Learning and Teaching Centre

Learning and Teaching Matters
July 2020

Overview from Director, LTC
Associate Professor Anthony Whitty

Welcome to the first communication for academic and professional staff critical to the delivery of learning and teaching at ACU. This information is for all staff including those new to ACU.

Feedback from response to COVID-19 in semester 1, 2020 highlighted the need to increase the efficiency of communications and reduce the duplication of information sent to staff. Throughout semester 2, 2020, a centralised regular communication will be sent from LTC to ADLTs/HOS for distribution to staff with touchpoints in learning and teaching. This will also be made available to other stakeholders and Directorates on an opt in basis.

Key focus areas will include the unpacking of issues that impact learning and teaching, and the confirmation of existing processes which may not be clear to staff. Information will be provided on how to operationalise and implement new and existing processes. Topics to be discussed will include: resources for staff, training and support, technology platforms and the availability of just in time assistance.

Regular short interactive surveys will be developed to ensure staff engagement and effectiveness. This will be an opportunity for all staff to provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.

If there are any topics you would like us to update you on, or information you would like clarified, please contact your direct supervisor or your Associate Dean in Learning and Teaching. They will work with myself and the team in LTC to ensure we clarify any concerns or update you on any area of learning and teaching.

Unit Development for Semester 2

As part of the Universities' strategy to enhance the online component of the learning and teaching experience for our students, the Provost and Deputy Provost worked with Executive Deans and Heads of School to nominate a small number of units that would be redeveloped for Semester 2 in what has been called a "Digital Uplift". In order to undertake this work, LTC staff have been working with a number of LIC's in the Faculties to assist them in redesigning some of their online learning activities, unit design, and assessment tasks in preparation for delivery in Semester 2, 2020. I personally want to thank all staff involved for coming together in a relatively short space of time to work together to enhance the student learning experience for Semester 2.

Return to campus

We acknowledge the ever-changing space due to COVID-19 and the impact it is having on delivering a high-quality learning and teaching experience for our students. Specifically, we understand that timetabling for online and face to face experiences has been very challenging for all areas of the University.

LTC would like to advise all staff that we are preparing some communications regarding lectures for Semester 2 which will involve identifying rooms that can live stream for those that are delivering lectures face to face and wanted to live stream at the same time. Given the changes in Victoria with COVID -19 outbreaks, I will also be working with the ADLT's and Student administration to ensure we update staff and timetable for semester 2 classes and how to communicate this type of information to your students for semester 2.

If any staff member has any issues with the timetabling of classes, please let your supervisor or Head of School know and they can work with timetabling to attempt to resolve any issues in this space.

Assessment

In response to the rapid changes in University learning and teaching brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, the Learning and Teaching Centre proposed a temporary amendment to the criteria for the award of supplementary

assessment in semester 1, 2020. The Acting Provost approved the amendments to the Supplementary Assessment Guidelines on 5 May 2020 as a temporary measure for Semester 1, 2020

Conditions for a supplementary assessment as outlined in section 21.2 of the Assessment Procedures still apply, except the following:

Awarded to a student who makes a genuine attempt to complete the unit, and whose final cumulative mark falls between **40% and 49%**. The current guidelines stipulate award if the mark falls between 45% and 49%. Students will be offered an alternative form of assessment which assesses the learning outcomes not yet demonstrated. Grade awarded on successful completion of the alternative assessment task is PA, mark 50.

The full procedures can be found at:
https://policies.acu.edu.au/student_policies/assessment_policy_and_assessment_procedures/supplementary_assessment

A review and refresh of the Assessment Policy and Procedures is in progress. A set of guiding principles was initially developed in close consultation with Faculties and key stakeholders. Over the coming weeks, Associate Professor Duncan Nulty and I will hold a series of co-design workshops with University staff to work through key assessment touchpoints and how these can better be articulated in the Assessment policy and procedures.

It is anticipated that the updated documents will be tabled for approval at November Academic Board for implementation in Semester 1, 2021.

Microsoft Teams - update from IT

What's happening

Throughout semester 1 ACU ran a pilot program investigating using Microsoft Teams as a tool for teaching. This pilot will expand in semester 2, when all ACU students will have access to Microsoft Teams in a special student tenant.

What we're telling students

Students will learn about Microsoft Teams via the Student Communications team. Students will learn how to access Teams, but that they will only use it for classes if specified by their teacher.

Why we're running a Teams for Teaching second pilot

After the first pilot, we have learnt a great deal. IT have been looking at different configurations to ensure the safety of our students and teaching staff. We are going to apply those lessons this second pilot with a student-only tenant managed by IT.

This separate Teams environment ensures security and allows IT to administer your Teams teaching space. Please be aware that teaching in Teams should only take place in conjunction with the Teams for Teaching Pilot managed by Learning and Teaching and IT.

If you are already using Microsoft Teams to teach, please get in touch with the Director, LTC, anthony.whitty@acu.edu.au as soon as possible.

In order to be able to continue to use teams we are requesting staff notify the LTC so we can work with IT to add you to the Pilot for Semester 2. Unfortunately, we will not be able to endorse staff using Microsoft teams for teaching without the endorsement of LTC for Semester 2.

Professional Development

LTC will provide professional learning opportunities before and into the start of semester two. These sessions will include getting started and managing units in LEO, Zoom, running online tutorials, Echo360 platform and Virtual Drop-ins. More details and a schedule will be distributed shortly.

During July the following sessions will be run:

- LEO Getting started
- LEO Managing units

- Virtual Drop-ins
- Using Zoom
- How to run an interactive tutorial
- Echo360 – recordings and lectures
- ACU Unitpulse

We will be scheduling more PD throughout semester 2. LTC also hosts a range of resources on the ACU website to assist staff:

https://staff.acu.edu.au/our_university/learning_and_teaching

We are pleased to announce that ACU is now an institutional member of ASCILITE (Australasian Society for Computers in Learning in Tertiary Education). Membership is open to all ACU staff who have an interest in technology-enhanced learning, teaching and research, learning design, applications development, interactive media or those who have responsibility for managing learning and teaching teams. ACU staff are invited to join and the cost of membership is covered by the University.

For more information and to join please refer to the online membership form.

Student Support

In February this year, ACU launched **24/7 on-demand study support service** offered by the Academic Skills Unit, in partnership with Studiosity.

The 24/7 on-demand study support service is available to all commencing students and offers:

· **Academic Writing Feedback** where students can obtain feedback on basic writing for assessment (grammar, spelling, structure, mechanics of referencing) within 24 hours.
· **Connect Live** where students can access online tutors in real-time around academic generic skills in areas including literacy, maths, accounting and economics to progress their immediate work.

Access to the 24/7 service is available through first-year LEO units and Academic Skills LEO unit. Therefore, **we seek your assistance to insert the 24/7 support service link in your first-year LEO unit before the semester starts.** A step-by-step guide is available from your LICs and will be sent to all LICs for semester 2 via another email specifically focussed on 24/7 support.

Graduate Attributes

A revision of the University's Graduate Attributes is being led by LTC. Our Graduate Attributes are a set of statements about the personal and professional identity of our students as they move out of the University into their future. Ms Penny Wheeler (LTC Project Lead) and I will be holding a series of discussions for staff across Faculties and other organisational units for those who would like to contribute to this process.

Associate Deans Learning and Teaching - Contact Details

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