthy of some consideration. I note, however, that only one of the four institutions where I have been working in recent years is listed on either source, though each institution has a website with some pages in English and each awards degrees. The *International Association of Universities* claims 615 member institutions from slightly more than half of the 200 or so countries in the world (11 institutions in Australia are currently members). The Association identifies its members as 'universities or degree-conferring higher education institutions whose main objective is teaching and research, irrespective of whether or not they carry the name of a university.' All of the institutions where I worked would satisfy this definition.

And what of 'World Rankings'? Do world university rankings accurately reflect the sector? It is worth noting that these are recent phenomena. Times



Higher Education World University Rankings originated in 2004, not much more than 10 years ago. While in 2012-13 THE rankings determined 400 'world class universities' to exist, with representation from just 24 countries, in 2015-16 they were proud to announce 800 institutions ranked, still less than 10% of the conservative figure of 9,385 institutions cited above. The THE editor claimed that "The move, at a stroke, ensures that the global rankings are truly global." I don't think so! On a conservative estimate, almost 90% of institutions were not even considered!

The Shanghai Jiao Tong University continues to rank 500 'world class' institutions including representation from approximately 13% of all countries. Consider for a moment the impact of 87% of the world's countries being arbitrarily determined as not having a single institution of 'world class'. In 2013, a press release claimed that the Jiao Tong rankings were 'recognised as the precursor of global university rankings'. They still have a long way to go.

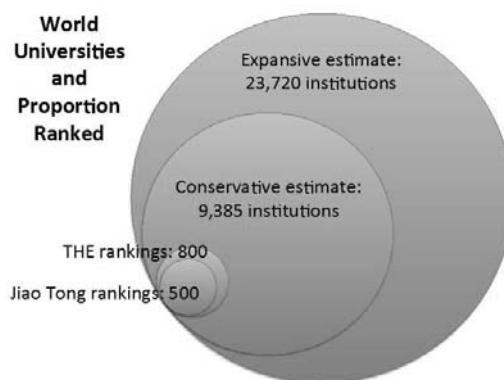
The prominence of these rankings in the sector appears significant because of the publicity and credence they are given by elite institutions and the dominance

of the 'voice' of such institutions in the sector. A number of countries have instituted explicit programs to develop at least one institution of sufficient status to obtain ranking. However, it is important to recognize just how partial they are as a global representation of the sector. For the vast majority of institutions, if indeed they are aware of these rankings, the question is not how well will they be ranked, but will they be ranked at all.

A broader analysis of higher education in the context of globalization also distorts the concept of higher education, presenting it with a strong bias towards the research function of institutions and by presenting arguments only significant for a small proportion of relatively well-resourced institutions around the world, the so called 'world class universities'. A quite different understanding of the interaction between globalization and higher education is obtained when considering the learning and teaching activities of higher education institutions, particularly those with severely limited resources, and when considering the sector in

its entirety. From this perspective, globalization appears at most partial and its interaction with the broad spectrum of higher education is limited.

At about the same time as rankings were gaining favour, Jan Currie was noting that global economic forces were segmenting



and dividing the world into those who initiate globalization, those who are affected by it, and those who are left out. If ranking processes are anything to go by, higher education appears to be a case in point. Many institutions are simply left out. Marginson and van der Wende noted that research-intensive universities tend to be the most implicated in globalization,

continued on page 23...



Who's who in HERDSA

Deanne Gannaway

I am an academic developer in the Institute for Teaching and Learning Innovation at the University of Queensland.

The main focus of my work is facilitating professional learning opportunities. This includes coordinating professional development workshops and teaching in the Graduate Certificate of Higher Education. I also get to connect people and ideas through the networking and showcasing events I coordinate.

I'm interested in bringing people together to work on sustainable curriculum design, where innovation can be transferred and embedded into practice and where evidence of what constitutes quality teaching and learning is adopted. I'm currently involved in a number of curriculum design projects ranging across law, health, humanities and science. I'm particularly interested in understanding how curriculum design works in generalist degree programs such as the Bachelor of Arts.

As a HERDSA member I have been on the executive for two terms. This time I am Treasurer and also working in the Fellowship portfolio. My role in this portfolio is to connect associate fellows to experienced mentors.

HERDSA means connecting to an amazingly dedicated group of people

who share my passion for teaching and learning in higher education in all its different guises - people who broaden my perspectives and spark my enthusiasm and creativity.

I am reading Murakami's Norwegian wood and All the light we cannot see by Anthony Doerr. I'm going to find something happy next!

I am passionate about food and cooking! And travelling to new places and meeting new and interesting people! And my family and my friends! And good theatre – and bad theatre! And music – of all types! And HERDSA!

Next I want to have a good hard look at what it is that HERDSA does to connect people to help them engage with the discipline of higher education.

I am proud of my daughters. They are young women I am really privileged to know, who constantly blow me away with their intelligence, their integrity, their passion, their creativity, their bravery. The fact that I had anything to do with them being in the world is a constant source of wonder to me.

What people may not know is that I've walked through a pride of lions in a game reserve in South Africa.

OFFICE FOR LEARNING & TEACHING

Grants, awards and projects

The OLT publishes final reports of its funded projects. Recent final project reports published on the OLT website include learning analytics, graduate employability, innovative use of technology, quality and standards, and curriculum design.

The Minister for Education and Training, Senator the Honourable Simon Birmingham has announced the successful applicants for Round 2 2015 OLT Innovation and Development grants and Seed grants. The grants focus on a number of priority areas including employability skills, access and equity, and increasing the effectiveness of the PhD. Successful applications are listed on the OLT website. Congratulations to all HERDSA members who have been successful.

Applications for 2016 OLT Innovation and Development grants and Commissioned Work grants are currently being assessed and successful applicants are expected to be announced in May.

Assessment of applications for 2016 OLT fellowships is currently underway. Up to four National Senior Teaching Fellowships and up to eight National Teaching Fellowships are expected to be awarded.

Nominations for OLT Citations close on **5 May 2016** and for OLT awards close on **7 July 2016**. Intending nominees should, in the first instance, discuss their intention with the relevant OLT Institutional Contact Officer (ICO). A list of ICOs can be found on the OLT website.

For further information on the OLT and its programmes please refer to the OLT website: www.olt.gov.au

Around the branches



Across Australia, New Zealand and Hong Kong our branches continue to offer added value to HERDSA members. HERDSA Branch Chairs are shown above, from left to right: Gesa Ruge (ACT), Anna Siu Fong Kwan (HK), Rebecca Sealey (QLD), Sharron King (SA), Tracy Douglas (TAS), Elizabeth Levin (VIC), Melissa Davis (WA).

ACT

Chair: Gesa Ruge

The January panel discussion on *Curriculum Development and Learning Design* brought twenty-two members and guests together to a lively meeting at the Australian Catholic University. Hosted and facilitated by Catherine McLoughlin, panelists Karin Oerlemans, Pam Roberts and Nguyen Bui discussed trends, research and current practice examples.

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FORTHCOMING

May: Higher education professional development and partnerships

June: Pre-HERDSA Conference ACT Branch presentations and members networking

Hong Kong

Chair: Anna Siu Fong KWAN

Universities in Hong Kong are conscious of the new development of MOOCs. A wide range of initiatives has been devoted to leveraging the potential of this trend in enhancing teaching and learning in higher education. About 100 participants attended an inter-university seminar *The Internationalisation of Higher Education with Massive Open*

Online Courses co-organised by HERDSA Hong Kong and The Chinese University of Hong Kong. Experienced practitioners led the discussion on the development of MOOCs in local higher education and how MOOCs might promote teaching and learning in their own institutions.

HERDSA members working in or visiting Hong Kong are most welcome to HERDSA HK activities.

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HERDSA Hong Kong website:
<http://herdsahk.edublogs.org/>

Queensland

Chair: Rebecca Sealey

In November 2015, 40 delegates participated in a peer-reviewed mini-conference *Shaping higher education with new ideas and emerging initiatives*. An interactive, thought-provoking keynote discussion on engaging alumni was led by OLT National Learning and Teaching Fellow Dr Jessica Vanderlelei. Two presentations from the HERDSA 2015 conference and six new presentations by QLD-based teams in preparation for abstract submission to HERDSA 2016 followed. Themes included: co-creation of assessment information; gauging course success; development and implementation of an ethics module; flipping physiology curriculum; customised educational, instructional videos; and partnerships in international exchange programs.

The event stimulated lively participant discussion about the design, implementation and evaluation strategies presented and provided feedback on HERDSA 2016 conference abstract submissions.
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HERDSA QLD website:
<http://www.jcu.edu.au/learnandteach/professionallearning/herdsa/index.htm>

South Australia

Chair: Sharron King

SA Branch meetings so far for this year have been focused on plans to hold the 2018 HERDSA conference in South Australia.

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Tasmania

Chair: Tracy Douglas

HERDSA Tasmania held the 2015 *Teaching Matters* conference in December with the theme *Tasmanian Blends*. Branch members presented their innovative learning and teaching practices.

Branch members are participating in scholarly activities in 2016, including a *scholarship of teaching and learning* community of practice funded by a University of Tasmania teaching development grant. Some are working towards local and national award applications while others, who have achieved University of Tasmania or OLT awards, are mentoring a number of staff in the application preparation process.

The branch is organising a workshop on *Writing a Teaching Philosophy*, to be held in first semester, 2016 facilitated by Stuart Schonell.

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Victoria

Chair: Elizabeth Levin

The AGM with an expert panel on *Authentic Assessment* was held in March. Stay tuned for a report. We



have decided to focus our events around assessment for 2016, with the second on *Assessment in Large Classes*. We are targeting OLT citation recipients and OLT Fellows and the response has been very positive with presenters keen to participate. Watch this space for news of an event to celebrate the success of the conference and to plan some new events for the rest of 2016.

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Western Australia

Chair: Melissa Davis

It is our pleasure to introduce WA Branch member Dr Pat Halloran, the photographer who shot the images for the HERDSA 2016 conference logo. We are very grateful for his artistic input in bringing to life the conference theme. Pat has a passion for photography and a keen eye for capturing beauty in everyday life. Pat describes photography as about freedom for him. He likes capturing static images such as the Australian outback and is also fascinated by the story-telling that can occur through street photography or studio work. Pat links photography to his work as an academic in that it is about constantly entertaining new ideas and being mindful that what we 'see' is based on our own world view and life experiences.

HERDSA WA members look forward to welcoming you to Fremantle for the *HERDSA 2016 conference*.

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FELLOWS COLUMN

So you think you can teach...

Liam Phelan

It's getting on to a year now since I completed my HERDSA Fellowship portfolio. And in all that time, not a week has gone by where I haven't called on that experience one way or another. Crafting a HERDSA portfolio invites – requires – deep reflection on one's education practice. My guess is that most folks would say that's an increasingly rare opportunity in contemporary academic life.

I think of myself as a good teacher. And in my time educating, I've been lucky enough to receive a couple of awards that say so too.

But HERDSA's Fellowship Scheme offers something more: the opportunity to really tease out and test the merits of one's education practice.

The Scheme supports fellows-in-the-making, through allocating experienced and skilled mentors. My mentor was absolutely wonderful. We are based in different cities and we worked remotely, over skype and email. Sometimes we were in contact intensively. Sometimes we'd set things aside for a spell. But my mentor always kept me on task – no mean feat sometimes, in the context of a typically busy work life.

Putting the portfolio together was a lot of fun! But it isn't a picnic: it takes a coherent, concerted effort.

I really enjoyed working with my mentor and I really enjoyed honing my understandings, and sharpening my insights, into both the literature and my own education practice.

I like writing, but even so, it took me a while to find my rhythm. I remember the moment where I felt like I'd cracked the code – suddenly it clicked for me, and from there I knew what I was doing, and why. Good times.

Learning is the gift that keeps on giving: even though lots of folks provide priceless insights into aspects of learning processes, no one has a complete understanding of what goes on when people engage in learning. With experimentation, reflection and humility, there is ample space for educators to continuously evolve their own practice.

The HERDSA Fellowship Scheme provides a formalised opportunity to contextualise, reflect on, test, and evolve good teaching practices. The experience will be different for everyone who engages in it, and it will be valuable - very valuable.

If you're even thinking about it, I strongly encourage you to go for it. Onwards and upwards!

Dr Liam Phelan is a senior lecturer and Online Teaching & Learning Coordinator with GradSchool, University of Newcastle.



HERDSA NZ

Barbara Kensington-Miller

This is my first article in HERDSA News as the new Chair of HERDSA NZ. To introduce myself, I am a senior lecturer at the University of Auckland with the Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education and looking forward, with some trepidation I must admit, to this new role. I am also on the HERDSA Australasian executive which means I have up-to-date information of what is happening. Well that is the theory...as I begin this role, I confess to feeling still a little unsure.

To begin, I would like to publicly thank Clinton Golding, from the University of Otago. As the outgoing Chair, Clinton has gallantly led the New Zealand branch. He has always been a thoughtful, courteous, and reflective leader and has left some big shoes to fill. I have benefitted from the model he has set and the support he is giving me.

My introduction to the position began with the Tertiary Education Research in New Zealand (TERNZ) conference, hosted last year by the Auckland University of Technology (AUT) on 25th-27th November. The conference was fantastic. AUT did a magnificent job and Nell Buissink led an excellent team convening it. TERNZ is a great opportunity to catch up with other New

Zealand academics, and it was exciting to meet some Australians crossing 'the ditch' to attend.

TERNZ is a conference with a difference. A distinctive feature is an emphasis on creating time for discussion and space for reflection. One of the explicit aims is to have dialogue which transcends disciplinary boundaries and promotes further exploration of a research approach to teaching and learning in the New Zealand tertiary sector. At a time when universities and polytechnics are under considerable external pressure to change, TERNZ provides an opportunity to examine the direction in which education change is heading, and the means by which practitioners might influence that direction.

The conference is non-traditional. Presenters have sessions of 50-60 minutes with around 10 minutes to talk about their ideas and research with 50 minutes for discussion or workshops. This formula prompts some provocative sessions, kick-starts conversations, and enables truly dialogic discussion. I noticed some clever titles worth a mention here, such as: *Killing two birds with one well-aimed rock*; *Fear and flipping in higher education*; *Bullshit*

and the art of crap detection. The effect is a high energy conference where everyone engages and heads home re-inspired.

Host groups are part of the magic of TERNZ. Twice daily, people meet to talk about what they found interesting in the sessions they attended. Collaborations are formed, friendships made, and new ideas for research gathered. These organised home groups are relaxed, friendly and supportive. The final session provides lots of hilarity as host groups get together to creatively share what they learnt.

Each year the HERDSA-TERNZ research medal is presented for original published research in the field of higher education that communicates quality ideas. This year Associate Professor Eva Heinrich from Massey University was the recipient. Eva's research on assessment has directed the development of the assignment tool in Moodle, which is now used in over eighty thousand sites worldwide and by millions of students. Recently, Eva complemented her Engineering PhD with a Doctor of Education. This work explored how teaching groups can improve learning about teaching. I'm impressed that Eva is really Doctor Doctor Heinrich. Completion of two doctorates is very rare and speaks volumes of Eva's commitment to her own learning and professional development.

Mention must be made of Ako Aotearoa, the National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence in New Zealand, who generously contribute financially to the conference and attend if they can. They are always supportive of such events and their backing is well received. Some of the research behind the presentations is the result of their funding.

For 2016, TERNZ will be hosted by Otago University in Dunedin from November 30th – December 2nd. Please mark it in your calendars! And we New Zealanders always welcome Australians to our beautiful South Island.

AKO AOTEAROA

Project funding priorities for 2016

Peter Coolbear

For the first time in 2016 we intend to award most of our funding through a research funding process (RFP) against some tightly defined specifications instead of an open call for proposals. Why are we making this change? The short answer is to fill some gaps in our project portfolio.

We are confident we are currently supporting exciting, nationally leading-edge projects on a very wide range of topics. Nevertheless, the need for work in some new areas has become increasingly obvious. We have decided, in the first instance, on three topic areas where we currently have no work being done. Two of these are selected in response to current high profile policy discussions in New Zealand:

Supporting the increased participation and success of women in trades or STEM subjects where they are traditionally under-represented.

Enhancing work readiness through tertiary education.

The third area, however, is one which we think should be the focus of significant debate, but there is something of a vacuum. As a result of the national mandatory review, the design of all New Zealand's pre-degree qualifications has shifted from a largely competency-framed model to one that is more enabling and deliberately focusses on outcomes and graduate attributes. So far so good, but what implications does that have for effective and appropriate assessment design? We need to commission some work that addresses this issue head on.

Check out www.akoatearoa.org for more information on these RFPs as we develop them through March and early April.

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NEW SCHOLARS

Share your voice

Deb Clarke

For many new to the academy, writing for publication can potentially pose a challenge. New scholars need to make some well informed decisions regarding what is motivating their writing, and with whom they wish to share their writing.

Consider the following motivations for publishing from Shokraneh et al (2010). Which of these motivators for publishing resonate with you?

- Documenting knowledge
- Sharing knowledge
- Problem solving
- Ownership of findings
- Personal promotion
- Intrinsic satisfaction
- Acquiring grants and awards
- Competition
- Enjoyment
- Surviving in the academy.

You can add to this checklist any further factors that motivate you to publish.

The Bologna Declaration states that a university is an autonomous institution which produces, examines, appraises and hands down culture by research and teaching. A university's role is to enrich minds. But how do universities measure this enrichment of minds? Most commonly this enrichment is measured by the number and impact of publications in peer reviewed journals. These criteria create useful and efficient measures for universities to justify their decisions regarding funds allocation and as a proving tool for promotion. If this is your motivation for researching and publishing then you will be driven by submitting manuscripts to journals with high impact factors. The journal impact factor or JIF is the average number of citations per

paper published in a journal in the last two years.

You may also like to consider the social, educational, emotional, psychological, and cultural impact of sharing your voice with not only members of the academy but the broader local and global community. Perhaps you view the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning as investigating and reporting on solutions to problems that are unclear, complex, contested, or have causal relations such as problems within the disciplines associated with health, education, environment, or culture. If so you may decide to contribute to professional association publications, community magazines, and social media dialogue. You might also prepare reports for government agencies and present as a guest speaker or key note for a business or community organization.

When next considering how and where to share your voice, remember to cast your net widely and broadcast your knowledge in a socially generous manner. Think about submitting a showcase article to HERDSA News or contact Deb Clarke dclarke@csu.edu.au about writing a piece for this column. The HERDSA Conference is held 1st July every year and provides another opportunity to receive feedback and publish on your work. The HERD journal offers another avenue for scholarly publication.

Useful reading

Shokraneh, F., Ilghami, R., Masoomi, R., & Amanollahi, A. (2012). How to select a journal to submit and publish your biomedical paper? *BioImpacts*, 2(1), 61-68.



Kelly Matthews wins National Teaching Fellowship

Dr Kelly Matthews, Senior Lecturer in the Institute for Teaching and Learning Innovation and the Faculty of Science at the University of Queensland, has been awarded a National Teaching Fellowship by the Office for Learning and Teaching, Australia. The project is titled *Students as partners: reconceptualising the role of students in science degree programme curriculum development*.

Kelly is an active researcher with a keen interest in practical applications in contemporary higher education issues focused on undergraduate curriculum reform and students' experiences of learning across degree programs. Kelly's current research themes include: student experiences of learning across degree programs with a focus on quantitative skills and other science-specific graduate learning outcomes; giving voice to student experiences of learning; and whole of degree program curriculum development in science higher education. Kelly also coordinates the university's teaching and learning program for new tutors. She is a Visiting Fellow at McMaster University in 2016 and is co-chair of the ISSOTL Special Interest Group Students as Co-Inquirers.

Kelly has partnered on twenty-two teaching and learning projects since 2006. Her publications are found in, for example, *Higher Education Research and Development*; *Educational Researcher*; *International Journal of Science Education*; *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher*

Education; and she has edited a special edition of the *International Journal of Mathematical Education in Science and Technology*. Kelly has received four awards for teaching and one award for research.

Kelly's research has demonstrated that science degree program learning outcomes are often invisible to students. Her National Teaching Fellowship explores a potential solution - students as partners. This offers a way of thinking premised on shared responsibility for learning and teaching amongst students and academics. The Fellowship will explore current practice in Australia and overseas across a range of disciplines and institutional projects across several universities. The Fellowship will harness student insight and creativity to transform science curriculum so that students graduate with a clear sense of learning outcomes and employability skills.

Activities include establishing a community of scholars; mapping national practices; piloting student-academic partnership activities; developing broadly applicable guiding principles for students as partners; and national workshops. The fellowship is developing links with international experts and peak Australian bodies.

Kelly hopes the Fellowship will stimulate and shape a national debate on the role of students in curriculum development and will be used as a catalyst to build national and international networks.

<http://itali.uq.edu.au/matthews-studentsaspartners>

Ethics, Care and Quality in Educational Development

International Consortium for
Educational Development
Conference

University of Cape Town,
South Africa
23 – 25 November 2016.

ICED 2016 is hosted by the Cape Peninsula University of Technology, Stellenbosch University, the University of Cape Town and the University of the Western Cape.

Pre-conference workshops will be held at the University of Cape Town 22 November 2016.

Registration opens 1 MARCH 2016.

About the Conference

Educational development has particular responsibilities with regard to ethics, care and quality enhancement in higher education because of the nature of its practice and the benefits it seeks to take to faculty and students. Educational developers, in faculties and in teaching and learning centres, have encountered many challenges around ethics, care and quality in the daily practice of their profession.

The conference theme lends itself to a variety of sub-themes such as: the ethics of educational research and evaluation; ethics, care and quality in the funding of university teacher development and excellence awards; and ethics, care and quality in formal staff development programs. The conference theme is intended to re-focus the practice of educational development, to encourage critical thinking on the roles and responsibilities of educational developers, and to offer opportunities for researchers and theorists to explore the complex relationships between ethics, care and quality enhancement that have always been at the centre of our work.

Visit the conference website at:
www.iced-2016.co.za/



FAREWELL



John Panter

Dr John Raspin Panter is remembered as an inspirational teacher and mentor who was highly regarded by his colleagues and contemporaries. He was an educational leader with an acerbic view of the encroachment of bureaucracy into academic work.

In 1972 John was appointed to the University of Wollongong (UOW) as a lecturer in the Philosophy and History of Science. He went on to lead the Centre for Staff Development until his retirement. John presided over the development of one of the earliest university teaching evaluation survey systems and one of the first formal teaching courses for academic staff in Australia. John was a canny and courageous unionist who served for several years as the President of the Academic Staff Association of UOW and on the NSW Executive of the academics' union, importantly ensuring that general staff were fully included in the formation of the National Tertiary Education Union of which he was a founding member.

After retirement John spent much time in Ireland as a consultant. He pioneered the beginnings of staff and educational development and was instrumental in the establishment of teaching development centres in Irish universities and institutes of technology. He was a founding member and inaugural Vice-President of the All Ireland Society for Higher Education (AISHE), writing the Society's constitution and appointed AISHE's first life member. The annual award for the best research paper published in the AISHE Journal is now the *John Panter Prize for Academic Development*.

At Trinity College Dublin John introduced strategic planning and chaired the College committee, profoundly changing the academic promotions system to give recognition to teaching.

John was always a great supporter of HERDSA. Teaching was his grand passion and he made a notable contribution to the development of teaching and learning in Irish higher education. A pointer to his legacy is in the recent dedication of the AISHE Good Practice Guides to his memory, one of which he co-wrote with Sylvia Huntley-Moore. The Guides can be downloaded at:

www.aishe.org/aishe-academic-practice-guides/



Faith Trent

Emeritus Professor Faith Trent AM FACE is remembered as an educator, academic, and educational leader who brimmed with energy, engaging forthrightness and an insatiable appetite for challenge, all of which helped to forge her long and distinguished career in higher education.

Faith was Executive Dean of the Faculty of Education, Humanities, Law & Theology at Flinders University until December 2010, holding a Chair in Education. Faith was President of the Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH) from 2006 to 2009 and an executive member of the Council of Humanities and Social Sciences. Faith was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in 2003 for service to education. In 2007 she was appointed a Fellow of the Australian College of Education. Faith was an AUQA auditor, a technical expert with HKCAAVQ and on the Governing Board of the Australian International Institute of Management. After retiring from Flinders, Faith worked as an education consultant and was Deputy Vice-Chancellor at the University of New England.

Faith valued highly her relationship with her two sons, Morgan and Farron. Listening to their experiences of education drove her to engage in influential research in education of boys and the impact of technology on learning.

Faith will be remembered by many for her generosity with her time and interest in the lives of her colleagues and the careers of young academics. She had a special interest in supporting women and younger staff into leadership roles. Flinders University staff will remember her dynamic workshops on teaching in tutorials. She never felt too busy to do what she could to help staff make education the best it could be. For her this always meant focusing on the needs of students.

Faith was always a strong supporter of HERDSA. She was a force to be reckoned with and knew so many of us across the sector well. She was relentless in forging productive connections and networks. She was a friend, a mentor and an inspiration to many people who knew her and who will miss her companionship and generosity of spirit. Selfless to the last, Faith requested that her body be donated to science.

NETWORK - DISCUSS - DEVELOP

Take some time at HERDSA 2016 to Talk About Learning And Teaching (TATAL).

TATAL workshops at HERDSA 2016 offer an opportunity to share, reflect and review the values and beliefs that underlie your approach to teaching and learning. Through a collaborative and facilitated workshop each TATAL participant is supported in the development of their own teaching and learning philosophy statement.

TATAL makes us think about how we teach and also about how we align our teaching with the scholarship of teaching...it makes me aware of how research can underpin and strengthen my teaching. And it's fun (2008 TATAL participant).

HERDSA TATAL Fremantle will start with a full day pre-conference workshop and finish with a breakfast on the first day of the conference, Monday 4th July.

Pre-conference workshop

- Facilitators and participants will establish a safe collaborative environment in which to investigate the challenges and successes of teaching and learning.
- Participants will develop a teaching philosophy statement with the support of the facilitators.

Breakfast Wednesday 6th July

- Facilitators and participants will provide collaborative feedback on draft philosophy statements.

- Participants will arrange dates for future meetings.

Participants can continue the TATAL experience after the conference face-to-face and through Skype as they develop a teaching portfolio and wrestle with and reflect on the puzzles of their teaching and their students' learning. TATAL groups will continue to meet face to face for Perth delegates, and virtually for delegates from geographically diverse regions, to prepare a teaching portfolio.

TATALs were first formed in 2009 and continue to meet and support each other as collaborative and reflective educators and scholars.

So, why would you get involved in a TATAL group? I recommend it to academics who are at the early, mid or later stages of their careers. There are plenty of opportunities to mentor and be mentored, to facilitate and be facilitated, to learn and to teach. The mixture of informality and formality keeps our group on an even keel and ensures we mix our interest in each other with our interest in a variety of issues related to good learning and teaching in the higher education sector (2011 HERDSA TATAL participant).

Facilitators are members of existing TATALs: Robert Kennelly (pioneer TATALer), Stuart Schonell, John Gilchrist, Kate Thomson, Abigail Lewis, Ainslie Robinson and Gesa Ruge.

For more information contact: stuart.schonell@utas.edu.au or go to <http://herdsa2016.org/workshop.html>

HERDSA community



HERDSA Hong Kong conference 2014



HERDSA Hong Kong gathering



Robert Kennelly with other HERDSA Fellows at the Auckland conference



MEanderings

Robert Cannon

When I first started in academe, participants in my workshops on assessment often expressed surprise at my assertion that it was one of the most poorly practised areas of university education.

All kinds of measurement nonsense was tolerated: giving scores like 12/10 because a work was so very good; only passing the number of students in first year Economics who would fit into the lecture room allocated for second year; and in large courses, neither establishing marking criteria nor checking marking when large numbers of different markers were involved. The variability in students' test scores achieved by this approach is mirrored today in the variability of different university ranking approaches. Not sure about this? Just have a look at the Australian Universities web site!

Assessment is still poorly practiced, but now at a much higher level as well. What alarms me is the way high stakes testing distorts education and university funding and the way the media fans anxieties about results. A high stakes test is one used to make important decisions about students, teachers, institutions, and the education system, commonly for the purpose of accountability. NAPLAN (National Assessment Program - Literacy and Numeracy) is an Australian example of a high stakes test at school

level. I include rankings as a high stakes measure as well because of the significant consequences for universities that flow from ranking outcomes.

In previous Meanderings I wrote about Cerberus, the mythical three-headed hellhound, and suggested Cerberus is wreaking havoc in higher education. I wrote about the 'Big Me' as one of its three heads, technology, as another, and now I consider high-stakes testing as Cerberus' third head. When I think of high stakes testing I also think of politicians and their advisers who seem to have little understanding of the impact of testing on education. Popular analyst Groucho Marx stated: "Politics is the art of looking for trouble, finding it everywhere, diagnosing it incorrectly and applying the wrong remedies".

Moralising rhetoric about accountability, transparency, and standards has created an over-anxious world where politicians and their advisers express a form of contempt for the fundamental ideals of education by fostering testing and ranking strategies that undermine and narrow them. And, it seems more tests are on the horizon!

"We will not be able to address mounting pressures on higher education if we're not radically improving transparency" the OECD's head of the Division of Innovation and Measuring Progress is reported to have said in

University World News on 1 February this year. The most promising response, he is reported to have said, would be an international comparative assessment of learning outcomes of graduates, with findings made available to all stakeholders. "It's about empowering the demand side." The assessment is called AHELO – Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes.

A friend pointed out that we are on the verge of having a quality assured system of education that will rival that achieved by the Australian Egg Corporation. Not only will standards be assured, she insisted, but in doing so we will end up with standardised education – just like standard large or extra large eggs!

Aren't we creating a world where diversity will be lost? Whether you attend university in Auckland, Athens or Accra really will not matter as it will all have been standardised – and transparently so! If testing is so great a stimulus for positive change, why hasn't education improved in ways commensurate with the vast sums and time spent on it? Instead testing is of corrupting it or at best, taking us nowhere.

What has education become when vague ideas like transparency, empowered demand, and standards have salience? University of Kent Emeritus Professor Frank Furedi in *Wasted, Why Education Isn't Educating*, has addressed this question. He argues that the idea of education, as the transmission of the cultural and intellectual achievements of humanity, is steadily being forgotten.

Unfortunately, out of all the people to whom politicians and bureaucrats might turn to help solve educational problems, they seem too often to overlook those with most expertise – those that teach students. Instead, they seem to favour those from other fields and other places. Economists loom large.

Isn't it as absurd to suggest that I am a highway engineer because I drive a car, as it is to say someone is an educational expert because they went to university? American lawyer Joel Klein, former Chancellor of the New York City Department of Education, is an example of this phenomenon. Klein had significant

influence on the Rudd and Gillard governments' policies but we are still waiting for the 'Education Revolution'.

John Ruskin was an influential Victorian-era English artist and thinker who taught drawing. He did this not to make people into artists, but to help them see what is actually there and to notice significant detail. What, in education, makes people truly see what is there and really important? The equivalent to drawing has to be teaching. In teaching we are forced to engage with the detail – the students and their abilities; the curriculum – what we teach, why, where, how, and how we know if learning has occurred; the physical and social environments of teaching; governance, administration, and financing; and, yes, test results too and using them sensitively to enhance student learning.

I raise these matters because one of the things that is deeply troubling is that those having an influence on education policies and practices based on little formal knowledge of it other than having been at university, advocate more testing and measuring as the gold-standard tool for the salvation of education's 'ills'.

The influence of those who appear not to have taught in schools is especially true when we look at the educational development support we supply through foreign aid. Consider the design of Australia's newest education project in Indonesia, *Inovasi*. Produced by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and available on its web site, it has statements like these: "The challenge: millions more attending school but not learning" and "We know that the point of service delivery – the school and the classroom – is not adding the value it should be." A moment's reflection suggests the improbability that millions of Indonesian children are not learning *anything*! But we are seduced into believing these comments as evidence is adduced from PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) data and national exam data. PISA is of dubious validity in Indonesia and national exam data is known to be corrupted, invalid, and unreliable. And since when did classrooms become a "point of service delivery"?

Steven Klees of the University of Maryland labels the problem as "measurement fetishism". Economists, he argues, have tried to convince us for years that testing is the highway to solving educational problems. The message, he says, is just get the data and everything else falls into place. The Director of UNESCO's Institute of Statistics wrote along these lines in February: "Remember the old saying: *If you think education is expensive, try ignorance*. Well now we have a new twist: *If you think education data are expensive, try doing without*." A 2012 report by Gordon Stanley to Queensland's independent schools shows it is not that simple. And, on rankings Stanley states: "Setting targets based on rank position rather than on standards achieved, flies in the face of modern assessment practice, which is standards based. Despite this, ranking appeals to those who see improving educational outcomes as a competitive sport."

We read of the sad results of this sport. "I am concerned about the excessive emphasis on studying for the NAPLAN at my children's school", writes a distressed parent in the *Adelaide Advertiser* (23 Jan 16). "My daughter will be in Year 3. She is already anxious about taking the test this year, after watching her brother go through it over and over again." The evidence is mounting of increasing numbers of children staying away from NAPLAN testing days. This unintended outcome is an indictment of a system that hypocritically mouths platitudes like engagement and equity.

An outstanding review is provided in their paper, 'The impact of high stakes testing: the Australian story', by Klenowski and Wyatt-Smith, *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy and Practice*, 2012. This should be compulsory reading for anyone contemplating high stakes testing. One of their main conclusions is that NAPLAN has limited utility in informing the Australian people how children are learning in the curriculum. They argue that is time to critique the flawed thinking associated with an assumed connection between testing, data, and learning improvement. Among numerous other studies raising a red flag

is a 2012 study by the Whitlam Institute at the University of Western Sydney that suggests that NAPLAN may be having a detrimental effect in areas such as curriculum breadth, teacher morale, and students' well-being.

And in higher education? The OECD has been carrying out a feasibility study for the *Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes*. We are sure to hear more of this in coming years. When we do, let us hope we hear more analysis about the potential unintended consequences for students, their teachers and universities. Past experience suggests we won't.

Is education becoming a meaningless idea? Furedi shows how the now abolished General Teaching Council for England's list of core values for the teaching profession contained not a single value specific to education. That is correct, not one! He asks how values like excellence, empowerment, and self-regulation are different from those of dentists, accountants or soldiers. Similarly, an Australian university recently advertised for a Course Project Manager. Neither the statement of knowledge and experience, nor the academic qualifications, specified any requirement whatsoever for teaching, experience in running courses, or formal qualification in education or training. It was all about management.

One of the things you learn as you get older is the variety of new ways to hurt yourself. In my life, one of these ways has been a career-damaging predisposition to point out weaknesses and problems, especially when it comes to assessment and evaluation. Pointing out inconvenient evidence about potential problems and failures in education to powerful people may not generally be a good idea however it is my view that it needs to be continued if we are to have a quality higher education system.

Robert Cannon is an evaluation adviser to USAID in Indonesia. Recently, he worked with the USAID-funded Palestinian Faculty Development Program. Robert was formerly Director of the Advisory Centre for University Education at the University of Adelaide. cannonra@icloud.com



Bibliometrics: A fifty years perspective

Roger Atkinson

In much earlier times - I'm talking mid to late 1960s here - authors were often informed about the publication of their newest research paper by the arrival of air-mailed 'offprint' requests. I especially liked requests from German scientists, quite flattering for me as a young postgraduate student to be addressed as 'Herr Doktor Professor', and the foreign stamps were useful for a young relative who was into collecting. Reprint requests were necessary, this being before the days of ready availability of photocopiers, and of course air-mailed requests arrived before UWA Library's surface-mailed copy of the journal and the publishers 'offprints'.

One's count of reprint requests constituted an early kind of bibliometric data, notable for two desirable characteristics: data easily obtained (I just counted the heap), and data available soon after publication of one's paper. Now, fast forward fifty years. Our contemporary authors are not counters of 'snail mail' reprint requests, they may instead look at the number of *Facebook* 'likes' they have scored, or their *Altmetric* score, or their *Google Scholar* citation count and h-index. That fifty year contrast sets up a good number of interesting questions! Too many, so to narrow the focus, this column considers just the two 'desirable characteristics' as perceived fifty years ago, namely 'data obtained easily' and 'data available soon after publication'.

To illustrate 'data obtained easily', in earlier times journal editors used to email complimentary hardcopy to ISI, as I started doing for AJET in June 2004, hoping eventually to obtain an *Impact Factor* for AJET ('eventually' turned out to be 2010, *six years* later). At the time, counting of citations was a manual operation, but now thanks to incredible advances in information technology, 'data obtained easily' is true. Data collection is done by 'bots' that 'crawl' websites all over the world, copy vast numbers of publications, and churn out citation counts from which other computer programs calculate and publish numerous kinds of bibliometrics and rankings.

However, 'data obtained easily', or perhaps *too easily*, creates a risk, the risk of attaching too much importance to bibliometrics like *Impact Factor*, h-index, *SCImago Journal Rank*, altmetrics, and others, or to related topics such as journal rankings. 'Data obtained easily' is problematic, as it is not counter-balanced or moderated by the *data that is hard to obtain*, that is, data that computer programs and 'simple quantification' cannot obtain. In recent years many observers have drawn attention to this risk, and the 'perverse unintended consequences' that may occur. Table 1 (p.17) presents a small, non-systematic but illustrative sample of critical views, using article titles or brief quotations and themed around an 'obsession with metrics and rankings'.

The contemporary equivalent to 'data available soon after publication' is something more recently and more rapidly developed than was the case with the evolution of 'data obtained easily'. To illustrate, the following quotation is from Altmetric's website:

Knowing who's talking about your research and what they're saying is crucial in today's increasingly online world. Ensuring your work is being accurately represented and interpreted, as well as getting to the right people at the right time, all plays an important factor its broader impact. ...

With altmetrics, you can start to track this information *as soon as your research is published* - meaning no waiting around for citations, and the chance to engage directly with the audiences who are interested in your work. (emphasis added) [www.altmetric.com]

The first example of the adoption of altmetrics by a major publisher that I explored was from Taylor & Francis, publishers of HERDSA's journal, HERD. If you look at the online tables of contents for recent volumes of HERD, you will find some new lines, for example:

Citing Articles:
CrossRef (2) | Web of Science (3) | Scopus (3)
Article Views: 274
Altmetric score: 2

Cursor over any example to obtain a brief popup explanation, or obtain a longer explanation from www.tandfonline.com/page/article-metrics. T&F explain that 'The Article metrics widget displays article-level metrics, including views, citation counts from CrossRef, the Web of Science, and Scopus. It also displays an Altmetric score', where Altmetric is T&F's provider of this score. Scopus (Elsevier) is the ARC's provider of citation data for its *ERA 2015* process, whilst Web of Science (Thomson-Reuters) and CrossRef (Publishers International Linking Association) also are providers of citation counts.

Whilst 'data available soon after publication' is very dependent upon the 'data obtained easily' factor, that is upon advances in computer networked, automated gathering of information, the growing influence of the new metrics owes much to changing attitudes towards assessments of research publications. The new approaches to metrics tend towards open access and universal availability, accord much more attention to article

Table 1: Snips from some publications, themed around an ‘obsession with metrics and rankings’

Wilsdon, et al. (2015)	<i>The metric tide: ... review of the role of metrics in research assessment and management ... we only have to look around us, at the blunt use of metrics such as journal impact factors, h-indices and grant income targets to be reminded of the pitfalls. Some of the most precious qualities of academic culture resist simple quantification, and individual indicators can struggle to do justice to the richness and plurality of our research.</i>
Werner (2015)	The focus on bibliometrics makes papers less useful. ...As the tyranny of bibliometrics tightens its grip, it is having a disastrous effect on the model of science presented to young researchers.
Hicks, et al. (2015)	Research metrics can provide crucial information that would be difficult to gather or understand by means of individual expertise. But this quantitative information must not be allowed to morph from an instrument into the goal.
Smith & Bennett (2015)	The ERA journal rankings were abolished in 2011. However, their ghost influences decisions from journal selection to academic recruitment and promotion.
The Guardian (2015)	Our obsession with metrics turns academics into data drones.
Calver & Beattie (2015)	Our obsession with metrics is corrupting science.
Gruber (2014)	Academic sell-out: How an obsession with metrics and rankings is damaging academia. ... unhealthy trend of institutions (and individuals) becoming increasingly obsessed with journal metrics and, recently, article-level metrics.
Colquhoun & Plessted (2014)	Scientists don’t count: Why you should ignore altmetrics and other bibliometric nightmares.
Adams (2014)	Bibliometrics has a problem. In fact, the field - which tracks scholarly impact in everything from journal papers to citations, data sets and tweets - has a lot of problems. Its indicators need better interpretation, its tools are widely misused, its relevance is often questioned and its analyses lack timeliness.
Kitt & Wearne (2013)	... a massive research performance data collection juggernaut that is scaled up in meta-metric analysis and benchmarking. Instead of research institutions deciding what is to be or what has been achieved, the noise of citations and other metrics that serve benchmarking, meta-analysis and university league tables cloud and crowd discussion in this space.
Thompson (2011)	No tyranny of metrics: Scrapped Australian plan now a revolution in research assessment in England.
Jarwal, Brion & King (2008).	Measuring research quality using the journal impact factor, citations and 'ranked journals': Blunt instruments or inspired metrics?

level metrics, and perhaps, somewhat surprisingly, have helped to wean research funding bodies such as our ARC away from the ‘blunt instruments’ approaches that marked earlier times.

One of the oldest and perhaps best known metrics, ISI’s *Impact Factor* (now Thomson-Reuters) is not freely accessible to readers, as a subscription to *Journal Citation Reports* is needed for access. However, a trend towards open access metrics seems to be emerging, for example the *Google Scholar Metrics* and *SCImago Journal Rank* provisions of h-index data, and Elsevier’s *Scopus Metrics*. *Google Scholar Metrics* provides authors with a free “Citation indices” service, which authors may keep private or elect to make public. *SCImago Journal Rank* provides journal editors with HTML code that can be used for free, to display their journal’s SJR, ‘cites per doc’ and ‘total cites’ data. Altmetric data that T&F has begun providing is free to readers (as it is included with the ‘abstract only’ view that is free to any reader).

Perhaps the most prominent illustration of increased attention to article level metrics

is *Google Scholar Metrics*. Other examples include *ResearchGate*, which features “Join for free” and allows you to “See in-depth stats on who’s been reading your work and keep track of your citations”. Increased attention to article level metrics helps authors who may have published an outstanding article in a journal with low ranking according to journal level metrics. Conversely, authors of a mediocre article that somehow secured publication in a highly ranked journal will not be well-disposed towards article level metrics, because they will be ‘found out’! However, we could note a potential dark side to article level metrics, from the perspective of journal editors. This is the risk of unfairly discriminating against authors and articles that are likely to attain only poor or modest citation counts. Authors from a language background other than English, and works based in country contexts other than advanced Western may be perceived as more likely to be in this category - questions which deserve further research.

Finally, the new approaches to metrics may have helped to wean research funding bodies and university managers away from

‘blunt instruments’ approaches, as starkly illustrated by the now defunct journal rankings scheme, *Tiers A*, A, B and C*. Notwithstanding Table 1’s criticisms, we can look on the bright side and say that the new metrics helped to show conclusively the silliness of *Tiers* and similar journal rankings, though I would like to accord the last word in my fifty year perspective to Smith and Bennett (2015), “... their ghost influences decisions from journal selection to academic recruitment and promotion”.

Roger Atkinson retired from Murdoch University in 2001. His current activities include honorary work on the TL Forum conference series, Issues in Educational Research, and other academic conference support and publishing activities.
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Links

See <http://www.roger-atkinson.id.au/pubs/herdsa-news/38-1.html> for this article in HTML, including links to numerous references for this topic.



FROM THE HERD EDITORIAL DESK

Joining the conversation

Barbara Grant

A good way to think about submitting an article to an academic journal is that you are joining a conversation.

In everyday social life, we follow learned but unspoken protocols when we join an existing conversation. These protocols differ from culture to culture and between private and public spaces. For example, often we are quiet for a time as we figure out what's going on in the conversation. Then, as we discern the gist of it, we begin to participate, probably by responding to something being said – agreeing (quite a good way to start, at least in Pākehā conversation culture), extending, questioning, disagreeing and so on. In this way of conversing, we don't usually barge in and claim the space for our own interests without some kind of 'entry' behaviour.

Sending an article to a journal is like this. So it's a good idea to signal that you are entering a conversation that is already ongoing. As the editor who screens most manuscripts submitted to *HERD*, I notice when authors send in articles on topics that have been discussed over the years in *HERD*. I don't like it when there is no acknowledgment that the author has read or thought about those past contributions. I want authors to *actively* engage with those earlier articles in ways analogous to those above: by agreeing, extending, questioning, disagreeing and so on.

When I talk to doctoral students about getting published in academic journals, I advise them to take the following steps:

Before you have written the manuscript, make a list of three journals that you want to be published in. To figure this out, check each journal's aims and scope and review some issues to see if there are relevant articles. Then rank your three journals.

Write the manuscript *for* the first journal on your list. Don't only look at the journal's specifications but *carefully* review at least three years' worth of recent issues to find articles germane to your work. When you track some down, engage with their ideas to show how your work builds on, extends, challenges or confirms that previous work. In this way, you join the journal's conversation. If you can't find any relevant articles, ask yourself if it's the right journal for your work. The answer may be yes and then you are initiating a *new* conversation.

Another tip. If the first journal rejects your submission, you submit to the next on your list. Before you do, though, take the time to find articles in that journal to connect with and cite.

Barbara Grant
Executive Editor of *HERD* on behalf of
the editorial team
bm.grant@auckland.ac.nz

ESSENTIAL READING

HERD Points for Debate Editor Tai Peseta provides her pick of an article of special interest in each issue of *HERD*. Here is an extract from Tai's latest pick from Vol 34(5).

In their article 'Towards shaping the field: Theorising the knowledge in a formal course for academic developers', South African scholars Jo-Anne Vorster and Lynn Quinn get to the heart of a challenge that has plagued the field of academic development for some time: questions of knowledge, context and institutional specificity.

Drawing on tools offered by critical realism and legitimisation code theory – conceptual resources that have not much penetrated the Australasian scenes of academic development – Vorster and Quinn unpack their own diploma program at Rhodes. The program is focused on supporting new academic developers in making robust epistemological decisions about the contexts of their professional practice.

The article offers an analysis of the program's curriculum as knowledge, and in doing so provides a 'reading' of the modules or subjects that comprise the course. Vorster and Quinn give a sense of both the teacher's intentions, the shape of the curriculum, and the likely outcomes for participants.

This article is essential reading for those of us pre-occupied with similar questions and responsible for designing professional learning experiences for university teaching, particularly graduate certificates.

Jo-Anne Vorster & Lynn Quinn,
'Towards shaping the field:
Theorising the knowledge in a
formal course for academic
developers'. *HERD* 34(5), 2015, pp.
1031-1044.

Sally Kift

A Decade of Transition Pedagogy

A Decade of Transition Pedagogy: Preparing for a quantum leap in the first year experience curriculum. Kift, S. (2015). *HERDSA Review of Higher Education*, 2 pp. 51-86. Retrieved from <http://herdsa.org.au/publications/journals/herdsa-review-higher-education-vol-2/decade-transition-pedagogy-quantum-leap>

Review by Peter Kandlbinder

Dr Peter Kandlbinder is Executive Editor, HERDSA Review of Higher Education and Senior Lecturer, Interactive Media & Learning at the University of Technology, Sydney.

It is unrealistic to expect that higher education is for everyone. Despite the years of preparation required to be offered a place at a university, not every student makes a successful transition into his or her preferred institution. Sally Kift has made it her responsibility to ensure that the number of students leaving in their first year of study is as small a number as is conceivably possible. This is not driven by a desire to balance the university budget, although the more than \$20 million lost to each public institution cited by Kift is compelling. What drives this passion for the transition to higher education is the waste of human talent as students fail to achieve their full potential and miss out on the transformative benefits that come from participating in higher education. Kift's method for slowing a stream of lost opportunities is to recognise that the curriculum can be leveraged to influence the experience of students as they transition into higher education. Until Kift's great insight, the curriculum was almost exclusively reserved for learning knowledge, skills and dispositions related to externally focussed outcomes. Universities prepared students for life after they graduated from their studies. By conceptualising everything students do in their first year of study as learning to become a university student, the curriculum was liberated from its disciplinary and professional emphasis

and could be used to support students develop the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to be successful during their career as a student.

Through the concept of transition pedagogy Kift turned learning in the first year towards making the implicit rules and expectations of higher education explicit so that students survive long enough to succeed in their disciplinary and professional domains. That somewhat simple but profound conceptual insight set in train consequences needed to shift first year attrition rates that have not changed in a decade. Without a transition pedagogy a university's only option was to focus on individual student behaviours and to attempt to get them to fit into its expectations for first year study. A focus on transition as a learning experience shifted the locus away from students to something that is within an institution's control. Kift points out that the curriculum is how institutions engage with all of its students. By conceptualising the transition of students as a curriculum, institutions are able to bring to bear standard curriculum tools that define outcomes, activities, assessments and evaluation methods to address the unique challenges each student faces as they make very individual transitions to university study.

In the more than a decade since the development of transition pedagogy in 2005, Kift notes, there has been an ever increasing number of evaluations validating the approach's efficacy, relevance and accessibility, even in markedly different cultural contexts. The concept of transition pedagogy continues

to evolve, with Kift accepting that a shift to a whole-of-institution approach to student transition is a long term goal that will take more than ten years to achieve. The emphasis of whole-of-institution approaches has relied on partnerships between academic and professional staff in academic language units, libraries, disability and student services, careers and employment advisory centres. Kift sees that there is more work that can be done on diversity and evaluation principles with learning analytics and adaptive learning technologies providing opportunities to track and support individual students in their early learning experiences. Nelson and Clark (2014) are working on determining an institution's capacity to initiate student engagement and retention strategies and programs.

The incentives to get the first year of a student's university career right have never been greater. With record numbers of students attending Australian universities—many with lower levels of preparedness than in the past—the cost of each unsuccessful transition to higher education is high. Beyond the financial cost, the price for early student departure is a loss of institutional reputation, and raises ethical questions about higher education practices. Kift presents a convincing argument that the great strength of transition pedagogy is its integrative power that has allowed it to be operationalised across the entirety of a student's interactions and engagements with their institution. That permits students to focus their energy on being a successful learner which has a positive effect on the university experience of all students.

About the Author

Sally Kift is Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic and Student Life) at James Cook University (JCU). Sally has published widely on pedagogy, legal education and student transition and the first year experience. In 2006 she was awarded one of three inaugural Australian Learning and Teaching Council Senior Fellowships for a project on the First Year Student Experience.

References

Nelson, K., & Clarke, J. (2014). The First Year Experience: Looking back to inform the future. *HERDSA Review of Higher Education*, 1, pp. 23-45. Retrieved from <http://herdsa.org.au/publications/journals/HERDSA-Review-Vol-1/23-45>

Shelley Kinash et al

Higher Education Student Evaluation

Measuring and improving student course engagement and learning success through online student evaluation systems. An OLT funded project. Project leader Shelley Kinash.

Review by Edward Palmer

Dr Edward Palmer is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Adelaide, with interests in evaluation and educational technologies. He received an ALTC citation in 2008 for his work with the development, design and evaluation of the learning package Medici.

A recent OLT project, lead by Dr Shelley Kinash, has looked at online student evaluations of learning. The main report

highlights practical ideas to improve response rates, enhance the analysis of results, improve the culture surrounding evaluation, and provides useful links to research in the field. The most powerful aspect of the project is a series of short case studies illustrating key aspects of meaningful evaluation.

A case study from Australian Catholic University discusses issues pertaining to online evaluations, including low response rates. These are

addressed in studies from Bond University and Central Queensland University that provide innovative and transferable solutions. The University of Western Australia study provides a succinct summary on ways in which the evaluation loop can be closed and the Charles Sturt University team look at redesigning surveys to be more inclusive of a wider range of student experiences, including work placements and fully online learners. Finally, no project of this nature would be complete without a contribution from Curtin University, who discuss their excellent eVALUate system, which pervades nearly every aspect of teaching in that University.

The OLT Project is well worth a look and can be viewed at

<http://highereducationstudentevaluation.com>



Academic Life in the Measured University Pleasures, paradoxes and politics

Wednesday 29th June – Friday 1st July 2016


The 5th International Academic Identities conference in Sydney 2016 explores contemporary academic identities and practices in all their complexity and multiplicity. While the theme points most obviously to the imposition of measures upon those who labour in the university – both staff and students – it also examines the ways the university itself (and the academic practices it encourages) has become transformed by measurement.

The conference aims to critically interrogate the full spectrum of academic identities, activities, practices and contexts that comprise the measured university.

The journal Higher Education Research & Development (HERD) will run a parallel special issue dedicated to the conference theme due for publication in 2017.

Further information and registration:

www.sydney.edu.au/itl/aic2016

 Twitter #ACIDC2016





What is the future of tertiary education?

Ron Oliver

The Australian Learning and Teaching Fellows (ALTF) Forum is a regular event run by the ALTF Network and brings Fellows together for discussion and debate on critical current issues in learning and teaching in tertiary education. The culmination of the event this year at RMIT was a panel session exploring the future of tertiary education. The session was attended by around twenty-five participants who engaged in lively debate. Chairing the panel was ALTF Fellow, Professor Ron Oliver, and included ALTF Fellows Professor Mark Israel, Professor Angela Brew, Associate Professor Rachael Field, and Professor Nicolette Lee. The panel discussed the question What will be the future of tertiary education for its various stakeholders?

The future will likely see significant changes to current models and practices as the sector deals with the pressures and influences from changes to funding models, new technologies, the workforce, access and expectations for the sector all round. This was the consensus of the five Australian Learning and Teaching Fellows exploring the future of tertiary education at the ALTF forum last October.

The current and emerging business models being used by Australian universities will significantly influence their future forms. The capacity to compete in diverse markets and to respond quickly to changes will be necessary attributes for any successful institution according to Mark Israel. How might different approaches to course marketing and educational delivery, for example: prestige, massification or niche and special courses; assist institutions to adequately respond to future trends in market forces, internationalisation and casualisation, he asked?

The significant disruption to education as we know it today from flexible and student-centred approaches to learning was seen to be inevitable by the Fellows. Nicolette Lee mentioned a few of the predictable changes we can expect, for example: flexible-learning, project-based learning, and entrepreneurial and technology-enhanced curricula where students take charge of their learning and learning outcomes. Imagine a future where traditional models of learning have been replaced by some whose presence we are starting to feel, said Nicolette. Think of open access online courses, dip-in and dip-out courses, increased student agency, and personalized courses.

What of the academic workforce of the future and the possible difficulties and challenges that such a future might bring? Rachael Field argued that the current academic work environment is asking more and more of academic staff. If the Australian higher education sector is genuinely concerned with student success, positive student learning outcomes and quality learning and teaching then the sector must attend to the people who are central to this work. It is a bit like the safety instructions for air travel, said Rachael. Academics need to fit their own oxygen mask first before helping others. Many young academics need support to build a positive professional identity across all their areas of endeavour – teaching, research and service – so that they are mentally well and able to thrive in their work environment.

And the students of the future? The democratisation of knowledge supported and encouraged by new media is changing the way students embrace

learning. Angela Brew discussed how, with social media, ideas and information are not ordered and neat but are instant, constant and messy and learning takes place everywhere and anywhere and many students are now practised in dealing with complexity and ambiguity. Higher education in the future will have to go beyond simple notions of student-centred learning and teaching to enable students to more actively engage with academics and others in generating knowledge, not just receiving what is already known.

The vibrant discussion that followed affirmed the speakers' various views. Institutions need to purposefully forge the future that they seek rather than allow external pressures to dictate the future entirely. Students coming to university will have an even broader range of backgrounds and preparations, so the capacity of institutions to be open to new ways of thinking about education will play a large part in their success.

The current state of higher education often sees academics working long hours with very large classes and potentially on-call at any time of the day or night. At the same time they are expected to develop research portfolios and to contribute significantly to administrative functions. Participants were concerned that such an environment might not attract the clever and passionate younger academics needed for future sustainability.

HERDSA members are warmly invited to meet members of the ALTF Network and engage in discussion and debate at the next open session which will be held in conjunction with the 2016 HERDSA Conference in Western Australia. For more information, visit the ALTF website at www.altf.org.



Photo by Libby Smith

Achieving Consistency

Ariana Henderson and Simon Evans

Educators often work semi-autonomously, particularly in higher-education contexts. That said, they may be expected to follow institutional or departmental expectations of how they work. Academic skills advisers at the University of Melbourne (UoM) are in such a semi-autonomous position. Over an 18 month period, the group examined and developed its understandings of student advising. Emerging from this was an advising guidelines document leading to greater clarity and greater consistency of student advising in Academic Skills at UoM. The process also reminded us of the importance of reviewing practices regularly.

At UoM, Academic Skills (AS) advises students on their academic work (barring subject-specific content, take-home exams and numeracy). Students may be referred to AS by teaching staff or may book an appointment independently (called Individual Tutorials, or 'itutes').

Initial discussions highlighted two key issues. Firstly, many students approached itutes expecting their work to be corrected. Additionally, with an assignment deadline looming, the adviser may have felt pressured *to tell* the student how to improve the draft rather than *teach* the skills needed. In such a situation, learning is far less likely to occur and can lead to student dependency on AS. Thus, we needed to address the 'learning over telling dichotomy'.

The second key issue was advisers adopting various approaches when advising, leading to possible inconsistency and confusion for students. General consistency of advice is important as students may see several advisers over a semester.

We utilised a Community of Practice approach to resolve these issues, a process in which advisers' are central to developing ways of working; increasing the likelihood that new ways of working would be adopted.

Both issues were resolved. To address student expectations advisers agreed to emphasise teaching and learning as much as possible. To ensure greater advising consistency we updated the advising guidelines.

Our discussions also reminded us of the role AS plays within the broader UoM academic community. That is, advisers help students become expert users of a range of academic skills and literacies, while concurrently orientating themselves in their disciplines as they gain subject knowledge and competences to independently identify, research and communicate in areas of their choice. We therefore developed a framework underpinning the updated advising guidelines to illustrate the relationship between AS and student independence in the academic community.

The final guidelines document needed to be a tool that could be understood and embraced by advisers and students. We achieved this in several ways. Firstly, it underpins the fortnightly itute debriefing sessions. It informs discussions and guides advisers in assessing how to advise in a multitude of situations. The final guidelines document is also included as part of the staff induction package, meaning that all new staff understand its central role in advising. Finally, we developed a simplified student version of the guidelines so advisers can explain to students the parameters of the service and the expectations we have of them.

In addressing the two key issues in this AS group, we can broadly conclude three points applicable to many areas of higher education where educators work semi-autonomously; be clear about your goals, be clear about the approach utilised, and be consistent across the group in applying it. Much of this discussion may seem 'obvious' to educators. However, as staff leave and are replaced, understandings of institutional practices and approaches can become diluted, fragmented or forgotten. Thus, understandings concerning goals, approaches and consistency need to be monitored, revisited, revised and highlighted over time, and should be seen as dynamic and responsive to changing circumstances.

Links

University of Melbourne, Academic Skills iTute Good Practice Guidelines at http://services.unimelb.edu.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0008/1722914/iTute-Good-Practice-Guide-V15-0.pdf

Communities of Practice: The Organizational Frontier. Wenger, E.C. & Snyder, W.M. at <https://scholarsbank.uoregon.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/1794/11736/A%20brief%20introduction%20to%20CoP.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>

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continued from page 5...



and that only a small proportion of higher education institutions falls within this description. The vast majority of institutions are ‘the tail that doesn’t wag the dog’ and are local in student population and disciplinary focus, while national aspirations at times appear to be driven by a desire to attain world status rather than by a considered imperative for economic, social and cultural development.

At best indications, there are approximately 15 million higher education students in the world today. Also, it would appear that just 2% could be considered as global/international students, including those who remain at home but register for courses delivered from another country. Further, there are indications that global growth in student numbers is occurring through the establishment of new institutions in locations where the labour market, population profile, and aspirations of marginally more affluent communities demand it. Two of the institutions where I have been working show a typical pattern, not unique to Asia, or to developing countries, of institutions that recently grew from small colleges training teachers to larger institutions conferring more advanced degrees in a broadening range of disciplines. Globally, any growth in ‘ranked institutions’ would appear to be outstripped by that in institutions and programs offering courses not intended to lead to further university study. While advancements at the top end of higher

education in China are often highlighted in local and international media, it is actually at the undergraduate ‘terminal’ level where the greatest growth in student numbers has been occurring. A recent OECD estimate suggests that globally more than 97% of higher education students do not progress to advanced research programs.

Global expansion of the sector is likely to have led to an unnoticed rise of teaching as the dominant function of higher education and a corresponding decline in the significance of research across the sector worldwide.

Owen Hicks, UWA Emeritus Professor and formerly responsible for the institution’s academic staff development, is a HERDSA Life member and a past national and WA branch president. As a Senior Consultant for the Australian Learning and Teaching Council he engaged with a wide cross-section of academics. More recently he has enjoyed volunteer assignments in East Timor, China and Vietnam, recently returning to Vietnam for eighteen-months at a provincial university halfway between Hanoi and the Chinese border. Contact: ohicks@inet.net.au

Links

Elaboration and all references or associated websites can be found in: Hicks, O. (2014). Globalization and learning across the higher education sector – at the other extreme. In A. Kwan, E. Wong, T. Kwong, P. Lau & A. Goody (Eds.), *Research and Development in Higher Education: Higher Education in a Globalized World*, 37 (pp 172-182). Hong Kong, 7-10 July, 2014.

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HERDSA encourages the development of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) by facilitating opportunities to meet like-minded colleagues at each HERDSA conference. HERDSA members can join the inaugural STEM Education SIG or initiate a new one. There is a Facebook page for communication between interested researchers.

Free online Energy Efficiency Education Resources for Engineering

A virtual classroom has opened online, to equip Australia's future engineers with real world problem-solving knowledge and skills. Funded by the Department of Industry through a \$0.5M project, the resources target whole system thinking in energy efficiency assessments, to improve energy performance across major sectors of the Australian economy. They cater for nine engineering disciplines, and are endorsed by Engineers Australia, the Australian Council of Engineering Deans, The Australasian Association of Engineering Education, the Energy Efficiency Council and the Australian Sustainable Built Environment Council.

A national higher educational research team including QUT, UA, UOW, VU, Latrobe and RMIT have developed and published four highly interactive modules, including: industry-based videos and supporting lecture and tutorial notes, worked case study examples, and a virtual 3D model of a commercial building. The team also produced a strategy for curriculum renewal for course and program managers, including a good practice guide to influence accreditation and curriculum renewal practices.

For further information, please contact the Project Leader, Dr Cheryl Desha:
Cheryl.desha@qut.edu.au,
07 3138 4072



Academic Practice Guides

The All Ireland Society for Higher Education (AISHE)

AISHE has developed a series of booklets for higher education practitioners to support the development of teaching and learning in practice.

The guides are available to download at:
www.aishe.org/aishe-academic-practice-guides/

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2. Promoting Inclusive Learning Environments for Nursing and Midwifery Students
3. An Introduction to Module Design
4. An Introduction to Enquiry/Problem-based Learning
5. An Introduction to Writing in the Disciplines

The series is dedicated to the memory of Dr John Panter. Suaimhneas sioraí dá anam dílis.

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HERDSA GUIDE

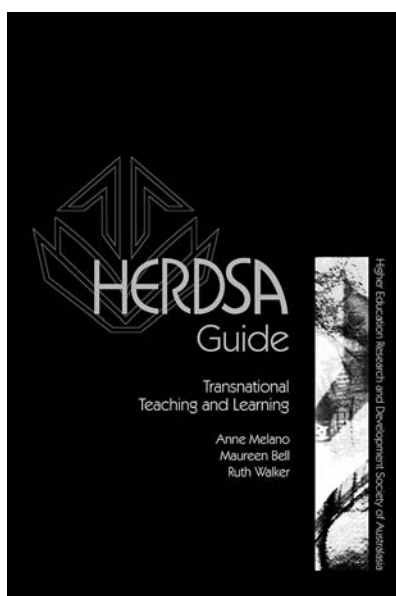
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Anne Melano, Maureen Bell and Ruth Walker

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Transnational Teaching and Learning is a comprehensive guide providing practical advice on the broad range of issues affecting academics engaged in transnational higher education. Distilling the wisdom of several dozen experienced transnational teachers as well as the research literature, this HERDSA Guide provides insights to some of the many questions transnational teachers and course coordinators might have. The Guide includes tips for designing new programs and avoiding pitfalls and celebrates the rewards of transnational teaching. Much of the practical advice in the Guide has been gathered from subject and program coordinators, co-teachers, students and staff in transnational programs in locations including Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Hong Kong. While it draws on the Australasian experience, the Guide has wider applicability.

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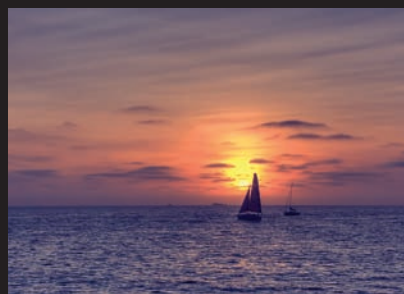
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