

2ND ACU LEARNING AND TEACHING CONFERENCE

ENGAGING STUDENTS

2012

PROCEEDINGS

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Welcome to 'Engaging Students'2nd ACU Learning and Teaching Conference

Professor Anne Cummins, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students, Learning and Teaching)

Dear Colleagues and Friends

I am delighted to welcome you to the ACU Learning and Teaching Conference 2012. These proceedings reflect the commitment, expertise and energy evident at ACU.

ACU prides itself on a student-centred curriculum which stands with the traditions of Catholic universities internationally and Australian universities. An ACU education focusses on assisting students to think critically and act ethically. We are committed to the development of future professionals who will be work ready, committed to the common good and able to adapt to the changing needs and opportunities of their chosen profession as experienced in Australia or internationally.



Standing with the tradition of Australian Catholic education, ACU embraces the commitment to equity and strives to enable access of students from diverse backgrounds entering university from a range of pathways. Committed to academic excellence, ACU identifies academically gifted students and seeks to challenge and extend them. ACU provides academic and personal support to facilitate the achievement of students. The success of each student is critical to us.

We recognise that the world of Higher Education is changing: globalisation, social media, information and communication technologies are radically changing the way we gain and use knowledge, seek and provide education. ACU is responding to these changes. This conference highlights innovations in pedagogy, and asks questions that will challenge our assumptions and stretch our thinking.

As a University committed to quality and the importance of each student we seek ways to engage our students, measure our effectiveness and ensure that learning and teaching is dynamic, challenging and relevant to our students and the professions they will enter and in time lead.

I thank my esteemed colleagues Professor Gilly Salmon and Associate Professor Hamish Coates for sharing their expertise and wisdom so generously with us. To my ACU colleagues, who constantly inspire me with your passion, commitment and expertise, we are proud to showcase your work at this conference.

The Learning and Teaching Centre team under the direction of Professor David Johnston has prepared a stimulating program. Thank you for your participation in the Conference and in the dialogues which will flow from it.

Professor Anne Cummins

Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Students, Learning and Teaching)

Student Engagement at ACU

Shannon Kennedy-Clark and Penny Wheeler (Proceedings Editors)

The Proceedings of the Second ACU Learning and Teaching Conference, Engaging Students, highlight the unique nature of learning and teaching at Australian Catholic University (ACU), a multi-campus university with a particular commitment to social and community engagement as well as a determination to meet the learning and teaching needs of students and staff and engage students at all levels.

Our two keynote speakers at the conference are national authorities in their fields, who demonstrate that, at the time of major change in the higher education sector, many of the learning and teaching issues on student engagement are shared at a national level. Professor Gilly Salmon seeks to provide ACU staff with a map for future student engagement centred on technology, while Associate Professor Hamish Coates addresses one of the conference's three subthemes, that of assessment. Workshop sessions during the conference presented by staff from across the University and visiting experts tackle some of the practicalities of engaging students through assessment and technology, and present the challenges and benefits of teaching in a university with a diverse range of standard and non-traditional student enrolments.

The posters and poster papers showcase research on the scholarship of learning and teaching from the faculties of Health Sciences, Theology and Philosophy, Education, Arts and Sciences and Business, and reflect the diversity of research on student engagement at ACU. A special mention needs to be made of Al Marshall's paper. Al, in the Faculty of Business, presents a comparative paper on French and Australian students studying both in Australia and overseas: this is an excerpt from an extended paper that won 2012 Best Paper in the Marketing Education Track at the British Academy of Marketing Conference. We also acknowledge the research being undertaken by Jenny D'Antonio, Faculty of Health Sciences and the Editors' Award for Best Paper: Jenny provides a brief overview of her study on mitigating "transition shock" through the professional socialisation of nursing students at Ballarat.

Several papers present research on improving student engagement with first year units of study and supporting the transition to university, such as the work of Drs Mehta and Rouf tracking the use of lectures, the staged scaffolding of student engagement in group work and reflection (Thomas and Shearer), and the detailed examination of the inquiry based learning approach from Arden and Gonda. Richard Colledge, Faculty of Theology and Philosophy, discusses improving student engagement through weekly readings and activities on LEO, and Clare Johnson, also from the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy, presents an initial overview of a study on engaging students in a compulsory first year unit of study. There are significant possibilities outlined in collaborations such as that between Faculty of Health Sciences teaching staff and the Academic Skills Unit (Webster, Robinson and Mountain) and, across years and cohorts, between students themselves (McArthur).

Engaging students with technology, a conference subtheme, appears in the research papers in several instances. Liz Weir, Faculty of Education, presents the background for a study on using iPads to improve pre-service teachers' engagement, confidence and knowledge when teaching movement skills in Physical Education, and questions the common misconception that there is little need for technology in Physical Education. Diane Charleson, Faculty of Arts and Sciences, presents an overview of a study on using blogs and social media to engage students in a unit of study on communication, and Michael Griffith looks at blogs in literature classes with diverse groups. An eight-level model of student engagement is put forward by Graham Rossiter, Faculty of Education: the model contrasts participant engagement in learning between face-to-face and fully online units.

The proceedings show how ACU research is responding to the changing context of learning and teaching issues and trends at national and international levels (as, for example, in Joel Hodge's paper on the characteristics of the workforce in universities). As we engage with a more dynamic model of student learning, integrating technology and blended learning spaces, ACU's geographic coverage provides a good scope for research in measuring student engagement and learning, and can contribute much to investigations of teaching at all scales.

All of ACU is concerned with fostering and supporting student engagement. We hope that this work ignites discourse and partnerships between faculties and campuses, and that the conference supports the building of networks that lead to innovation, creativity and research-informed pedagogy.

Shannon Kennedy-Clark is a Senior Lecturer, Academic Development, Learning and Teaching Centre, where she has special responsibility for initiatives for large and diverse student groups. Shannon has been assisted in presenting this conference by Madeleine Hopkins as the event organiser and by Penny Wheeler as assisting editor for the conference papers and posters. Madeleine and Penny are also from the Learning and Teaching Centre.

Keynote: Mapping the Future for Learning - a Hitchhiker's Approach

Professor Gilly Salmon, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning Transformations), Swinburne University of Technology

A journey to the near future of learning with a practical approach to creation, this keynote glances back to look forward through three lenses: Openness, Digital Connections and Mobility, asserting that the future for knowledge and learning will be very different from the past.

It's up to each and every one of us to create viable and desired futures for learning and teaching, and this keynote suggests some pathways to such futures.

Biography

Professor Gilly Salmon is one of the world's leading thinkers in online learning. She researches and publishes widely on the themes of innovation and change in Higher Education and the exploitation of new technologies of all kinds in the service of learning.

She is internationally renowned for her significant contributions to online education, including research, innovation, program design, teaching methods and the use of new technologies.

Gilly has recently been appointed Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning Transformations at Swinburne University of Technology. She took up her appointment at Swinburne in January 2012.

Previously, she was the Executive Director and Professor (Learning Futures) at the Australian Digital Futures Institute, based in the University of Southern Queensland, Australia and was Professor of E-learning and Learning Technologies, and Head of the Beyond Distance Research Alliance and the Media Zoo, at the University of Leicester in the United Kingdom.

Recent books include *Podcasting for learning in universities* (Maidenhead, UK: Open University Press/McGraw-Hill). The third edition of her seminal book *E-moderating: the key to learning & teaching online* is now out: see www.emoderating.com



Keynote: Engaging Students in Higher Education: Strategies and Insights for ACU

Associate Professor Hamish Coates, LH Martin Institute, The University of Melbourne

Higher education is moving into an era that requires engaging a much larger and more diverse number of students. This calls for effective strategies and insights that are efficient to develop, implement and review.

This keynote draws on insights from several international and national studies which highlight work taking shape in countries and universities around the world, and offers practical options for teachers, academic coordinators and support professionals.

Biography

Hamish Coates conducts research and development in the field of higher education. He is Director of Higher Education Research at the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER), and a Program Director with the LH Martin Institute for Higher Education Leadership and Management, based at the University of Melbourne.

Hamish collaborates widely, and has worked with learners, senior researchers and administrators in 35 countries and hundreds of tertiary institutions. He is leading a consortium of international agencies to run OECD's landmark Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes Feasibility Study (AHELO). Over more than a decade he has led influential assignments that have shaped research, policy and practice.

Hamish conducts a wide range of research in tertiary education management and policy, and is considered an authority in several areas. Broadly, his work focuses on designing and developing new forms of evidence-based quality assurance for higher education. Publications focus on the definition, measurement and evaluation of education inputs, processes, contexts and outcomes. Active interests include large-scale evaluation, tertiary education policy, institutional strategy, outcomes assessment, learner engagement, academic work and leadership, quality assurance, tertiary admissions, and assessment methodology.

Hamish teaches research methods at all levels, trains and works with tertiary executives, manages research teams, supervises graduate students, has contributed to numerous advisory groups, runs workshops and conferences, has worked with all Australasian universities and hundreds of training organisations, serves on a number of editorial committees, consults for the World Bank and OECD, and has held visiting fellowships at the University of Michigan and at UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP).

Dr Coates has completed advanced management training at INSEAD in Fontainebleau. He completed his PhD in 2004 at the Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne. He holds a Master of Education (Assessment and Evaluation), Bachelor of Science and Bachelor of Arts (Honours) from the University of Melbourne.



WORKSHOP OUTLINES

Workshop A1: Embedding Academic Skills in Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Michelle Black, Maria El-Chami, and Nancy Reid

Brief Description

Embedding academic skills in units and assessment tasks is a response to the challenge of strengthening our support of students' academic literacy development. The workshop presenters are lecturers who have each informally trialled their own methods and materials for embedding basic academic literacy skills in units of study in partnership with library and academic skills staff. The workshop will offer participants an opportunity to focus on how they might adapt or develop these in their own units.

Session Outline

There is now a university-wide focus on the need to support students' academic literacy development, and this need can be expected to increase. Embedding academic skills in units and assessment tasks is a response to this challenge, which, it can be argued, has become of such magnitude that dedicated academic skills units' input is not sufficient to meet it. The university, as noted, is now developing resources and support for teachers who want to integrate academic skills development within the ongoing weekly work of their unit teaching, learning and assessment.

The workshop presenters are lecturers who have each informally trialled their own methods and materials for embedding basic academic literacy skills in units of study in partnership with library and academic skills staff, before the university wide focus and support was known and available.

Michelle Black, lecturer in Sociology, and Arts and Sciences librarian, Maria El Chami from ACU Mount St Mary campus, will showcase the implementation of focused library sessions with first year Sociology students. Students use the Internet to locate sources for university assessment, and this is one of several initiatives to help develop skills in locating appropriate online sources, and assess their worth. Students first attend mandatory library sessions where they learn to locate appropriate Sociology sources for writing their essay. The second session shows students how to identify authoritative and credible online sources.

Sue Rechter, sociology lecturer, and Nancy Reid, Academic Skills Advisor at ACU Melbourne campus developed a series of five 'how to write a sociology essay' workshops which were held in tutorial timeslots in the first year sociology unit. The workshops involved simple, assessed class exercises, and two or three supporting lectures in the lecture time slot, and were assessed in an essay exam at the end of semester. Results from the exams are very encouraging, but no formal evaluation has yet been undertaken. Nancy Reid has been working with ACU Melbourne library staff Katherine Duncan and Daryl Bailey to develop a student workbook, integrating the tutorial materials with other discipline-appropriate materials, for general use in sociology classes.

The workshop will outline the rationale, process and outcomes of each trial, show the teaching materials developed, and offer participants an opportunity to focus on how they might adapt or develop these and other resources now available (for example those developed in their own units).

Presenter Biographies

Ms Michelle Black is a lecturer in Sociology at MSM and coordinates several programs including the ACU BSocSc top-up program in Hong Kong. Michelle lectures extensively to first year students, and in 2010 initiated an informal program of embedding academic skills into first year student classes. This has been highly effective in reducing the incidence of plagiarism, and in enhancing student marks in other subjects. Michelle has also worked as a social researcher in the government and community health sectors.

Ms Nancy Reid has worked at ACU since 1995, in teaching, curriculum development, planning, administration and assessment in a variety of ELICOS and IELTS programs, as course coordinator

WORKSHOP OUTLINES

for ACU's TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) program for International teachers, and since 2006 as an Academic Skills Adviser.

Ms Maria el-Chami is the Liaison Librarian for Arts & Sciences at Australian Catholic University, Mount St Mary campus. She has worked in a variety of academic, public, and private libraries over the past fifteen years. Maria is particularly interested in empowering students to become life-long learners via online information literacy programs. She is currently completing a Graduate Certificate in Higher Education at ACU.

Workshop A2: Engaging Business Students With Reflective Learning

Dr. Charles Hollis and Professor Susan Dann

Brief Description

Pressure from industry for work-ready graduates has meant that for many business degrees assessment is largely task oriented. This can occur at the expense of deeper learning of concepts and the development of generic skills such as critical thinking. The use of reflective learning practices, whilst encouraged by international accreditation bodies, is not central to most business schools. This workshop explores the introduction of reflective learning into a foundation business unit, the challenges faced by students and staff integrating reflective learning into business studies and its value in developing lifelong learning skills for business graduates.

Session Outline

This workshop consists of three key elements:

1. Review of the concept and context of reflective learning in the business school environment
2. Report on the experience of reflective learning of first year undergraduate business students at Australian Catholic University; and
3. Interactive workshop activities designed to address some of the key challenges in implementing reflective learning in business units.

Content and context of reflective learning in business schools

The importance of reflective learning in business programs is underlined by the requirement for evidence of reflective learning practice in the standards of the Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB), the primary international accrediting body for business schools. It is further reinforced by the assumptions of lifelong learning and ongoing professional accreditation requirements of the business professions. In response to these expectations, a reflective learning assessment item was introduced into the foundation marketing unit in the Bachelor of Commerce degree.

Experience of reflective learning

To understand the student experience of reflective learning a study was undertaken into the introduction of reflective learning into the unit Principles of Marketing. This study explored attitudes of students toward reflective learning, challenges in undertaking reflective learning and how this experience impacted on their perceived learning in the unit.

Overall students reported a positive attitude towards assessment based on reflective learning although many were challenged by the change in learning style. The subjective nature of the writing, which required students to “put themselves into the picture”, did not provide a structure that business students who are used to and prefer “black or white” answers are comfortable with and many initially found the process confronting. The reflective learning assessment encouraged thinking that took students outside their comfort zones, gave them appreciation of the abstract nature of many business situations, developed critical thinking skills and better prepared students for the dynamic nature of the business world.

While many students took time to adapt to the learning styles associated with reflective writing, it is interesting that the students in this study expressed a preference for reflective writing over other forms of assessment. After exposure to the technique in one unit and suggest that reflective writing be extended to other business units.

Workshop activities

The acceptance of reflective learning approaches in business units requires a shift in mindset on the part of both academics and students. Key challenges that were identified in the study included the

WORKSHOP OUTLINES

need for structured implementation to allow student learning approach transition, support for students who struggle with this change of approach to learning and, from a staff perspective, how to grade reflective learning assessment activities in a way that is rigorous yet acknowledges the variations in student experiences. This final part of the workshop will generate ideas around these issues and others identified by workshop participants and will draw on the experiences of those from other disciplinary areas that are more familiar with reflective learning.

Presenter Biographies

Dr Charles Hollis is Senior Lecturer in Marketing, School of Business, Australian Catholic University.

Charles came to academia after an extensive career in marketing and remains engaged with the industry through the North Brisbane Chamber of Commerce where he served as Deputy President. Charles has a PhD from QUT, an MBA from Northeast Louisiana University and BSc from Brigham Young University Hawaii. Charles recently completed the Graduate Certificate in Higher Education, which sparked his interest in the potential for reflective learning to assist marketing students in better engaging with the subject and developing a deeper understanding of marketing concepts.

Susan Dann is Professor of Marketing and Deputy Head of the School of Business, Australian Catholic University. She has previously held academic positions at QUT, Griffith University, James Cook University and the University of Queensland and has published extensively in marketing including six textbooks. Immediately prior to joining ACU Susan spent five years in industry and remains engaged with industry and government through her board directorships, especially in the health industry, and membership of the Health Practitioners and Legal Practitioners tribunals within QCAT. She is a former state president and national deputy president of the Australian Marketing Institute.

Workshop A3: Using SPARK^{PLUS} to Improve Group Work Fairness, Engagement and Learning Outcomes

Dr. Keith Willey

Brief Description

SPARK^{PLUS} is a web-based self and peer assessment kit that enables students to confidentially rate their own and their peers' contributions to a team task, individual submissions or compare their judgements and opinions to their peers.

This workshop will introduce you to the capacity of SPARK^{PLUS} to facilitate assessment of and provide feedback on an individual's contribution to a group project.

The interpretation of the Performance (SPA) and Feedback (SAPA) factors can be used to discourage and identify group work free riders, over-raters and saboteurs. In this workshop a range of scenarios will be used to show how these factors change and reflect the different personas commonly seen in group work activities.

Session Outline

SPARK^{PLUS} is a web-based self and peer assessment kit that enables students to confidentially rate their own and their peers' contributions to a team task, individual submissions or compare their judgements and opinions to their peers.

The automation of these activities and the provision of confidentiality provide substantial opportunities to improve learning. Students consistently report that SPARK^{PLUS} makes group work fairer and improves outcomes of team tasks. In addition, its use in peer learning activities increases engagement, provides learning-oriented feedback and assists students to learn.

This workshop will introduce you to the capacity of SPARK^{PLUS} to facilitate:

- Self and peer assessment of an individual's contribution to a group project
- Generating individual marks for, and providing feedback on, contributions to a group project.
- To discourage and identify group work free riders, over-raters and saboteurs

This workshop should be of interest to faculty using group work assessment activities in their teaching. SPARK^{PLUS}'s Performance (SPA) and Feedback (SAPA) factors can be used to inform and moderate individual marks for assessment, but their interpretation requires care and thought. In this workshop a range of scenarios will be used to show how these factors change and reflect the different personas commonly seen in group work activities.

Presenter Biography

Keith Willey's research interests include the learning and assessment associated with working in groups, the use of self and peer assessment for collaborative peer learning, the nature of informal learning in professional practice, academic standards, and improving peer review. Keith is an Australian Learning and Teaching Council Teaching Fellow and a recipient of the UTS Medal for Teaching and Research Integration. He has been a visiting scholar at universities in Australia, Europe, North America and Asia and is the Project Manager and lead developer of the self and peer assessment software tool SPARK^{PLUS} currently being used by faculty at over 20 Australian Universities.

Workshop A4: An iPad Stepping Stone: Engaging Both Students and Teachers

Adam Staples

Brief Description

Mobile technology has exploded onto the educational landscape and continues to embed itself at an extraordinary pace. This session details a number of ways in which iPads have been used within classrooms at a tertiary level and a primary level to engage students in self-directed learning. Participants will be shown how iPad technology has been used in the described environments, will be shown ways of locating educationally sound apps and will be given the opportunity to be involved in hands-on iPad activities.

Session Outline

The purpose of this workshop is to act as a stepping stone from which participants can start to consider the affordances of employing mobile technologies across different learning spaces in order to engage students in their learning. Examples of iPad technology use, taken from a number of classes and including descriptions of the task and desired learning outcomes for students, will be modelled and discussed with a particular focus on how such use really does engage these students. Navigating the vast number of applications available to iPad users can be daunting and so the presenter will offer tips on how to locate educationally sound apps without spending too much time doing so through the provision of tried and tested resources. Participants are encouraged to bring iPads to the workshop as they will be invited to engage in activities showcased during the session and will also be invited to join an iPad e-community.

Presenter Biography

Adam Staples is a Visual Arts Education lecturer from the School of Education (Vic) within the Bachelor of Education programs, both in face-to-face and fully online modes. His research interests include the role of visual arts and visual arts education in contemporary society building, ICT in the visual arts classroom and developing innovative online feedback practice.

Workshop A5: Tertiary Education for Camp-Based Refugees

Duncan MacLaren

Brief Description

Tertiary education for camp-based refugees is a fairly new phenomenon but, as protracted refugee situations become the norm, universities, non-government organisations and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees are becoming more active in providing access to tertiary education. ACU has been a pioneer with its program for Burmese refugees on the Thai-Burma border. Participants will hear about the evolution of the program and the innovative techniques in providing tertiary education for a very vulnerable student cohort.

The main learning outcomes will be an increase in awareness of:

- (a) off-shore learning for refugees still 'warehoused' in camps
- (b) the specific challenges facing refugee students
- (c) the lessons which can be transferred to teaching refugee students in Australia, and
- (d) indications of how to use the program for cross-cultural interactions with domestic ACU students.

Session Outline

After a brief introduction, the audience will view a 15-minute DVD of the program in order to hear the voice of the refugee students themselves. This will be followed by a short presentation of the learning outcomes and how a community development approach enriches the program for refugees. There will lastly be a short exercise for those attending to brainstorm on how to gear programs to students who come from a refugee background here in Australia.

Presenter Biography

Duncan MacLaren is the former Secretary General of Caritas Internationalis, one of the largest aid and development networks in the world. He came to ACU as a Visiting Professor in 2007 for six months and stayed on to coordinate the ACU Refugee Program on the Thai-Burma border. In addition, he designed the Bachelor of International Development Studies Degree Program and teaches the subject in Sydney.

Workshop A6: Helping Others to Help Themselves: Peer Assisted Learning Programs at ACU

Dr. Dermot Nestor

Brief Description

Known by a variety of acronyms, *Peer Assisted Learning* is widely heralded as one of the most successful initiatives to impact upon the Higher Education sector in recent years. Building upon the social constructivist theories of Piaget and Vygotsky, *Peer Assisted Learning* targets high-risk *subjects* as opposed to high-risk *students* in responding to key strategic objectives such as retention, transition, and social inclusion agendas. This presentation is designed to give participants an opportunity to reflect on the origins, objectives and essential elements of this collaborative learning programme, and to assess their potential impact upon the ACU community.

Session Outline

This session is structured around 4 clear goals:

1. To outline the genesis, goals, and essential components of successful Peer Assisted Learning Programmes
2. To provide detailed statistics which support the claims of such programmes to improve performance across such key areas as retention rates, student grades and social inclusion
3. To suggest a potential framework for the development of an equivalent programme at ACU
4. To invite participants to reflect on the potential for creating discipline-specific, and cross-disciplinary communities of practice at ACU.

Presenter Biography

Dr. Dermot Nestor is a Lecturer in Biblical Studies at the Strathfield Campus of ACU. He also serves as Assistant Head of School for the School of Theology. Dr. Nestor joined ACU from Trinity College Dublin in July of 2011. In addition to lecturing in the School of Religions & Theology at Trinity College, Dr. Nestor was heavily involved in the Student Services area, and particularly with the Senior Tutor's Office where, in 2009, he developed the Postgraduate Advisory Service.

Full details of this unique service can be found at: http://www.tcd.ie/Senior_Tutor/postgraduate/

Workshop B1: Inquiry-Based Assessment

Dr. Judith Gonda

Brief Description

This workshop will provide participants with the opportunity to consider the concept of alignment between unit learning objectives, teaching strategies and evaluation. The workshop will be interactive, allowing participants to critically evaluate assessment items they have developed for their inquiry-based (IBL) units and to consider strategies to increase their alignment with the philosophy of inquiry-based learning.

On completion of the workshop participants will be able to:

- Appreciate the need for alignment between learning objectives, teaching/learning strategies and assessment.
- Critically analyse existing assessment strategies within their IBL units.
- Apply knowledge gained from the workshop to the development of aligned assessment items.

Session Outline

Overview

This workshop will provide participants with the opportunity to consider the concept of alignment between unit learning objectives, teaching strategies and evaluation.

Rationale

Eighteen months after the implementation of IBL units in the second and third years of the Bachelor of Nursing program in the School of Nursing, Midwifery & Paramedicine at ACU it has become evident that introducing a new style of teaching/learning requires more than changing teaching strategies; it also requires a change in assessment. Inquiry-based learning results in knowledge and generic skills such as problem solving, self-directed learning and teamwork and therefore assessment needs to evaluate all of these. In addition, with effective and innovative assessment students feel empowered and their capabilities can be enhanced. It therefore seems prudent that we take time to critically examine our assessment strategies, consider a variety of options that align well with constructivist teaching/learning methodologies and make changes as necessary.

Theoretical Framework

Inquiry-based learning takes a student centred approach to learning that is underpinned by a constructivist philosophy. It moves away from an emphasis on "I know", or bodies of knowledge, to "we learn" where students are collaboratively constructing knowledge with a focus on applying it in practice. It is also known that assessment drives learning for students; therefore assessment is integrally linked to teaching/learning strategies. For many novice and experienced academics who have been used to the traditional teacher-centred approaches to learning and assessment, this requires a considerable conceptual shift.

Activities

This workshop is intended to be interactive, allowing participants to critically evaluate assessment items they have developed for their inquiry-based (IBL) units and to consider strategies to increase their alignment with the philosophy of inquiry-based learning.

Goals

On completion of the workshop participants will be able to:

- appreciate the need for alignment between learning objectives, teaching/learning strategies and assessment

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- critically analyse existing assessment strategies within their IBL units
- apply knowledge gained from the workshop to the development of aligned assessment items.

Presenter Biography

Judy Gonda is a registered nurse and midwife with many years of diverse clinical practice experience. Her involvement in tertiary education commenced in 1989 fulfilling a long-standing passion for nursing education. Judy came to ACU in 2007 and since then, she has participated in curriculum development and the implementation of several innovative teaching strategies. More recently, she has been closely involved in the introduction of Inquiry-based Learning (IBL) into the most recent BN curriculum. It is this involvement that has highlighted the need for close alignment between the pedagogy of learning and assessment.

Workshop B2: Hands-On Strategies to Develop Connectedness With Students in Learning and Teaching a Challenging Unit

Dr. Kwee Yum Lee

Brief Description

This workshop is designed to share and experience practical strategies that were successfully used to enhance students' enjoyment of learning in the human neuroanatomy and physiology unit, which is one of most challenging units in the School of Exercise Science. The success of all strategies can be attributed to bridging the gap between how students perceive learning in this subject and how teacher perceive it, thus generating a shared learning experience

Session Outline

Owing to advancements in technology, it has become easy to access information, so that the depth of one's knowledge is more in demand than how much one knows. This deeper learning can only occur when accompanied by enjoyment and satisfaction in the process of learning. Successful learning and teaching requires patience in becoming connected with students.

This connectedness was made possible by various strategies that the presenter have actively developed, tested, and implemented since she commenced teaching in 2009. Hands-on experience of implementing these strategies will be the focus of this workshop which will include the following:

- Setting out a contract
- Devising and communicating clear and precise weekly objectives
- Use of demonstrations and metaphors
- Obtaining and responding to students' feedback on difficult concepts
- Providing exam feedback
- Providing opportunities for students to self-evaluate their learning
- Use of interactive technologies: mind-map and web-based poll

Through the conscious and reflective use of these strategies, teacher can facilitate interactions with students and can create an academic forum in which students and teacher benefit from the learning experience.

A metaphor of a tandem swing can work as a reminder of the importance of connectedness in learning and teaching. The teacher is on one side and students are on the other side of the swing both holding onto the same ropes. The teacher keeps monitoring what students do and perceive via verbal and nonverbal communication. Students express their perception of learning through those strategies. These communications create trust and dynamics that propel the swing forward. The higher the swing gets, the greater the thrill of learning becomes. The shared curiosity, questioning, and enjoyment of finding out more and the awe of how little we know create synergy for both the students and for the teacher in the journey of learning and teaching. It is this dynamic of connectedness between the students and the teacher that forms the basis for the enjoyment of learning.

Presenter Biography

Dr. Kwee Yum Lee (PhD, BAppSc (Hons) Sydney) is an early career academic lecturer teaching motor control and learning area at the School of Exercise Science, Strathfield Campus since 2009.

Workshop B3: Using Social Networking in Higher Education

Leanne Cameron and Miriam Tanti

Brief Description

In this workshop we will fully discuss and demonstrate the benefits and the challenges of introducing higher education students to social networking in an educational context. This will be of particular interest to those who support students on professional visits, practicums and clinical visits outside the university.

Session Outline

This session will involve an introduction, hands-on activities and round table discussion. During the session participants will:

- explore the concept of social networking
- investigate the place of social networking in higher education
- become proficient users of a number of social networking tools
- carefully examine the moral, ethical and legal issues surrounding social networking. These will include, but not be limited to: sharing of personal details and photographs; copyright infringement; defamation; and bullying, harassment and offensive material
- determine the value of social networking in their own context.

Activities

A description of the activities that participants will be expected to engage in:

- Participate as a mini lesson using social networking as the main communication tool
- Explore various existing social networking sites and their value in an educational environment
- Discuss pedagogical approaches and issues
- Design their own learning activity using social networking tool/s
- Discuss learning and teaching issues from various project trials
- Evaluate social networking as a tool for facilitating learning

Presenter Biographies

Leanne Cameron is currently working with Australian Catholic University as a Lecturer in Educational Studies. She has successfully introduced Social Networking in her Diploma of Teaching/Masters of Education unit. Leanne has spent a number of years working to effectively integrate technology into learning environments. Prior to working at ACU, she worked at MELCOE and with the Australian Centre for Educational Studies at Macquarie University, Sydney.

Miriam Tanti is currently working with Australian Catholic University as a Lecturer in Educational Studies and Information and Communication Technology. Miriam has successfully developed communities of practice in all of her undergraduate and postgraduate using a variety of social networking applications. Miriam has spent many years researching and implementing transformative learning environments. She also runs NSW Institute accredited professional development sessions for practising teachers on ways to effectively integrate ICT into education.

Workshop B4: Teaching, Learning and Technology

Professor Geoff Romeo

Brief Description

This session will take a practical, hands-on, look at the impact of the Teaching Teachers for the Future (TTF) project and what it means for student engagement. The TTF project is a unique nationally significant project funded by the Australian government through the Department of Employment, Education and Workplace Relations (DEEWR AUD\$8.8 million) and the ICT (Information and Communication Technology) Innovation Fund (ICTIF). It attempted to build the ICT Education (ICTE) capacity of the next generation of Australian teachers through its focus on pre-service teachers, teacher educators and the new Australian Curriculum. Bring your own mobile Internet enabled computing device – tablet or laptop.

Session Outline

This will be a practical hands-on session where participants will be invited to undertake some online activities related to the TTF project. These activities will help to explain what the TTF project has tried to achieve and will be mostly related to Australian History and the accessing of databases available through the National war memorial. The focus will be on the use of technology for authentic purposes and will discuss the use of the TPACK framework. Participants are asked to bring their own mobile Internet enabled computing device – tablet or laptop or share with a colleague.

Presenter Biography

Professor Geoff Romeo has a PhD from Monash and has conducted research into the development of instructional strategies for the integration of ICTs in the primary curriculum, the use of touch screen technology in the classroom, the use of ICTs in education, and the use and development of online learning applications in higher education. Currently he is the Editor of Australian Educational Computing and a board member of the Australian Council for Computers in Education. He has received state and national awards for outstanding leadership in ICT in Education and was made a fellow of the Australian Council of Computers in Education in 2010. He joined the Faculty of Education at the ACU as the Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning in 2010. Professor Romeo played a leading role nationally in the conceptualisation and implementation of the TTF.

Workshop B5: First Impressions: Using the First Weeks of First Year Effectively

Associate Professor Theda Thomas, James Marland, Sarah Wright, Chris Matthew and Laurine Hurley

Brief Description

This workshop will highlight ways in which we can engage our first year students during the first weeks of their being at university within different discipline contexts. First year students can feel isolated or lonely in their first weeks and may feel overwhelmed with the new environment. Sometimes we feel that the most important thing to do in the first weeks is to ensure that students understand the rules. This workshop will stimulate your thinking about how you might integrate learning activities into your first weeks of classes for first years that reduce their anxiety and make them feel welcome.

Session Outline

Retention is an issue at both the university and faculty level and with the focus on access and equity pathways, we need to focus more on how to retain students especially in the light of the government agenda to increase student participation in higher education. Tinto (2003) maintains that classroom practice can play a big role in helping to retain students but that lecturers do not necessarily know how to teach in such a way as to retain the students.

The first few weeks at university are crucial to the students' entire learning experience and it is important for us to reduce the students' anxiety while introducing them to our disciplines. A survey of 1448 first year students across 8 units and 6 disciplines taught by the Faculty of Arts and Sciences found that 42.5% of students in the class did not know one other person in their class at the start of their first tutorial.

In all their diversity, students come to higher education to learn and that it is within the first year curriculum that students must be inspired, supported, and realise their sense of belonging; not only for early engagement and retention, but also as foundational for later year learning success and a lifetime of professional practice (Kift, 2010).

This workshop looks at what you can do in classes in the first two weeks of the first year within the context of your discipline.

As part of an ACU teaching development grant the project team (Alison Blair, Laurine Hurley, Tracey Sanders, Theda Thomas and Sarah Wright) set up a collection of tips for first year lecturers. Included in these tips were Tips for Orientation, Tips for your First Lecture and Tips for your First Tutorial (FAS, 2012). When we started collecting ideas from across the variety of disciplines in our Faculty we realised that the discipline played an important role in determining what was important for students to understand in those first weeks. We had a number of creative lecturers who were engaging their students in various ways that linked their discipline to the needs of the student in transition.

Workshop Program

Activity 1: What do our first years feel like when they come to university?

Our students and what worries them

Activity 2: First tutorials – ice breakers to meet the requirements of the discipline

Example from Drama

Example from Economics

Activity 3: Why am I studying this subject? What is this discipline all about?

Example from Biosciences (for health sciences)

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Activity 4: Bridging the gap between high school and university

Example from Ancient History

Time to think and share

How could you integrate activities in your first lectures and tutorials within your discipline area?

References

Faculty of Arts and Sciences. (2012). *1st year experience*. Retrieved from <http://leo.acu.edu.au/course/view.php?id=283>

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Tinto, V. (2003). *Promoting student retention through classroom practice*. Paper presented at the Enhancing student retention conference sponsored by the European Access Network, Amsterdam, November 5–7, 2003.

Presenter Biographies

Associate Professor Theda Thomas is the Associate Dean (Learning and Teaching) in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. She started researching in higher education in the late 1990s when she became interested in determining ways of helping Information Technology students learn the interpersonal skills they needed to work with clients. She has since expanded her research interests to looking at the embedding of graduate attributes across the wide variety of disciplines in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.

Dr James Marland began teaching theatre and literature in 1989 in Queensland. Much of his early teaching experience involved working in specialist drama academies with primary, secondary and tertiary students. In 2008 the University of Sydney awarded him for his excellence in teaching practice. James recently completed his PhD at the University of Sydney. His research focused on the intersection of theatre, literature, religion and sexuality, evaluating the way in which performance can assist in dismantling socio-political prejudice.

Dr Sarah Wright is a Lecturer in Economics at Australian Catholic University (ACU) in Strathfield, Sydney. In recent years, Sarah has been a speaker at a number of conferences including the Australian Conference of Economists and Economics. In 2011 Sarah was awarded an ACU Citation for “developing teaching approaches and resources that engage students and enhance their learning by catering for their individual learning styles in economics”. Prior to that, in 2010, Sarah received the Faculty of Arts and Sciences Excellence in Teaching Award and was announced as the Uni Jobs “Lecturer of the Year for ACU”.

Dr Chris Matthew completed a PhD in ancient history at Macquarie University in 2009 before being taken on as a sessional lecturer in ancient history at ACU in second semester 2010. Chris has been with ACU ever since (now full-time) teaching units on Greece, Rome and the ancient Near East. The author of several books and articles on the ancient world, Chris is regarded as a leading authority on the topic of ancient warfare. Chris has been an invited guest lecturer at many universities across Australasia, as well as working as a historical and creative consultant for both films and museum exhibitions.

Laurine Hurley has a background in microbiology and immunology, genetics and public health. She has taught Human Bioscience at ACU for many years and has seen the role of the discipline in the courses it serves change markedly over that time, along with the nature, ability and interests of the student groups. A subscriber to the Jesuits’ maxim, she believes firmly that the first contact is the most influential; she valued her time as national First Year Experience coordinator for ACU and works to ensure the principles learnt there underpin all the units she teaches.

Workshop B6: Supporting Students Through Transition Towards Engagement and Retention

Maria Hegerty, Patricia Hacker, Geraldine Butler, Denise Mountain and Suzanne Dooley

Brief Description

While students enrol at ACU expecting to learn, and many assume that their chosen course will be challenging, research indicates that appropriate levels of support improve their learning outcomes (AUSSE, 2010). The workshop participants will consider strategies for engaging their students at ACU that foster the academic, social and personal transitions inherent in university life. The workshop will examine a selection of student scenarios and discuss strategies that may enhance student engagement by fostering academic, social and personal transitions to university life.

Session Outline

Student engagement is dependent on “knowing your students” and is fostered through strategies that are purposeful, can be evaluated and are sustainable (Godfrey & King, 2011). Kift (2009) strongly supports the notion that students come to university to learn and need to be inspired, supported and realise their sense of belonging.

Students are now able to enter tertiary education through many pathways but not only are the numbers of entrants increasing but so also is the diversity within any given cohort. Diversity matters, and signals the multifaceted and complex needs of students. The ways in which university staff present themselves to the emerging diverse range of students especially in the early days of their engagement is crucial in enhancing their academic, social and personal engagement on campus. Student diversity in all its multiplicities can be best understood as the complex range of underprepared, under-resourced students arriving without evidence that they are incapable of completing tertiary study.

The goal of this presentation is to consider issues of student engagement. The presentation will acknowledge the complexity of practice issues that student diversity presents to university staff and outline strategies that will enhance practice and so assist students to develop their skills, reflect on and achieve their goals.

The workshop will examine a selection of student scenarios and discuss strategies that may enhance student engagement by fostering academic, social and personal transitions to university life.

Presenter Biographies

Maria Hegerty Executive Manager, Office of Student Success (OSS) including the Academic Skills Unit and the Campus Life Team. Maria’s leadership is characterised by a genuine interest in and respect for students and a desire to assist them succeed in their life at ACU. Maria’s motivation is about ensuring students’ life at ACU is fulfilling by working with them to meet their personal, social and academic needs. She understands that success means different things to each student and aims to support all students in achieving their goals.

Patricia Hacker National Manager, Academic Skills Unit, OSS. Patricia has been part of the Academic Skills Unit team since 1998 and Manager for the past 6 years. She is motivated by a strong desire to assist students succeed in their study, has a rigorous and reflective approach to the needs of the diverse range of students, and aims to establish strong partnerships with faculties and academic staff and lead as well as support the provision of innovation and the development of new approaches based on critical analysis of need.

Geraldine Butler Campus Life Coordinator, OSS. Geraldine leads the Campus Life Team, Melbourne campus, and has been instrumental in successfully implementing initiatives to help students transition into life at university. Geraldine informs her practice through rigorous reflection on recent research and her active participation in the Victorian First Year Experience Network (FYEN)

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and offers a range of opportunities to support students as they encounter challenges both academically, socially and personally during their transition experience.

Denise Mountain Denise Mountain is a member of the Academic Skills Unit. Denise's achievements include collaboration with the School of Nursing at MacKillop for the Nursing Transition Module, and the introduction of Academic & Professional English eXplored (APEX) and Grammar for Academic Purposes (GAP). APEX is designed to develop the skills and confidence of students in spoken communication. The program has run for two years at MacKillop, one year at Mount St Mary (MSM), and was introduced to McAuley in 2012. GAP was launched at MacKillop and MSM campuses in 2012, to run in tandem with APEX, and develops academic grammar skills for written assignments. Denise's approach is characterised by her commitment to collaboration with faculties and rigorous development of the above programs to support students from transition through to engagement in their chosen courses.

Suzanne Dooley Suzanne is 0.6 Academic Skills Adviser and 0.3 Careers Adviser at Ballarat. Suzanne has worked with students and staff at Aquinas for twelve years, embedding academic skills and career development in the curriculum, focusing on transition, and initiating and facilitating "students as tutors" in Academic Skills. Suzanne is committed to providing peer-to-peer academic skills support as a means of improving student experience especially during transition to university studies.

Workshop C1: “Debating the Point”: Using Debates and High Level Role Play to Engage Students in Adjusting to Academic Writing

Dr. Ellen Warne and Dr. Nell Musgrove

Brief Description

Part of the shock and exhilaration of coming to university is the realisation that just about any piece of knowledge can be questioned and debated. As Ann Osborne has pointed out, “academic culture in general is a culture of argumentation, and democracies are societies in which debate is central. The problem is that this culture of argument is initially alien to most students.” This workshop explores ways to use debates and high level role play to engage students in the process of researching the field, coming up with an argument or team line compiling evidence to support their case, trying to predict the case of the other team and managing the drama of the interaction. Participants will finish the workshop with strategies for helping students to transfer these skills into essay writing and other written academic work.

Session Outline

This workshop explores ways to use:

- role-plays, mock-trials and split-class debates with first year students, including a mock trial workshop activity
- formal debates with second year students
- high level role-play incorporating debates in the Model United Nations Forum to engage third year students

Workshop activities and materials will give practical examples of how to scaffold these activities for students so that they can engage in:

- owning an argument (using mock trials to develop this awareness)
- coming up with an argument or team line
- compiling evidence to support their case
- trying to predict the case of the other team
- critical reading of sources
- the process of researching the field
- managing the drama of the interaction

Ellen and Nell will also draw on research from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences “Engaging Students” project to show the ways students believed they could transfer these skills to other academic assignments.

Participants will finish the workshop with strategies and resources for helping students to undertake engaging activities that produce quite deep learning experiences that help students transition into academic culture. Participants should have practical ideas for implementing these techniques and for extending them by getting students to reflect on how such skills may be transferred into essay writing and other written academic work.

References

Osborne, A. (2005). Debate and Student Development in the History Classroom. *New Directions for Teaching and Learning*, 103(Fall), 45-46.

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Presenter Biographies

Dr Ellen Warne is a senior lecturer in history and teaches students from first year to honours. She was awarded a Faculty Excellence in Learning and Teaching award in 2010.

Dr Nell Musgrove is a lecturer in history who is known for her engaging learning and teaching strategies.

They are both involved in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences “Involve Me: Hear Me: Engaging Students and Staff” project, and Dr Warne is a named researcher in two teaching development grant projects that assist staff to design curricula and assessments that are engaging as well as rigorous. These projects have led to an online resource, *Strategies for a Successful Semester*, and an ongoing Peer Mentoring Scheme for staff. Together they ran the first Model United Nations forum for third year students in 2011, which takes academic debate to another level.

Workshop C2: E-tivities: Pathways to Learner Engagement

Professor Gilly Salmon

Brief Description

How we shape the future of active and interactive teaching and learning online...Gilly Salmon will explore ways of deploying them for your topic, your program, your teaching practice, and your learners. A quick guide to taming e-tivities!

Presenter Biography

Professor Gilly Salmon is one of the world's leading thinkers in online learning. She researches and publishes widely on the themes of innovation and change in Higher Education and the exploitation of new technologies of all kinds in the service of learning.

She is internationally renowned for her significant contributions to online education, including research, innovation, program design, teaching methods and the use of new technologies.

Gilly has recently been appointed Pro Vice-Chancellor, Learning Transformations at Swinburne University of Technology. She took up her appointment at Swinburne in January 2012.

Previously, she was the Executive Director and Professor (Learning Futures) at the Australian Digital Futures Institute, based in the University of Southern Queensland, Australia and was Professor of E-learning and Learning Technologies, and Head of the Beyond Distance Research Alliance and the Media Zoo, at the University of Leicester in the United Kingdom.

Recent books include *Podcasting for Learning in Universities*. The third edition of her seminal book *E-moderating: the key to learning & teaching online* is now out (see www.e-moderating.com).

Workshop C3: Mediating Learning Processes Through Technology

Kathryn Boyle

Brief Description

This workshop aims to identify any common experiences of participants in online teaching and learning, explore the data on student satisfaction with online learning and demonstrate practical examples of how Adobe Connect classrooms can greatly enhance the learning process for students in fully online mode. With input from practitioners, we will evaluate the effectiveness of this technology to enhance student engagement and look at some other implications of its use.

Session Outline

Student evaluations of fully online units indicated that there was an urgent need to engage learners far more actively with the lecturer, the material and each other. Because many FTP courses have relatively small numbers, many units are offered in fully online mode. In order to more actively engage students and to promote interaction in the learning process, the Faculty has promoted the use of Adobe Connect classrooms.

This workshop aims to identify any common experiences of participants in online teaching and learning, explore the data on student satisfaction with online learning and demonstrate practical examples of how Adobe Connect classrooms can greatly enhance the learning process for students in fully online mode. With input from practitioners, we will evaluate the effectiveness of this technology to enhance student engagement and look at some other implications of its use.

Presenter Biography

Kathryn Boyle is from the Faculty of Theology and Philosophy. She worked as a sessional lecturer for many years and has been on staff full time for the last 4 years. Her current role is Project Officer (Graduate Course Implementation - Quality Pedagogy) overseeing the redevelopment of fully online units in the post-graduate programs.

Workshop C4: How Do Australian Aboriginal Students Engage in University?

Leanne King

Brief Description

Supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in reaching their full potential to engage with university, especially those students studying on away-from-base (AFB), is not an easy process to understand. Designed for those who work actively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students or those who wish to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in higher education, this workshop will review the developmental process through which Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students engage in the teaching and learning process.

Session Outline

Using Personal Story and Brainstorming, the presenter and participants will focus on the role of engagement leading to increasing the retention and graduation rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in higher education.

Personal story contextualises engagement in higher education, specifically in AFB, with the objective of an overview of one person's engagement.

Activity description: importance of life story to increase learning; listening skills.

Theoretical framework: Each person's story holds power within the context of who is telling the story, whose story is being told and what purpose the story has. Koch (1998) states that, in "representing stories, consideration is given to voice, audience, the 'other' and the story teller's place in the story" (p. 1189).

In many cultures, storytelling is an important part of the educational process. As Little Bear (2000) notes, it is through stories that customs and values are taught and shared (p.81). However as Blair (1998) notes, storytelling within education has reduced.

Colonisation and subsequent assimilation-based government policies – in particular, schooling (institutionalised education) based on Western pedagogy and epistemology – have lessened the storytelling, the use of imagery, and the holistic approach. The problem-solving approach that encompasses real life experience has been replaced by linear process and thought, by segmentation (Blair, 1998, p. 38).

Brainstorming secures a working understanding of engagement. This activity encourages people to participate, creates movement in the workshop, and allows an overview of the workshop topic.

Activity description: list three to five broad questions or statements about engagement.

Theoretical framework: Brainstorming is an exercise in structured spontaneity, in that participants are actively encouraged for a specified period of time to think of as many varied even outrageous ideas as they can (Brookfield 1987, p. 118). Having a pre-defined problem allows original thoughts and creativity in the pursuit of positive solutions.

Presenter Biography

Leanne King: I am an Australian Aboriginal woman, in particular a Dharug woman. My cultural connection is through the land of the Dharug people and connection to family. My current position as Academic Coordinator of Yalbalinga, the NSW Indigenous Higher Education Unit (IHEU) at Australian Catholic University (ACU), further locates me in the non-Dharug mainstream, within an institution responsible for knowledge and knowledge production. This position has involved working with and alongside other Indigenous and non-Indigenous people to deliver a mainstream undergraduate degree in an Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Residential Block

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Program. I am a graduate of such a program, completing the Bachelor of Education in Adult Education in 2000 and gaining my Master of Arts in Indigenous Social Policy in 2002.

Workshop C5: Pathways to Positive Engagement

Amanda Harrison, Sue Woods and Maria Valastro

Brief Description

Having students with a diverse range of linguistic, educational and cultural backgrounds can enhance the experience of all students and staff at ACU. However, we need to be sure that incoming international students are properly prepared for study in an Australian university environment, and we need to provide ways in which students can connect to the wider ACU community. These connections need to be made early in the students' study experience. This workshop will look at ACU's "pathway" preparation courses for international students, and at some of the recent successful initiatives to engage domestic and international students within the ACU community.

Session Outline

English language tests are commonly used as a measure of students' linguistic proficiency. An important point for consideration is that an English test in itself does not necessarily measure students' preparedness for university studies or provide them with the tools to engage in the broader university community. ACU offers "pathway" programs which are designed to prepare students from diverse linguistic, educational and cultural backgrounds for their study experience at ACU. The purpose of this workshop is to provide information on our current pathway programs and to recognise the multifaceted role of pathways. This will include strategies and practical examples devised to assist students' transition into university and the academic and linguistic environments they may encounter. We will also explore ways of connecting students to the wider community, and the idea that if we successfully prepare students through our pathways, we can facilitate positive student engagement in the broader university community. This in turn enhances the experience of all students and staff.

To initiate discussion, the presenters will outline the ACU English Language Centre's EAP (English for Academic Purposes) program, including information on how it compares with what is measured in an English language test. The Tertiary Preparation Program (Health Sciences) will also be introduced. This is a more discipline-focused program which has been developed and implemented collaboratively between ACU International and the Faculty of Health Sciences. Finally, examples will be provided of recent ACU International projects which have been designed to engage domestic and international students, and which have provided a positive and sustainable student exchange. Workshop participants will be invited to share their experience of international students' engagement in their studies and in university life, and to provide any suggestions for the further enhancement of international pathways and projects.

Presenter Biographies

Amanda Harrison has both a national and a North Sydney campus role in coordinating ACU's Tertiary Preparation Programs. Her background is in Mass Communications and English language teaching (TESOL), and her program experience includes IELTS preparation, English for Academic Purposes and Communication Skills. Amanda has worked overseas in Spain and for ACU in China, and has been involved in ACU's various pathways programs since 2002.

Sue Woods coordinates the three ACU English language centres: Melbourne, North Sydney and Brisbane, and manages ACU International on Brisbane campus. Her background is in English language teaching and teacher education, and she has worked overseas at the University of East Africa, Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania, and as a teacher in Papua New Guinea. Her Australian experience includes teaching English and working with international students at the University of Sydney, Curtin University of Technology and the University of Western Australia.

Maria Valastro is based on Brisbane campus but has a national role in coordinating advisory and support services for international students. She has a Masters degree in Social Work and has

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worked with international students at QUT International College. At ACU, Maria has worked closely with the OSS in facilitating student engagement and enabling international students to contribute positively to campus life.

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Using Student Evaluations to Assist With the Formulation of a New IBL Unit

Rachel Ardern and Dr. Judith Gonda

Health Science, Australian Catholic University

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Abstract: *Inquiry based learning (IBL) was introduced into the second year nursing curriculum for the first time at ACU in the first semester of 2011. Students' feedback about units NRS258 & NRS261 surrounding this introduction ranged from very positive to very negative. Consequently, this feedback was used to inform modifications to the tutorial and resources for two third year units in order to increase student participation and develop their clinical thinking abilities. Examples of the feedback and corresponding modifications will be outlined in this poster.*

Keywords: IBL, feedback, curriculum

Why Use Inquiry Based Learning?

Friedman et al. (2010) indicate that Inquiry Based Learning (IBL) is able to develop students' understanding and assist with their development of critical thinking by engaging them in the learning process and encouraging curiosity. IBL is "a learning process through questions generated from the interests, curiosities, and perspectives/experiences of the learner" (Sincero, 2006). Freire's 1970 metaphor of teaching and learning, "birth and creation", demonstrates the need for students to be immersed in their learning in order for the students to be able to "birth" their own knowledge and understanding in relation to the subject matter being explored. Friedman et al. (2010, p. 770) highlighted five essential steps that students must be involved in order for IBL to be successful:

1. engages in questions;
2. finds evidence to support references to questions;
3. formulates explanations from the evidence;
4. connects the explanations to knowledge;
5. communicates and justifies the explanations.

These are some of the reasons why an IBL approach to learning was introduced to two second year nursing units, in 2011. By using a variety of strategies, such as scenario based tutorials, group discussion, independent inquiry and oral presentations, all five of these steps were integrated into these units.

Feedback about IBL from the Student Perspective

On completion of the semester students were provided with the opportunity to complete a confidential unit evaluation, in the form of a survey, for both units. The 30 item survey used a five-point Likert style scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". Seven of these questions related to the IBL implementation (see Figure 1). Of the 217 students enrolled in the Unit, 166 students responded to the survey (a 76 per cent response rate, which is a representative sample). Of these seven questions, five indicated that more than 50 per cent of students agreed or strongly agreed with statements that indicated they found IBL to have assisted their learning. However, no questions scored more than 60 per cent in these combined categories, which indicated that there was plenty of room for improvement at all levels. The responses to the other two questions, questions 16 and 19, indicated that students felt the resources provided and the organisation of learning activities needed improvement (see Figure 1).

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In addition to the 30 item survey, students were encouraged to provide feedback via opened questions requesting both positive and negative feedback. Positive responses included statements such as:

The scenarios are a good learning resource and I found them helpful with how to deal with different cases on clinical prac

I liked how the IBL was setup – with each group member answering a different question – rather than how it is done in another unit where the whole group answers one question.

IBL learning enhanced my ability to think clinically about clinical issues. It made me apply theory to scenarios and think more about issues. Scenarios covered (a) good amount of different operative issues – holistic issues and helped my learning by relating learning to “real life” people

Negative responses included the following comments:

I do not believe IBL learning was helpful at all as the questions were extremely broad and there were too many little questions inside the one question that made it impossible to have all the right information as well as even having all the information. Very difficult and too broad – when we were expected in every tutorial class to have all the right info.

Facilitator participation in IBL and their knowledge about the subject is not sufficient. The approach is leaning towards “online” education and we are not enrolled in an online nursing course.

The IBL learning is difficult when we aren’t guided enough with our research

I am still unsure of best evidence-based practice regarding clinical issues as students did not look these up and they weren’t clarified by teachers.

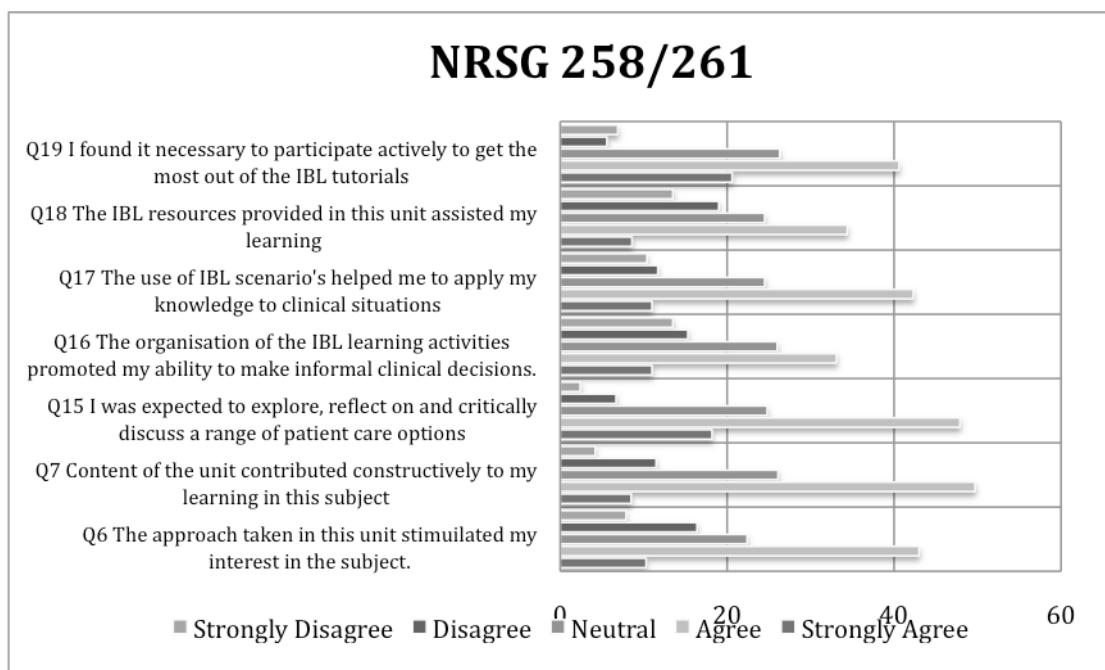


Figure 1: Student Evaluations from Semester Two 2011 (Students enrolled 217 – responded 166)

Modifications to Third Year Units in Response to the Feedback

In Semester 1, 2012, two additional third year units were developed using the same IBL approach and strategies that were introduced the previous year. However, modifications were made to the

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structure, processes and resources in response to the student feedback. These modifications included:

- Tutorial groups were divided into smaller sub-groups with only five to six students per group.
- In week 1, sub-groups decided on acceptable group behaviour, such as: expected level of research material for each learning issue, appropriate time frame for completing the research, allocation of a scribe each week, and the most appropriate means of communication during off-campus time.
- Learning issues were allocated to each member of the group on a weekly basis.
- One to two slide PowerPoint for each learning issue; providing a summary of the key points learnt from the students' research. This was placed in LEO under the tutorial group discussion board.
- Development team pre-developed questions with the specific aims of increasing nursing knowledge through pathophysiology, pharmacology, and diagnostic understanding. This provided a guide for facilitators to assist with generation of questions and facilitate discussion.
- Facilitators were given complete scenarios in advance, with learning issues identified and with a minimum standard answer guide aimed at ensuring student research was appropriate and adequate.

Expected Outcomes in Semester 1, 2012

Whilst it is too early to determine the outcomes of these modifications yet, anecdotally it seems that students have had a more positive experience. The quality of research presented at each tutorial, the discussions generated concerning the topics and the clarification sought during resource sessions helped to provide insight into student satisfaction. It is anticipated that unit evaluations for this semester will indicate:

- Increased satisfaction with group participation from the student body
- Increased satisfaction with facilitator involvement
- Increased performance on set exams

The results of these evaluations will be analysed and compared to those of Semester 1, 2011, and it is expected that these outcomes will be reported in a journal publication.

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Using New Media as a Basis for Instruction and Assessment in a Communications Unit of Study

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Abstract: *Social and New Media are fast becoming the dominant forms of communication while university educators are increasingly grappling with teaching “digital natives” and attempting to keep them engaged in a highly competitive arena. This paper explores a way of engaging students by embracing rather than eschewing new media technology and integrating it as an integral part of classroom teaching and assessment.*

Keywords: new media, blogs, student engagement

Introduction

University educators are facing challenging times, but with such challenge comes opportunity for innovation, reassessment and change to traditional practices. Central to this challenge is the engagement and retention of a new cohort of students, and the need to redefine our understanding of the student, their learning styles, their aspirations and the place university education has for them in this changing world. These students are mainly digital natives, chronic multi taskers and often lack clear direction in their long term aspirations (Gaston, 2006). They also are unsure of the role a university education should play in their lives. In order to provide quality learning for these students, the curriculum needs to be more based on the existing skills of the students. Rather than seeing personal technologies, such as mobile phones, and social media, such as *Facebook* as distractions and obstacles to learning, the skills inherent in the use of these can form the basis for class structure and assessment tasks. It is increasingly apparent that New Media and Social Media are becoming important means of communication and a necessary skill for graduates to have to equip them in the existing and future workplace. Surprisingly while most students are increasingly familiar—and engaged—with smart phones, Facebook, YouTube, and other new media platforms, research and experience tells us that they are not entirely expert with them. They often lack both the technical ability and the capacity to compose professionally effective messages (Rifkin, 2010) with these media and are often passive users of the technology rather than critically aware content producers. Research has shown that while students spend many hours using social media sites such as Facebook and Twitter they are generally not critical or analytical users of technology (Selwyn, 2009). It is my aim to support students in developing the skills to be content producers with an understanding of the power of their communication and how to harness this for optimum communication

Using Blog Technology for Profile Writing

In this paper, I will discuss the redesign of the unit Introduction to Communication to utilise new and social media to engage students more effectively. This University-wide elective has traditionally been taught to equip students with written, oral and spoken communication skills, with an emphasis on workplace communication, and in Melbourne, is now also a core unit in the Bachelor of Media Communication. To adapt to these diverse needs, the unit has been restructured around New Media Communication, both its practical applications and in critical analysis of its impact on society and communication in particular. This unit commences with a four-week module on profiling and blogging. The aim of this module is to enable students to create their own blogs, and through

critical analysis of existing online content to develop appropriate communication skills. The students are asked to create a multimedia profile of a fellow student suitable for a blog page or Internet site.

Tumblr (www.tumblr.com) was selected as the blogging platform due to the user-friendly interface and the apparent popularity of this platform with the student cohort. In the first week the students are paired off and asked to conduct an in-depth interview with each other in order to gather sufficient material to write a profile of that person. They are guided in interview techniques and encouraged to go beyond the surface in collaboration with their partners. Then they are instructed to search the Internet for examples of profiles. These examples are then analysed in terms of layout, language and use of media. While there is no insistence on a specific style that the students should adopt in creating their profile, they are directed to model their work on exemplar sites as guide to professional writing and place particular emphasis on writing for a specific audience. Next students are shown the workings of Tumblr and asked then to create a blog site which they can customise to suit their profile subject. Many students are excited by this, as they often have not had the courage to start up their own page. The next stage comprises of instructing students in the use of a small video camera and discussing and analysing the role of video and images on a blog page. They are then asked to value add to their written text with a video insert that should be uploaded to the site along with pictures and audio that will give the reader a real insight into their subject. They learn not only the technical skills to do this but also how to analyse and critique the elements involved in this means of communication and how to use these in an integrated and considered manner for optimum results.

Students enjoy this process, and learn to interpret this form of New Media and produce an engaging and successful end product¹ (Ferdig & Trammel, 2004). Student feedback has been very positive with many students continuing their blogs outside of class and they are excited about the potential of new media that they had not considered before.

Analysing and Critiquing New Media as Subject Matter in Developing Communication Skills

The second module in the unit is centred on an assessment that consists of an oral presentation, a research portfolio and a critical analysis piece of writing, which are all more traditional components of a Communications course. In this case, however, the class work is devoted to issues in New Media and its impact on society and communication. Students are required to keep a folio of newspaper cuttings and downloaded Internet papers related to issues in New Media which will be used to inform their oral presentations. In class, students watch three films which deal with various issues surrounding New Media. These films include the documentary *Catfish* which is a highly engaging and disturbing look at identity fraud on Facebook and has a huge impact on the class; *Digital Nation*, a documentary looking at a range of impacts of digital technology on society; and *Wikirebels*, which looks at the issues around Wikileaks and the impacts of New Media on journalism, privacy and censorship.

These films are discussed in groups and followed up with Internet searches for articles relevant to the topic either academic or from the wider media. Students then work on a group presentation on any aspect of the impact of New Media on society. The topics are very diverse and range from such issues as privacy, censorship, citizen journalism and the impact of New Media on children. The students are then asked to use three articles that they have individually collected for their portfolios, and write a critical and analytical piece on the issues raised. This is a very successful component, as the students are engaged with the subject matter and often amazed at the implications that arise from the social media that they use often without reflection. Along with becoming content producers they are also becoming critical analysts of New Media and its impact on their own communication. Evidence of the success of the redesign of the Unit to focus on New Media is

¹ For example, <http://juliakeffordprofile.tumblr.com/#13387790120671&hideEverything>.

through positive student feedback, increased class attendance and the quality of work produced because students are engaged and enjoy the work they strive to produce quality end products which they are proud to share with their peers and the extended community.

Conclusions

This unit offers the students the chance to develop their skills and learn to be effective communicators and content producers rather than passive consumers. They learn to become critically engaged with the media and learn to see its relevance in a range of work related applications (Prensky, 2001). By working with familiar media, students are able to develop their writing, oral and listening skills as they are engaged with the subject matter. As the content is relevant to their interests and to their future use of communication skills, they can see the tangible benefit of engaging in the unit activities. It is important that students are provided with opportunities to communicate using new media so that our students become equipped with skills in being able to communicate complex ideas using these technologies that are increasingly being used in all workplaces. The feedback from student evaluations will be used to further refine the design of this unit.

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Scaffolding Critical Reading in First Year Philosophy

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Abstract: *Most first year students of philosophy encounter an unfamiliar discipline that requires significant levels of critical reading and thinking. Consequently, there is a need for careful scaffolding and formative assessment that prepares students for summative tasks. However, ensuring students regularly and attentively engage with Unit activities to help develop these skills can be difficult. This poster reports on a Learning Environment Online (LEO) based initiative to embed a weekly critical reading task and short written responses into a Unit of Study.*

Keywords: philosophy, critical reading, engagement.

Background and Context

Many first year students report that they find philosophical thinking new and challenging, and philosophical reading difficult. There is, therefore, an imperative to ensure that students are systematically assisted in the development of abstract critical thinking and reading skills. These skills can only be achieved when students regularly and attentively read a range of appropriately pitched philosophical texts and are required to respond to them, in both verbal and written modes. Yet, across the sector, teachers of first year philosophy classes often find it difficult to achieve high levels of student engagement with weekly set reading materials, and on this basis tutorial discussions of set readings are often all the poorer for the lack of prior attention to these texts (Australasian Association of Philosophy, 2010).

Enhancing Philosophy Student Engagement Through New Technologies

There are various benefits in addressing this challenge through the use of Learning Management Systems (LMS), though two benefits stand out in particular. First, LMS can vastly simplify the logistics around student submission and lecturer feedback, and they can shorten the turn-around time for feedback. Second, LMS support the process of peer review and the creation of a scholarly community among students.

Recently there has been increasing interest among philosophy teachers in the pedagogical power of online journals, forums, blogs and the like. Panza et al. (2006) highlight the desirability of complementing face-to-face class discussion with online fora as a way of helping prepare students for class, engaging those less confident in group discussions, and providing the lecturer with a helpful tool for tracking student engagement. Wright and Bowery (2006) report in a similar vein with specific reference to Blackboard's online forum program, while Zanelotti (2011) and Long (2010) report on the use of blogs, podcasts and wikis to engage more widely with web-based learning communities.

Using LEO to Embed Weekly Critical Reading and Written Responses

What follows is a progress report on a new trial project to address the challenge of enhancing student engagement that was implemented within a first year philosophy unit (PHIL100: Introduction to Philosophical Inquiry) at the Brisbane campus of ACU in Semester 1, 2012.



Figure 1: Changing modes of student reading and engagement

For seven of the twelve weeks of semester (starting in Week Three), students were required to upload a one hundred word “weekly blog” response to a key question relating to the set reading for that week. The ACU Learning Environment Online (LEO) questionnaire tool was used. Readings were assigned largely from the set text, with others made available through ezproxy links. Each reading topic referred to the lecture material from the previous week, and students had a window of ten days to complete each response. While blogs were not individually assessed, each adequately completed blog contributed one percent to the student’s overall tutorial participation mark (itself worth ten per cent of their overall unit result).

Notwithstanding the limited size of each weekly blog, the questions were designed to require students to make both expository responses, as well as more analytical, interpretive and evaluative responses, with the weighting increasing on the side of higher level learning objectives as the semester progressed.

Table 1: Sample weekly blog questions

Question: What point is Nagel making about the mind–brain relationship in his thought experiment about the brain scientist looking inside your skull as you eat chocolate? (pp. 29–30). Do you agree with him on this? Why/why not?

Question: What does Nagel think about the idea that social justice requires Governments to try to remove chance inequality from society (pp. 77–79; 80–81)? What reasons does he give for his position? Do you agree with him? If not, why not? If so, to what extent? What complicating factors come into play here?

Strategies for answering these questions were discussed and modelled in tutorial classes, both as a way of increasing student confidence with the blog task itself, as well as providing scaffolding for the kind of skills required for the research essay task due at semester’s end.

Initial Results of the Trial

Successes

While comparisons with earlier years are largely anecdotal, student engagement with weekly readings seemed to be noticeably enhanced (especially earlier in the semester), with class discussions benefiting accordingly. Less tutorial time was needed for reviewing reading content, thereby leaving more time for unpacking specific claims made in the text, analysing them, and allowing student to student engagement concerning differing evaluations.

It remains to be seen whether there will be longer-term benefits from these encouraging results in terms of improved student results in PHIL100, or better preparation for advanced units in philosophy.

Areas of Difficulty

While these results were pleasing, much fine-tuning is still clearly needed. Two areas stand out. First, at between 46 to 73 per cent, participation rates were far less than optimal. Figure 1 provides an overview of the total number of responses over the semester.

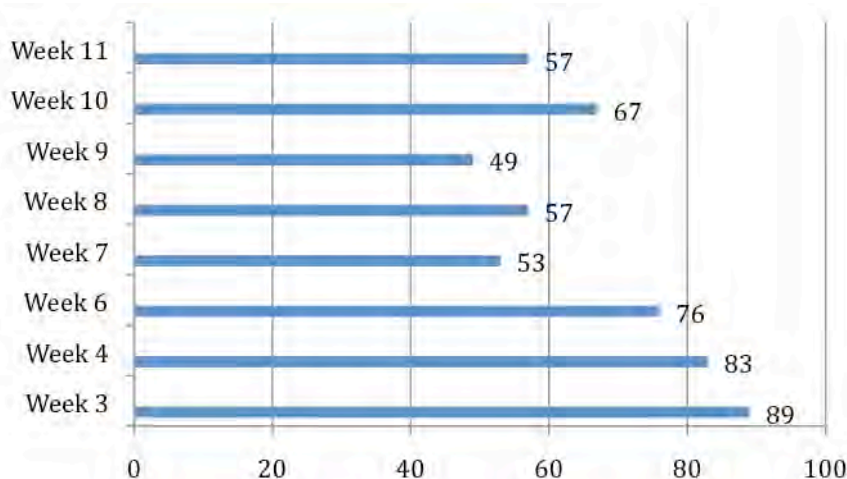


Figure 1: Weekly set-reading blog response rates [total enrolment = 123]

It is evident that a sizable proportion of students did not participate in the weekly blog exercise each week, with response rates drifting downwards as semester progressed, with a slight upturn in the final weeks. The decline was likely to be linked to other work falling due during semester. However, it is notable that even at the beginning of semester response rates were no higher than 72 per cent of enrolled students. To some degree, difficulties with the technology might have been an issue, though another factor may have been student judgements about the dispensability of the task (given that it was tied to an item weighted at only ten per cent).

Second, there were important limitations in the capacity of the LEO questionnaire tool in opening a meaningful interface for feedback between student and lecturer, as well as among students. There are technical issues to be addressed here which when overcome promise to enhance both student feedback and possibilities for the emergence of a unit-based community of learning.

Possible Future Directions

The intention is to persist with this initiative with the next cohort in PHIL100. One strategy to address the participation rate in the future would be to increase its weighting as a percentage of unit assessment. However, this would run the risk of eroding its nature as a *formative* skill development task. An alternative would be to reconfigure aspects of the task as a unit hurdle requirement. A third (preferred) strategy would be rather to work on the LEO technical issues to achieve greater feedback in response to blogs (both lecturer to student, and student to student) as well as further enhancing links between the blogs and tutorial discussions.

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Acknowledgments

Photograph credits: http://www.stjohnsyouthservices.org.au/images/page_pix/Girl-reading-book.jpg and <http://serc.carleton.edu/details/images/25496.html>.

With thanks to Dr Paul Tyson, with whom I co-taught PHIL100 in Brisbane in Semester 1, 2012.

Professional Socialisation and the Flexible Model Placement: a Regional Experience

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Abstract: *Clinical placements provide opportunity for application of theory into practice, whilst being fundamental in facilitating professional socialisation (McKenna, Wray, & McCall, 2009). This concept is explored whilst describing the establishment of a flexible clinical placement in a regional Victorian hospital for undergraduate student nurses from Australian Catholic University, Ballarat. Surveying graduate participants in contrasting models reveals that flexible model students felt slightly more professionally socialised than block students. These findings are extremely limited but demonstrate that further research is required.*

Keywords: Continuous clinical placement, professional socialisation

Professional Socialisation

The movement from the known role of student to the unknown role of Registered Nurse is described as a phenomenon known as "Transition shock" (Duchscher, 2009). It is argued that professional socialisation is a potential buffer to the realities of transition shock (Cowin & Hengstberger-Sims, 2006; Howkins & Ewens, 1999; Mamcher and Myrick 2003). Cowin and Hengstberger-Sims (2006) state that transition shock involves a graduate's loss of confidence in professional socialization, interpersonal relations and the workplace environment.

Professional socialisation is defined by Merton (1957, in Clouder, 2003) as "the process by which people selectively acquire the values and attitudes, the interests, skills and knowledge—in short the culture—current in groups to which they are, or seek to become, a member" (p. 213). McKenna et al. (2009) propose that clinical placements not only allow for the application of theory and practice, but also are integral to students becoming socialised within the nursing profession. This position is supported in earlier work by Coudret et al. (1994) stating that nursing clinical practice facilitates the professional socialisation that assists students to make the transition to graduate nurse role. Although not explicitly explored in the literature, a link is evident between the structure of clinical placement and the development of professional socialisation (McKenna et al., 2009).

Flexible Model of Clinical Placement

Block placements are usually a wedge of time ranging from 2 to 5 weeks occurring consecutively and have traditionally been the model of clinical practice within nursing curricula. Heath (2002) suggests that this approach does not allow time to address specific learning needs or enable students and staff to have a sense of belonging and ownership. Chan (2002) adds that students are often thrust into clinical areas as short-term members with differing motivation than permanent employees. Newton, Cross, White, Ockerby, and Billett (2011) conclude that a partnership model with a continuous mode of placement can enhance feelings of belonging to the workplace culture which can impact the social development and work readiness of graduates.

The Flexible model is a continuous placement where students undertake the required clinical hours over an extended period ranging from 6 to 18 weeks. Students experience rostering across all shifts and weekends, with supervision from preceptors and dedicated clinical teachers. With this model, students may perceive advantages such as engagement with theory and practice, whilst developing social and trusting relationships between staff and students (McKenna et al., 2009).

Regional Experience

As a means of addressing placement deficits and an alternative to block, the flexible/continuous model of clinical placement has been widely adopted by ACU. With the assistance of a federally funded project to build workforce capacity across the Grampians Region, a flexible clinical model was established on the regional Ballarat campus of ACU in partnership with a regional health care facility. This clinical placement pilot involved 12 final semester students undertaking placement over 12 weeks, with a 4-week block placement occurring simultaneously. This flexible placement was new for the health care facility, though not new for ACU.

Formative, independent evaluation studies were undertaken by the project, which demonstrated strong support for the new model. Students, academic and clinical staff identified the following benefits of this program: greater flexibility and independence for students in choosing shifts, increasing their ability to manage other demands in their lives; a more realistic “24-hour” view of nursing by rostering on night and weekend shifts; and the opportunity to refine skills and consolidate knowledge in a supportive and vibrant working environment.

To research the professional socialisation provided by this alternative to block placement more deeply, a post intervention survey was administered to three participants from the block placement and three from the flexible placement, all of whom are now engaged in graduate employment with the health service. Approval was obtained between the health service and participating graduates. Participants were asked 5 questions using a Likert scale, using the definition of professional socialisation above, participants scaled their response to the attainment of the “values, attitudes, interests, skills and knowledge” gained on their final placement, considering the impact on their graduate transition from the placement experience.

Results

Responses from the survey were collated to infer the outcome of professional socialisation experienced on the placement (Table 1). Positive results were compared and plotted (Figure 1), along with the category differential (Figure 2). From the limited findings, graduates from the flexible model felt slightly more professionally socialised than block students. Flexible students rated attainment of skills and knowledge higher than block students, but rated values lower. Further studies are required to interpret this finding.

Table 1: All responses per category of definition for each model of clinical practice

Model	Value	Interests	Attitudes	Skills	Knowledge	Total
Block	3	3	3	2	2	13
Flexible	2	3	3	3	3	14

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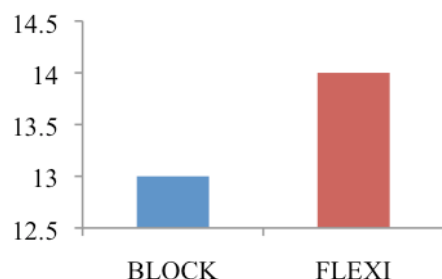


Figure 1: Total positive responses

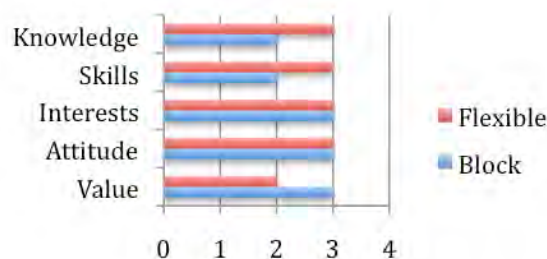


Figure 2: All responses per category

Conclusions

Summative results show flexible model students felt slightly more professionally socialised than block students. These findings are extremely limited and cannot be inferred for all clinical models, and only pertain to the two cohorts of graduates studied within the health care facility at the time of the placement. Given these limitations and apparent lack of detailed literature linking clinical models to professional socialisation, it is argued that further research is required to make rigorous and detailed conclusions.

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Using Blogging as a Powerful Stimulus to Enhance Student Engagement in Higher Education

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Abstract: *Social software (like blogging software, Twitter, wikis, multi-user virtual environments, YouTube, Facebook) has affordances that can powerfully assist student engagement with and personalization of academic content, support and development of learning communities, realization of summative learning outcomes, and development of future skills requirements. This poster presentation explores the implementation of blogging in University literature classes as an enhancement to face-to-face teaching for undergraduate students and outlines the author's current research strands. The benefits and challenges of using blogging are also discussed.*

Keywords: affordance, social software, blogging, ePortfolio, literary skills, literacy skills

Introduction

The purpose of this poster presentation is to provide an overview of the author's work and research in using blogging, a social software/Web 2.0 technology, in higher education. According to Greenhow, Robelia and Hughes (2009), "Web 2.0 technologies enable hybrid learning spaces that travel across physical and cyber spaces according to principles of collaboration and participation" (p. 248). The affordances of social software facilitate a "participatory culture" amongst students and provide "low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement, strong support for creating and sharing one's digital productions" (Jenkins, 2006, p. 3), a sense of social connections "or at least caring what other people think about what one has created" (Jenkins, 2006, p. 3), and a belief that contributions matter." Social software can be considered as computer-supported collaborative learning designed to "explore the potential of the persistent record of interaction and collaboration as a resource for intersubjective learning" (Stahl, Koschmann & Suthers, 2006, p. 419).

Studies on blogging indicate that it has been used for collaborative learning spaces (Rourke and Coleman, 2009), increasing participation amongst students (Williams and Jacobs, 2004), for reflection (Yang, 2009) and for promoting writing skills (Marsden & Piggot-Irvine, 2012). Dede observes: "the new media's potential to engage and individualize is strategically important for giving learners of diverse backgrounds the opportunity to reach their full potential" (2009, p. 12).

For the author, the "experiment" began in 2004 with the intention of deepening the engagement of undergraduate students with creative literature. The key principle behind the initiative was to explore how far the use of social software could enhance teaching and learning and to provide an interactive space where students could express their ideas and especially their creative responses and be "heard". Initially, the focus had been on literary skills development, that is, deepening students' engagement with literary ideas and -through creative imitation- liberating their sense of how a work of literary art is made. More recently, with the direct support of Academic Skills, the focus has widened to embrace the way literacy development and academic writing skills can be enhanced through the agency of blogging, to inform ongoing research on the impact of this work on students' literary understanding and on their academic and digital literacy.

The Blogging Initiative

With an increase in student numbers and reductions in face-to-face hours and study time, I looked for ways for students to engage meaningfully with their discipline and with each other outside class,

and Web 2.0 and blogging software seemed an obvious platform on which to engage and develop student interest.

Generally, blog entries are chronological, with comments enabling interaction between authors and readers. In my classes, blogs are online spaces where students publish their writing using a myriad of multimedia assets within a more structured context than in normal social networking. Note, importantly, that this web-based activity is only one component in a balanced curriculum. As part of their formal, formative, assessment, students are asked to write a mix of critical and creative responses to their reading each week, drawing on their life experience as is deemed relevant and necessary. They are also asked to peer review each other's work in their blogs at least once a week, giving support, suggesting improvements and offering additional resources. Students are expected to complete at least one academic essay and also engage in an end of semester exam.

All students engaged in this task (in first, second and third years) complete their work by using WordPress to construct a summative blog as the title page for their showcasing ePortfolio².

Initially, the aims of the initiative were to:

1. create an interactive space where students could share their passion for literature, where they could learn creative methods from each other and where they could discover how to express themselves in a less formal setting.
2. encourage students to become more natural writers, by encouraging them to write more freely in a genre they are more comfortable with.
3. encourage student exploration of self-expression with more than words, utilizing the multimedia resources. Creativity using other media such as videos, photography, music and kinetic texts, as a support for their writing work is encouraged.

This was also motivated by my own interest in enhancing my teaching practice and the advantages this gave to my students' learning experience, and providing an avenue for scholarship and research in Learning and Teaching. Academic studies have in the past sometimes been presented as superior to the creative disciplines (writing, music, painting), which are often the subject of academic inquiry: this seems an impoverishment, so I relished the opportunity, through the new technologies, to bring together academic inquiry with creative expression. This is supported by Greenhow, Robelia and Hughes (2009), who have identified "learner participation and creativity" and "online identity formation" as providing new research questions (p. 247).

More recently, the author has been collaborating with Diana Simmons (Academic Skills) and Wai-Leng Wong (Library) to expand the research to include how literacy development can be enhanced through blogging. One of the key research questions is whether the largely informal nature of Web 2.0 can act as a pathway to develop students' academic writing (see Chong, 2010).

Discussion

The aim of both literary and literacy development continues to be strongly supported by the built-in peer review requirement through which students' work is both open to scrutiny and creative suggestions from their peers. It naturally also provides the space where academic teaching staff and academic skills staff can seriously engage with students' written work. This final aim has been strongly supported by what appears in student responses to their task.

These positive outcomes range from the joy in being able to respond creatively to a work of literature, rather than just critically, to the satisfaction of sharing ideas with their peers. Unlike traditional university learning, which is often carried out in isolation and in competition with others,

² Exemplars of students' work can be accessed at the [author's blog](#).

this new site for exchange lends itself to collaboration, cooperation and the development of a learning community (Shirky, 2008, cited in Minocha, 2009). Here are just two from a wealth of responses that indicate that there is a wonderful synergy created between the student's academic work, their fellow students, their lecturers, their academic skills support unit and finally with the technology that is the most powerful and ever advancing component in their armoury of equipment (Pegrum, 2009).

"I will ever be grateful to MJ for his encouragement and support. I am especially grateful to those classmates of mine at the Clemente program, whose feedback and support have been outstanding, not to mention how good their work is ... I am filled with a kind of joy and love for those who have helped me on my journey through literature and I will be eternally grateful to them. Watch this space!!

and

"In the beginning I did not want to do it, I told myself that I couldn't do it. I found WordPress so intimidating and I spent hours in front of my computer in tears, telling myself that it would never happen (as I am not very technology savvy). In making this component assessable, I made myself do it and have completed it to the best of my ability. It has challenged me to a level where I feel like I have accomplished so much in doing this and has reminded me that I can do it. I feel that this component has given me a better understanding of the course work. I have really enjoyed it!

Within the current research strand, the preliminary analysis of the literacy development using content analysis of a selected group of first year students' blogs has revealed diverse results. More work needs to be done in coming semesters to continue to enhance literary and literacy skills development through blogging. A design-based research approach will be adopted to develop a framework that will support students' literary and literacy skills development using blogging.

It is also worth noting that while the use of blogs has attracted some criticism from more conservative academics, it is actually an ideal space for students to deepen their literary understanding and to enhance their literacy skills. In a blog and an ePortfolio a student's work is on public show and students are both advised and guided – by peers, by academic staff and by academic skills staff – to present their work as a fully professional offering.

While the anecdotal feedback has been positive, there have of course been challenges that need addressing to enhance the continuing value of using blogging (and the connected ePortfolio) as a powerful stimulus for student engagement. These issues include making sure that students have realistic expectations of the extent of the staff members direct involvement in their work. The Facebook generation demand instantaneous, regular comments! – so the role of the educator and the nature of social software when used in a university context need needs to be made really explicit. The overwhelming response from students is that they are deeply grateful for a space to be themselves while engaged in their academic enterprise.

Conclusion

The blogging initiative has opened new pathways in teaching and learning and has found a way of tapping into students' creative and linguistic imagination within the context of their academic study. The experience and analysis to date has indicated the importance of blogging and the integral ePortfolio as a powerful agent in enhancing literary skills and providing a valuable space in which to embed the support for literacy skills. It is the continuing subject of this research project and teaching practice to find the best ways to enhance and support student engagement within the context of contemporary digital technologies. The challenges are also pertinent and need to be addressed. As Pegrum has tellingly predicted:

education must also prepare students for a social future where they have the technological and personal literacies to build their own digital identities and author their own individual

narratives. It must prepare them for a sociopolitical future where they have the participatory and remix literacies to intervene in societal narratives. It must prepare them for a global future where they have the cultural and intercultural literacies to contribute to world narratives. The future of our individual liberties, our democratic political systems and our planet demand it. (Pegrum, 2009, p. 54)

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The Common Good and Marketisation: Evaluating the Casualisation of Australian Higher Education

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Abstract: *This paper assesses recent data on the casualisation of the Australian university workforce, and will focus on Australian Catholic University (ACU) as a case study. Contrary to the popular rationale for casualisation that emphasises worker choice research indicates that there are many gaps and problems left by casualisation for workers/staff, students and universities. These problems pose particular challenges for universities in a deregulated marketplace seeking to maintain teaching quality, particularly to growing universities, such as ACU, to balance growth with their own purported emphasis on social justice and workers' rights.*

Keywords: casualisation, casual, teaching quality, ACU, social justice, dignity, Catholic Social Teaching

Context

The casual workforce in Australian universities continues to grow, presenting particular economic, management and ethical issues for the higher education sector and Australian society in general. The proportionally greater reliance on casual workers, called *casualisation*, is a particular source of tension and grievance with some groups such as the unions, the media and many casual workers. Recent research identifies the motivations for and the experiences arising from casualisation, with increasing numbers of casual staff not fitting the traditional mould and unable to fulfil the expectations of student learning.

Methodology

The study used a twofold methodology: a review of current literature, particularly relevant studies, on the casualisation of the Australian university workforce, with particular focus on the ACU workforce, utilising current statistics; and a theoretical analysis of the issues, for example job security and a fair wage, arising from the literature. This analysis draws on the principles of Catholic social teaching to provide a framework for understanding the nature of work and orienting a discussion of work in regards to the common good. The paper argues for a vision of universities, undergirded by ethical principles, to counter the excessive *marketisation* of the sector and manage casualisation in our present context of deregulation and growth.

Reviewing the Literature and Data

Current Rates of Casualisation in the Sector and at ACU

According to recent studies, there is an increasing rate of casualisation in many Australian industries, especially in higher education, in which there was an increase of 40 per cent in the rate of casual employment between 1996 and 2005. The most recent data indicate that Australian universities average 21 per cent of their teaching as being fulfilled by casuals, with up to 60 per cent of the total workforce employed as casual. It is reported that ACU has the second highest rate of casualisation of any Australian university, at 35 per cent.³ In 2011, 309.6 full-time equivalent (FTE) positions were

³ Higher Education Supplement, "Casual staff numbers at each university", *The Australian*, 28 March 2012.

filled by casual workers, out of a total of 1568.2, with the academic staff component standing at 272.7 casual out of 818 on the FTE measure.

Understanding the Experience of Casualisation

The understanding of casual staff in higher education has been most influenced by the categories proposed by Gappa and Leslie (1993): *aspiring academics*; *industry expert*; *career ender*; and *freelancers*. According to research conducted by Gottschalk and McEachern (2010), the casual freelancer in higher education is becoming more common, though not because of staff preference: "Some take on casual work because of its part-time nature and opportunity for flexibility while bemoaning its insecurity; others accept casual work as a matter of survival (Kimber, 2003)".⁴ According to recent studies, casual work is not the preferred choice for most casual workers: for example, Gottschalk and McEachern (2010) found that 30 per cent were satisfied with their mode of employment, while 45 per cent wanted part-time work with career options, and 19 per cent preferred full-time; while an earlier study, Junor (2004) found that 28 per cent preferred casual work and 43.2 wanted more hours.

Issues Arising From Casualisation

There are numerous issues found in recent studies arising from the experience of casual staff and the gaps and problems that have been identified as of concern. For example, there are questions about the teaching quality of casual staff, particularly caused by the context of teaching as casual staff lack support, time and professional development. There are also concerns over the quality and appropriateness of assessment and marking, and the difficulties of student access to staff. Casual staff also report a lack of control and flexibility over their own work (including in terms of teaching time), an inability to advocate for their rights, low status and involvement in university life, and limited career opportunities. There is also increasing disillusionment as well as mental health problems reported by casual staff.

Analysis

Casual employment is popularly regarded as beneficial and fair for employers and employees, especially in terms of giving flexibility to both, yet the experience of casual work is that it keeps people confined to the cycle of low-paying, insecure jobs (the "trap"). This situation is increasingly showing that casualisation is part of an "ideology of choice, individualism and labour market flexibility".⁵

Casualisation can be further critiqued in the light of Catholic social teaching. In this view, the nature of work is not just about personal or institutional ends but is vocational (that is, as in accordance with the desires, talents, capacities and calling of each person) and forms part of the authentic development of each person. Work also is meant to contribute the common good (not just to the individual good) and can even be seen as a form of worship or gratitude to the Creator God. In this light, the University can be seen as a community of educators and academics pursuing the common good, respectful of each person's work in teaching and researching for the good of others, particularly their students.

Findings

In recent research and studies of its effects on casual staffers, it seems clear that the view of the human person underlying casualisation is individualistic and relies on the market ideology of choice and freedom (an ideology which can be limited by the exigencies of the profit motive). While

⁴ L. Gottschalk and S. McEachern, "The frustrated career: casual employment in higher education", *Australian Universities' Review* 52.1 (Feb. 2010): 37-51.

⁵ J. Burgess, I. Campbell, & R. May, 'Pathways from casual employment to economic security: the Australian experience', *Social Indicators Research*, Aug 2008, vol. 88, issue 1, p. 172.

allowing for flexibility in the market for workers and businesses, this ideology neglects the human's full vocational ends, which need to be supported by an appropriate understanding of the person and work, and by a communal framework of rights and relationships seeking the common good. This study does not wish to neglect the necessary market and financial concerns of universities, nor the strategies being proposed to reduce casualisation, but concludes that casualisation will not be properly addressed until the underlying views of the human person, work, the market and the university, which are driving casualisation, are confronted. Universities need to re-contextualise their work, particularly in light of the pressures of marketisation in Australian higher education. They require the higher education community to re-envision itself as a community of workers seeking the common good in teaching and research, and bound by relationships of dignity and committed to a common vocation. If this vision can be found, common ground will have been formed to develop strategies for integrating casuals more effectively into university life and for respecting their rights and dignity as people and workers.

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Learning the Power of Ritual

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Abstract: *This project investigates student attitudes toward the compulsory study of theology, whether attitudes shift within a semester and if so to what degree, why, and to what extent a shift toward the positive can be attributed to engagement in the Participant Observation problem-based-learning exercise. An in-depth interview provides comprehensive insight into a student's perspective on how a Participant Observation (PO) exercise integrated and formed her understanding of and engagement with the unit content in a practical field setting.*

Keywords: ritual, problem-based learning, participant observation, student engagement, reluctant consumers

Introduction

Undergraduate education students at ACU are required to study THCT202 Christian Ritual, Symbol and Sacrament in order to receive accreditation to teach in the Catholic school system. The compulsory nature of this unit, combined with large class numbers and the fact that most of the students do not regularly attend church and tend to have little instinctive interest in the subject under consideration (that is, church ritual), makes for a “perfect storm” in terms of a challenging teaching–learning environment in which to attempt to engage the mostly “reluctant consumers” of this unit in the learning process. The Participant Observation (PO) exercise draws students into the study of Christian ritual utilizing a methodology involving direct experience and observation fieldwork in the context of a local parish community.

A two-stage research project (currently underway), aims to ascertain whether the PO exercise undertaken by students in THCT202 promotes effective and deep learning and shifts student attitudes toward the positive in relation to the compulsory study of this theology unit. The hypothesis tested in this project is that by studying ritual within the context of ritual, students who begin as “reluctant consumers” of THCT202 learn the power of Christian ritual from the inside and begin to engage fruitfully in its academic study as they link classroom theory with experiential praxis, analyse the theory–praxis nexus they have researched, and present their findings to their peers.

Research Design

The first exploratory stage of this project (the focus of this short paper) involved an in-depth interview with a student regarding her perceptions of the PO problem-based-learning exercise and how this task helped her to link her understanding of the unit content with the field-work research experience and consequently shifted her attitude toward the positive regarding this compulsory unit of study. April, a 19-year-old second-year B.Ed. (Primary) student studying THCT202 as a member of the researcher's tutorial group, consented to the interview and completed a short demographic questionnaire. The interview was a lively, engaging and extensive conversation lasting 50 minutes. At the time April received the request for the interview she had completed all assessments except for the final exam and had received her grades for these assessments, which mitigated any perception of coercion or any pressure to offer particular responses to the interview questions. Details of the interview outcomes are below.

The second, more extensive stage of this project (the subject of future papers) will involve the administration of two surveys to the entire student cohort (around 250 students) measuring student

attitudes toward the compulsory study of THCT202 at the beginning and at the end of a semester (subsequent to completing the PO exercise). Stage Two will consist of analysing and charting the extent and direction of student attitude shift and whether or not any shift can be attributed to engaged student learning via the PO exercise among the whole cohort.

The Participant Observation Exercise

The PO exercise began with the students reading and discussing an article on the ethnographic methodology of Participant Observation and its use in a Christian ritual setting (Johnson, 2004), so that they understood what they were being asked to do, the appropriateness of this methodology for studying ritual, and its practicalities, benefits and limitations. Students formed themselves into field-research groups of four or five, with group membership based largely on the geographic proximity of their chosen ritual observation church to their homes. A non-graded practice run of the PO exercise was conducted by all students during a Mass celebrated in the campus chapel, and this was followed by an analytical debrief during a tutorial. Students then determined the parameters of their own PO research project, such as location, time, ritual occasion, and observational responsibilities. Detailed instructions were provided regarding the type of ritual students could choose to observe (namely, that of a Christian denomination which celebrates according to a ritual book against which the students could compare what they participated in and observed); the number of rituals to be observed (minimum of two); which aspects of the “ritual map” (Grimes, 1995, p. 24 ff.) they would focus on individually; and how they would determine levels of congregational engagement and the overall success/failure of the ritual both in their opinion and in relation to the official ritual text, including reasons for their final judgments. Though students worked as groups to conduct the research, they were graded individually on what they presented in the tutorial and on their individual written report on the PO exercise. During the course of the exercise, students completed the various stages of the PO methodology: observation, analysis, theorizing, and reporting (Jorgensen, 1989, pp. 107–123).

Interview Results

April was a very forthcoming, articulate and dedicated student who demonstrated a notable depth of analytical thought. She identified her initial attitude toward studying THCT202 as fearful and intimidated (as she lacks a religious background and feels stressed by theology units), anxious (as she is a high academic achiever and wants to do well) and interested but nervous (due to a lack of knowledge possibly causing offence in the ritual context). At the start of the semester April indicated that she was studying THCT202 both out of personal interest and because it was a requirement for accreditation. She ranked it fifth in importance out of the five units she was studying concurrently. During the interview (held during week nine of the semester), she stated that she was studying the unit out of personal interest (with no mention of its compulsoriness for accreditation) and that she now ranked it fourth in importance out of five.

April described the fieldwork as the best part of the PO exercise, saying that it catered for visual and kinetic learning, “and in fact any kind of learning”. She said that it enabled her to get information from a real-life source, not just from a textbook or from words on a page. She explained that the group work part of this exercise was the best she had experienced, because she liked being graded on what she had presented individually but also appreciated being able to bounce ideas off the other group members in preparing the presentation of research findings. April stated that the “light-bulb” moment came when she found she was able to apply what she had studied in the official ritual books to what she saw in the ritual. She explained that the PO exercise gave her the chance to see how the liturgy in practice links to theological theory, supporting a claim that the PO exercise is about forcing students “to go deeper”, “that they have to do that to succeed” and they have to check if the ritual celebrants “are doing things right and why/why not”. April noted that through studying THCT202, she had “learned about the process of gathering data, what goes on behind a research paper, and the origins of the research process”. She said she now has a “greater

understanding of Roman Catholic and Maronite traditions”, “and understands better the roots and purpose of symbols” (which was the area of the ritual map on which she focused in her part of the presentation of findings.)

The interview with April demonstrated that the attitude of even a motivated and interested student could be made more positive through engaging in the PO exercise. The depth of connections April made between the intended educative purpose of this exercise and the educative outcome she experienced was clear, as she demonstrated an ability to apply the theory learned in the classroom to the field setting and then rehearse for her peers what she had learned in the research exercise. In teaching her peers what she had learned she reinforced both her own and their understanding of the theory explained and expressed in light of what she had observed, analysed, critiqued and reported. She had moved from fear to engagement, from caution to excitement and from compulsory study to interested and enthusiastic study. A clear link between informational and experiential knowledge was established by this student.

Preliminary Findings and Conclusions

The interview offered support to the hypothesis that the PO exercise is a successful mechanism for engaging students in deep learning in a subject they generally are at first reluctant to study. The PO exercise supports student learning based on informed reflection and inquiry, encouraging a positive, inclusive, group work experience where the students negotiate the terms of their independent research as a group, and are responsible for supporting each other in this process. This style of problem-based learning enables students to take responsibility for their own learning through its emphasis on individual accountability for work completed, while also enabling them to benefit from a positive group work experience. The autonomous student group work was supported by lecturer/tutor advice as needed, but largely students were left to their own devices to conduct their research according to detailed guidelines. This exercise constituted the first encounter with and experience of social–scientific research for many students, and they took great delight in reporting their original research findings to their peers, indicating a general attitude shift toward the positive among the tutorial group of which April was a member. The overall standard of tutorial presentations was high, as one group’s excellent presentation would inspire other groups to raise their own standard. Frequently, in presentations, students referred back to material covered in lectures which they had observed enacted in praxis, and noted how they understood an idea better for having seen it in practice during the PO exercise. Students also reported a new attitude in regard to church ritual itself—many of them were surprised at how engaged they felt with the ritual now that they knew so much more about it, and they were surprised at the level of hospitality extended to them by parish communities and leaders. Many students indicated an intention to attend the rituals again in the future.

The PO exercise encourages students to reflect on the subject of their inquiry (Christian ritual) as the primary investigators of a faith-based practice in which many of them are otherwise reluctant to participate, but in which they must be educated if they are to work in the Catholic school system. This active learning exercise enables students to move from theory to practice: the ritual, semiotic and sacramental theory studied in the classroom is tested/observed in the field, and then reflected on in verbal, visual and written form via the tutorial presentation of findings utilising PowerPoint and other media, and the written report of findings. The theory–praxis–reflection–reporting structure of the PO exercise allows students to enter into a deeper appreciation of their first-hand experience of the reality on which the theory is based, promoting deep experiential learning. Through the PO exercise, students seek out knowledge within parameters they themselves have had strong involvement in defining through their choice of group members, location, time, type of ritual, aspects of the ritual map for study, and other aspects; and they practise their observation–analysis–theorizing–reporting skills in a concrete experiential setting and engage reflectively on what they have learned and are learning before, during and after the PO fieldwork itself. It is hoped that Stage

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Two of this research will enable further elaboration on and demonstration of what has been indicated in Stage One.

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Establishing Collaborative Learning Networks Within and Between Units of Study

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Abstract: *In this paper collaborative tasks conducted in Semester 1, 2012 involving two student cohorts are outlined. A second year and third year cohort studying food technology were involved in two long term collaborative tasks, one being the development of sourdough products from the capturing of the yeast and the other, the collection and categorising of food packaging, developing a resource for both cohorts. Preliminary analysis of the results indicates that there was sustained project interest and that there was a development of communication channels between the cohorts.*

Keywords: collaborative learning, learning networks, student behaviour, student experience

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to outline a study on the integration of collaborative tasks between two undergraduate Units of Study (UOS) on food technology in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences. Collaborative learning has been recognised as optimal for developing problem solving and critical thinking; valuing diversity; developing positive attitudes towards learning; understanding different perspectives; and understanding complex concepts (Johnson & Johnson, 2002; Bruffee, 1999). As these are attributes desirable in graduates, modification of food science tutorials was undertaken with the following aims: to design and implement an educational experience that could network student learning within and between units of study; and to model this experience in such a manner that students were actively involved in all stages of the planning and implementation, drawing parallels to their future teaching behaviours.

Method

Academic staff ($n=4$), three tutorial classes from a third year UOS (TECH210, $n=37$) and four tutorial classes from a second year UOS (TECH207, $n=46$) studying food technology at Mount St Mary Campus, Strathfield, NSW participated in the study. TECH210 students were responsible for planning and monitoring the sourdough project, and TECH207 students, the food packaging project. Tutorial groups in both cohorts designed activities for and received feedback from students in the other UOS.

TECH210 tutorial classes collected wild airborne yeasts and cultivated traditional sourdough, maintaining growth during the semester while it matured. Negotiations between students concerning integral project tasks included recipe and lesson design and marketing. The second year (TECH207) followed these lesson plans using the sourdough and providing feedback to TECH210 regarding lesson structure and content, the functionality of the sourdough and the recipes.

TECH207 students were responsible for developing a PDF portfolio to be used by both UOS during future tutorial sessions for nutrient labelling, packaging, food safety and production. Tutors and students from both UOS contributed to this resource however classifying products and identifying missing components were the responsibilities of TECH207.

TECH207 and TECH210 students will be provided at session close with the PDF portfolio. Evaluation of student engagement will be through observations of student communication and interactions; evidence of sustained project interest, problem solving; and demonstrated critical thinking. The food packaging project creates a valuable tool for later use: this activity will not contribute towards

student assessment. The sourdough project encourages student interaction with immediate value and contributes to student assessment.

Results

Both projects were completed with outcomes and observations summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: A comparison between the food packaging and sourdough projects

	Food packaging project: TECH207	Sourdough project: TECH210
Students	16 student groups in 4 classes	12 student groups in 3 classes
Communication	Face to face communication between classes and TECH210 dependent on tutor. Within class collaboration greater than previous year TECH207. Tutors explained sourdough process to TECH207, Q and A and discussion through LEO and written communication from TECH210.	Communication beyond groups and the tutorial class via "face to face", Facebook, photography LEO, txt and email. Written communication re project stages and activities to TECH207 classes.
Physical Interactions	Did not extend beyond each TECH207 class Tutor was viewed as project leader	Extended to other TECH210 classes providing food samples: boasting, sharing and advice. Tutor was observer unless invited to advise
Beginning stage	Medium curiosity	Medium curiosity
Middle stage	Low interest needing tutor encouragement	Full responsibility for culture increased contact between students
End stage	High interest when value of resource realised	High interest when value of activity realised; confidence high; and success in developing new product
Demonstrated: Problem solving Critical thinking	Limited to contents of resource file Difficulty envisaging future use (beyond university)	Developed a protocol with multiple testing, modifications and product marketing strategies
Outcomes	1. PDF of 250 food products for TECH207, TECH210 and teaching; 2. curiosity in sourdough and products they will develop in TECH210; 3. Involvement in sustained learning activity that was beyond their tutorial group	1. teamwork beyond tutorial group; 2. explaining sourdough process to students and community; 3. exchange of ideas beyond tutorial class; 4. sourdough and resources for both UOS.

Conclusions

Study aims were achieved. Next year the physical interaction between the second and third year cohorts will be strengthened with second year student exposure in 2012 being an advantage. Tutor observations will continue and student reflective journals will be introduced as well as analyses from focus groups. The packaging project requires engagement of students beyond their class and feedback from the 2012 class will assist. Both projects created interest beyond the technology

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laboratory and during the coming semester TECH213, using a similar format to TECH210, will establish an organic kitchen garden.

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French and Australian Student Approaches to Learning and Studying

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Abstract: *This study identifies the similarities and the differences between international and domestic students of marketing in their approaches to learning and studying. Specifically it focuses on French marketing student studying in France, and Australian and French marketing students studying in Australia. There is relatively little prior literature comparing students' learning and studying approaches across cultures, and, reflecting this, an exploratory qualitative methodology was utilised. A number of important differences between the three cohorts of marketing students were identified. Similarities were also identified, underlining the fact that French and Australian marketing students are both culturally grounded in a Western tradition of knowledge and learning. The findings also indicate that international marketing students can make changes in their approaches to learning and studying, indicating that these approaches are not fixed.*

Keywords: learning approaches, studying, international education, France, Australia

Introduction

The student cohort is diverse at most Australian universities and it includes a substantial component of international students. Asia has been the major source of international students (Jolley, 1997). The learning approaches and needs of international students are often alleged to be different from domestic students. Research in the Australian context has indicated that differences in learning approaches are one of the main difficulties experienced by international students (Wong, 2004). The needs of international students are often not understood, or are misunderstood (Shaw, 2005). Teaching students across cultures can pose significant challenges for educators (Shaw, 2005), and cultural differences between students and educators can hinder both teaching and learning if these challenges are not addressed (Bull, 2005). Students find learning is difficult when educators do not take account of their differences, or what they potentially have to offer to the learning experiences of the other students (Morgan, Kingston & Sproute, 2005). A common misperception is that internationals are more interested in Biggs's (1987) "surface learning", as opposed to a "deep learning" approach. In the 2009–2010 year there were 70,245 French students studying internationally (Institute of International Education, 2010). The growth of French students studying in Australia is a relatively recent phenomenon. In 2009 there were more than 3000 French students studying in Australia (*The Australian*, 7/10/09). They are a fast-growing segment, and at many universities, they are the largest European segment.

Within this context this research focused on identifying the differences between international marketing students and domestic marketing students' learning approaches, with the aim of better informing marketing educators. Specifically, it focuses on French students studying marketing in France, Australian students studying marketing in Australia, and French students studying marketing in Australia. It was hypothesised that each of these three cohorts of marketing students has different approaches to learning and studying. This research sought to investigate the following three research questions:

- What are the key characteristics of Australian and French marketing student approaches to learning?

- To what extent are there differences between Australian and French marketing student approaches to learning, and what are they?
- What adjustments, if any, do French marketing students have to make when studying in Australia?

The Existing Literature

Different theorists have formulated theories around learning approaches and styles, including Kolb (1984), and Honey and Mumford (1982). Research in the Australian context has indicated that differences in approaches to learning are one of the three main difficulties experienced by international students (along with cultural barriers and language problems (Wong, 2004), as noted earlier. Some literature emphasises the significance of culture in the pre-determination of learning styles (see Neuman & Beckerman, 2000, and Spizzica, 1997). This “culture based learning styles” approach can be contrasted with a more contextually based approach, under which students are influenced by environmental factors and are able to modify their learning styles accordingly. The “contextualists” (for example Riding & Sadler-Smith, 1997; Sternberg & Grigorenko, 1997; Vermunt, 1996) argue that different social and educational experiences are the principal influences on students’ approaches to learning. Australian research among international Asian undergraduate students found that despite coming from a different style of learning and teaching, students are able to adapt fairly rapidly to a more “Australian” style of learning and teaching, and that the longer students stay the more they adapt (Wong, 2004). There are, however, only limited Australian-based studies (Biggs, 1989; Niles, 1995; Ramburuth, 1997; Volet & Renshaw, 1996) in this area, and these have focused on Asian students. None have focused specifically on marketing students or European students.

Methodology

An exploratory investigative approach was considered appropriate. Accordingly a qualitative research methodology was chosen, specifically individual in-depth interviews. The sample population was 2nd year marketing students at an Australian university and at a French university. In total, 30 in-depth interviews were undertaken – 10 with the French students studying in France, 10 with Australian students, and 10 with French students studying in Australia. The participants were recruited using non-probability sampling. Reporting of the findings was undertaken using human content analysis of the extensive notes taken by the researcher during the in-depth interviews.

Main Findings

The main findings are reported on briefly.

The majority of research participants claimed that their study skills (how they generally approach and actually go about studying) have changed from school to university, and in the case of the French marketing students studying in Australia, from their French university to the Australian university.

When asked whether what they are studying is mostly about descriptive knowledge about the world (facts), or mostly about how to think about the world (concepts), virtually all the Australian and French marketing students thought that they were studying both.

In terms of the purpose of studying, there were broad splits with no clear result apparent. A number in both countries (and both nationalities) felt that studying was just about the rewards or outcomes of studying (such as a marketing job, or entry into a Masters program), while others felt studying has its own rewards (such as a different view of the world, or more critical thinking).

Positively, the majority claimed that for them the courses studied offered something in their own right that they might not otherwise have. Only a couple claimed that studying is just about passing in order to graduate.

While the three cohorts gave higher importance ratings to “Applying and using knowledge”, the Australian marketing students gave a higher rating than the French marketing students to “Gaining information and knowing a lot” while the latter, in contrast, gave a higher rating to “Understanding the meaning behind knowledge for oneself”. All three cohorts gave “Memorising what has to be learnt” an equally low importance rating.

When shown descriptions of each type of learning approach, the majority of participants in both countries chose the deep approach as characteristic of their own general approach. Only two of the 30 participants chose the surface approach. Some of the French marketing students in Australia however clearly chose the strategic approach.

Personal views of learning tended to centre on two of five views: “Learning is acquiring facts, skills and methods that can be retained and used if necessary”; and, “Learning is making sense of meaning, relating parts of the subject matter to each other and to a ‘bigger picture’”. There were no cohort differences.

French marketing students in France were more likely than the others to agree that they have trouble in making sense of things they have to remember, and to not believe that they have organised their study time carefully, and to disagree that ideas they have come across in academic reading have set them off on long chains of thought. In contrast, Australian marketing students are more likely to claim that they usually set out to understand the meanings of what has to be learnt, put a lot of effort into studying, relate new ideas to practical or real life contexts, and are systematic and organised in studying. The views of the French marketing students studying in Australia on the majority of statements tended to be located somewhere between Australian marketing student views, and those of their counterparts studying back in France.

Conclusions

The learning approaches of French and Australian marketing students are different from each other, though grounded as they both are in a Western tradition of knowledge and learning, it seems that the differences are less marked than with those business students grounded in an Eastern tradition. The fact that French marketing students studying in Australia have had to make adjustments underlines the differences, but also the fact that changes can be made. That is, learning approaches are not “fixed”, but rather are “plastic”. This finding is in alignment with some of the research on Asian students in Australia, which indicates that adjustments are both necessary and possible. All three marketing cohorts in this research had a positive overall view of learning and studying, but there are still opportunities for teaching strategies (and university resources) to be adjusted to better address student approaches to learning and studying, and better deliver on the nexus between marketing teaching and learning.

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Interventions Aiming to Improve Lecture Pedagogy in the New Interprofessional Health Science Unit at ACU

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Abstract: *Student attendance at lectures in the new Interprofessional Science Unit was variable and poor at times. In response to this, several changes were made to the way lectures and Unit content were delivered. A comparative study of the mid and end of semester assessments was conducted. Preliminary analysis of the data indicates that there was a significant reduction on failure rates at the conclusion of the Unit. Overall, the changes to lecture pedagogy contributed to improvement in student engagement and academic performance.*

Keywords: lecture pedagogy, Health Sciences, student engagement

Introduction

Human Biological Science 1 is a new Interprofessional Unit, introduced in 2012, for first year students enrolled in the Bachelor of Nursing, Bachelor of Physiotherapy, and Bachelor of Exercise Science degree programs at ACU. This study was conducted in Semester 1, 2012. During the first three weeks of semester, student attendance at lectures tended to vary between one-third and two-thirds of the cohort. Other signs of disengagement included coming to lectures late and leaving early, and lack of interest and motivation. Tutorials and practical laboratory classes were well attended throughout the semester. This could be partly due to the fact that attendance at lectures was not a compulsory requirement, and because students had online access to course notes, including lecture notes. There is a variety of learning styles present in a tertiary learning environment, and some students may not be reached by the standard lecture format (Wehrwein et al. 2007).

The failure rate in early assessments was found to be high. For instance, in the mid-semester assessment, it was observed that 29 per cent (225 out of 776) of students scored below the pass mark. The aim of the present study was to look into how the failure rate in assessments could be reduced to below 10 per cent for the cohort and to investigate measures to improve student attendance at lectures.

Methods

It was necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of lectures as a teaching strategy in interprofessional education. There is a risk that this didactic model will only promote superficial learning as students may become bored and disengaged, absorbing some of the content only and remembering even less (Domizio, 2008). Other drawbacks with the lecture format are that students may be reluctant to ask questions in large groups and there would be insufficient opportunity for ascertaining student understanding. However, according to Matheson (2008), the lecture remains a popular teaching strategy in tertiary education, capable of quickly introducing key concepts to a large group, for further study. Other benefits of lectures include personal approach of lecturer and set environment (Domizio, 2008). Student engagement and academic performance in the Human Biological Science 1 unit were monitored during the semester. After an examination of the Unit design, the research team enacted the following changes to the delivery of the lectures:

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- In each set of lecture notes, about ten key words were omitted so that the students were required to attend the lectures to be able to then insert the missing words during the PowerPoint presentation.
- At the beginning of the lecture, the subject matter would be briefly introduced by outlining the Lecture Objectives, covering definitions, and emphasising the importance and relevance of the topic (for example, the body organ system being taught).
- A summary of the main points (that is, main structures and functions of the organ system) was presented towards the end of the lecture.
- The summary included five sample questions (in the last slide) and going through the answers with the cohort. It should be noted here that these questions would not be reused in the examination. Where necessary, modified versions of the questions were used.
- At the end of the lecture, the content of the following lecture was outlined to prepare students for forthcoming topics and to raise interest in the subject matter.

Student performance (that is, the proportion of fail, pass, credit, distinction, and high distinction grades) at each of the assessments was compared for evaluation of the lecturing strategy. The non-parametric, Chi-Squared test was used to interrogate the data.

Results

The results of this study show that the changes made to how the lectures were delivered contributed to student learning and performance: student attendance at lectures, their level of interest, and performance continued to improve throughout the semester. Students generally showed increasing interest in learning the course content, and were staying behind after the lectures to ask relevant questions.

Table 1 shows a comparison of the academic performance of students in mid-semester and late-semester assessments. Both assessments were comparable as they mostly consisted of multiple choice questions; the weighting of the mid-semester assessment was 25.0% and that of the late-semester assessment 20%. There was a significant ($p < 0.001$) reduction in the proportion of students achieving a score below the pass mark and a significant ($p < 0.001$) increase in the proportion of students achieving distinction.

Table 1: Comparison of academic performance of students in mid-semester and late-semester assessments

Assessment grades (%)	Mid-semester assessment % (students)	Late-semester assessment % (students)
Fail (< 49%)	29.0% (225)	20.3% (152)
Pass (50–64%)	41.0% (318)	30.8% (231)
Credit (65–74%)	16.3% (127)	20.3% (152)
Distinction (75–84%)	9.8% (76)	22.1% (166)
High Distinction (>85%)	3.8% (30)	6.5% (49)

Conclusions and Future Directions

Changes made to the lecture pedagogy (such as modifying material, providing summary, and previewing) improved student engagement. The lecture remains a popular teaching strategy in

tertiary education. This finding is consistent with that of Matheson (2008). The success of the lecture pedagogy may be due to the fact that the lecturer introduces a topic and gives structure to students' reading. In addition to indicating the depth of reading and knowledge required for the topic, the lecturer becomes an inspirational role-model by motivating and engaging students. If students perform well in the first semester, they are more likely to remain in the course; whereas poor achievement is very likely to result in student attrition from the course (Robinson et al., 2010; Krause et al., 2005).

The improved lecture pedagogy will be followed through in the Human Biological Science 2 unit in Semester 2 and student attendance at lectures, including in tutorial and practical classes, will be stringently monitored to assess the impact on academic performance of the cohort in all the assessments of Human Biological Science 2.

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The *Real* Versus the Virtual University Teacher: An Interpretation of Contrasts in Participant Engagement in Learning Between Face-To-Face and Fully Online Teaching

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Abstract: *An eight-level scheme of student engagement in learning has been devised for two purposes: 1. to interpret the variety of ways in which students might engage in learning in postgraduate study; 2. to compare and contrast the profiles of engagement in learning in face-to-face and fully online units. This analysis can be useful for interpreting the value of postgraduate education in both formats and for informing priorities and policy in program development. It is also a useful starting point for empirical research on these issues.*

Keywords: learning, engagement, online and face-to-face formats

Introduction

Australian Catholic University, like other universities, has extensive fully online unit offerings where there is a *virtual* teacher. Here, students may have no interaction with their lecturers apart from the receipt of assessment marks, rubric performance grids, and perhaps brief comments for some, but probably not all, of their written work (this does not include the use of programs like Adobe Connect where lecturers and students can see and hear each other in an online classroom-like situation). Fully online units have complemented and, in some instances, replaced the traditional teaching of face-to-face (FTF) units where, by contrast, there is a *real* teacher. Fully online units have been adopted to provide flexibility, meeting the needs of distance education students, the perceived value of 'electronic' learning, the economy of large over small class sizes, the range of units available, increased profitability, and changes in staffing, such as the casualisation of the academic workforce.

This reflection⁶ on extensive involvement in teaching postgraduate Religious Education programs is, in a sense, like educational 'reverse engineering' or putting what was judged to be best practice into theory, coming up with an eight level system for interpreting student engagement, which in turn has helped contrast different profiles of student engagement in FTF and fully online units. As yet, this interpretation has not been related to the literature of adult learning, but could be a starting point for empirical research on issues for postgraduate professional development, for interpreting the learning potential of different teaching formats and for informing priorities and policy in program development.

An Eight Level Model of Participant Engagement in Postgraduate Learning

Engagement, a construct commonly regarded as a key element of learning, can be considered in simple terms as the mental activity of participants in thinking about the content being presented. Engagement may include understanding the content or having difficulty in working out what it means, as well as some emotional response and some thoughts about how the content relates to professional experience; it may involve a new insight or it may confirm or challenge previously held ideas. Engagement may or may not be expressed in a verbal comment or question, and/or in written

⁶ A full paper on this topic is available from the ACU Strathfield Education [repository](#).

notes or material for forthcoming assessment tasks. The expressions of engagement, in addition to their value for participants, can also be helpful for the teacher/lecturer as indicators of participants' understanding. The eight level scheme simply suggests the variety of modes that may figure in any student's engagement. The strength of engagement at any level will vary according to the individual. While the sequence is linear and logical, not all levels may operate in a particular instance. The levels are not necessary stages in a developmental sequence, even though the full sequence may be followed by some students. A brief overview of the eight levels is provided below.

Engagement E1. *Initial presentation of content.* It is not enough for a lecturer to 'cover the territory' in the content. Good lecturing will present a *wise 'take', slant or particular interpretation* of the content, with its own bias. This can help participants get an idea of the 'topography' of the content and issues from the lecturer's considered viewpoint. This helps students see more easily the main points in contrast with the lesser points. It provides them with an accessible, ready-made 'handle' on the content, something that is difficult for the new student to acquire just from reading. They can vicariously use the lecturer's position on content to develop a coherent, integrating perspective, until they are able to articulate their own professional view.

Engagement E2. *First active signal of comprehension.* Participants can signal first comprehension of the ideas just presented in a number of ways. Lecturers will commonly use participant comments and questions to gauge the level of immediate comprehension of their presentation. But more than this, they can be attuned to appraising group comprehension in a relatively subconscious way, scanning the expressions on the faces before them for signs of understanding.

Engagement E3. *Sustained class discussion and exchange of views.* Either in a segment structured by the lecturer or as may emerge spontaneously from participant contributions, a higher level of sustained discussion and exchange of views between students and lecturer indicates a new kind of learning engagement.

Engagement E4. *Informal participant discussion.* Sometimes significant learning from a unit crystallises in informal conversations during breaks, which is also an opportunity for some to follow up questions with the lecturer.

Engagement E5. *Follow-up study of unit materials.* Students study in preparation for assessment tasks.

Engagement E6. *Completing the assessment tasks* (such as written assignments and group projects) This is a point in the whole postgraduate educative process to which students devote considerable attention and energy.

Engagement E7. *Lecturer assessment feedback to students.* The purpose of this feedback is to be diagnostic and interactive. Students often pay special attention to the comments on their work, making this a significant point for engagement in further learning.

Engagement E8. *Active participant response to lecturer assessment feedback.* The lecturer assessment feedback to students is not always the final chapter in the ongoing learning conversation. Some students communicate further, talking about the issues that were raised in the appraisal of their work.

Contrasting Patterns of Student Engagement in Face-To-Face and Fully Online Units

Lecturers delivering an FTF unit know through levels E1 to E4 that their students have at least heard and engaged with all the content in some initial and basic way; that they have a fair idea of how it is being comprehended; and they can adjust presentation and resources if needed in the light of E2 and E3. They know that the students will then engage with the content again in E5 and E6 like a second major incursion as they study and complete the assessment tasks. Because they know that students have covered all the content in E1, the assessment tasks do not need to cover all unit content; they can follow up particular aspects with some flexibility.

By contrast with FTF units, and school classrooms, where creative use of the Internet and ICT can be integrated into teaching and learning, the common version of the fully online unit has less scope for multiple forms of student engagement. This applies particularly to the lecturer-student professional relationship: how it builds up, if at all, will be different. This is less of an issue for units with both FTF teaching and some online work.

In the FTF unit, E1 may be exclusively through reading. Like some of their predecessor print-based, distance education materials, fully online units may be composed of academic articles and/or book chapters aggregated together with little in the way of connecting links, with some focus questions. Better structured units have a systematic and coherent story-line that runs through all the unit modules, carrying most of the content, with lateral links to supporting resources/readings. Audio and video files together with PowerPoint presentations can give variety to the content presentation so that the student is not left with just reading large 'slabs' of text.

The key learning ingredient often missing in fully online units is the *perspective* or *take* of the lecturer noted in E1. Without this facilitating and guiding perspective, students can find it difficult to negotiate a large range of new academic articles by themselves; confronted with 'acres of print', all looking infallible because it has been published. What they need most here is the helpful perspective of a lecturer to get the mass of material into manageable and comprehensible perspective. A lecturer's organic take on content is not as easy to inject into an online unit as it is in FTF teaching where ongoing comments put new content into perspective. Including introductory audio files at appropriate points across FTF units can help provide this lecturer perspective.

Contrasting with the two major engagements with content in the FTF unit, fully online students may sometimes end up with only one – a conflation of E1, E5 and E6, where they work on content only once while preparing assessment tasks. With no guarantee that their online students will even read/cover all the content, lecturers may think about modifying the assessment tasks in the direction of ensuring that all content is covered at least once. Assessment then takes on a unit content coverage role.

Conclusion

This paper provides a way of interpreting how differences in context and pedagogy can affect engagement in student learning, particularly in contrasts between FTF teaching and fully online units. This in turn can inform the structuring, teaching and assessment of units, and empirical research, as well as policy and priorities about unit development and availability.

All of this is directed towards developing programs in both formats that are as helpful and as relevant as possible in promoting postgraduate professional development.

Supporting First Year Pre-service Teachers to Work in/as Communities of Learners

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Abstract: *In this paper we report on a teaching and assessment task designed to engage first year students in the development of their knowledge and skills in the area of collaboration and team work. This task introduces first year students to group assignment work and supports their development of an essential attribute of teaching – the capacity to work and learn in partnership with others.*

Keywords: collaboration, team work, partnerships

A Provocation on Building Pre-Service Teachers' Identities as Team Members

This paper is in response to a learning and assessment process undertaken in a first year unit in the Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood and Primary). The focus is on an activity developed to support students to learn about, engage in, demonstrate and reflect on working in professional partnerships. The driver of this learning is students' engagement in a group assessment task. The purpose of the task is to have students enhance their awareness of the importance of collaborative team work, the skills and strategies needed to engage in such work and the impact of such an approach to their work as teachers. Student engagement in this assessment process and student learning in relation to the assessment tasks, has led to this provocation presented by two lecturers who have both been Lecturers in Charge for the unit Partnerships for Learning. This paper seeks to engage you in reflection about representations of assessment for learning and student self-reflection, for the purpose of enhancing student development and a sense of professional identity within a community of learning discourse.

The teaching of learning outcomes in this unit involves both academic staff and staff from the Office of Student Success. There is a focus on understanding the emotional as well as academic elements of team work. The process begins by introducing students, in an active and practical way, to team work. Students are then presented with a lecture on team work from the perspective of the content of the unit (that is, partnerships in education), emotional factors of working in a team, and the academic skills required for effective group assignment tasks. The students are given weekly guidance to engage with the elements of collaboration as they develop their group assignment. They are also supported and guided through the use of readings and discussions to produce an individual assignment that is a reflection on their group experience.

In this paper, we present our reflections on the learning and teaching opportunities of these tasks. The following sections outline the key elements of this process. In each section we will describe the task in which the students engage, the intentional teaching in which staff engage, and the intended outcomes of each element of the process. We outline the key elements of this learning and teaching experience and we reflect on the value of this from the perspective of students, lecturers, support staff and the professional community to which the student aspires.

Students engage in a group task

Churchill (2011) identifies skill development and an understanding of shared goals as important for cooperative learning, while Ruys, Van Keer, and Aelterman (2011) find that effective teaching in collaborative contexts enhances student teacher collaborative skills. This suggests that effective teaching of group skills and collaborative goal setting strategies in effective teaching episodes should lead to an enhanced ability to work in collaborative settings.

In the first tutorial of the unit, students are given a novelty team building task to complete. Students have been divided into small groups (these groups will form their assignment groups). Each group is provided with a packet of toothpicks and a small amount of Blu-Tack. The instructions are to build the tallest construction they can in 10 minutes. The teacher takes photos of each group throughout the process.

This interactive exercise serves a number of purposes. This is the first week of university for most of the students and this is a relaxed way for the students to connect with their peers. The task also gives students an experience of team work. At the end of the group task (after the “winners” have been acknowledged, of course) the teams are asked to share the strategies with the tutorial group they used to complete the task. Each working group is then required to document these strategies for future reference.

The teaching intent of this exercise is to provide students with a reference point for the content of the following lecture, which will focus on the strategies of team work and the professional expectations of teachers working in partnership.

Students learn about the social, emotional and intellectual demands of working in groups

The lecture that follows the initial tutorial is delivered by a team - the lecturer for the unit, a member of the academic skills team and a student counsellor. The students are asked to use their experience in the previous tutorial to help them engage with the content of the lecture. The purpose of this lecture is to introduce the students to the concepts of partnership and team work, which are essential elements of what it is to be a teacher. The lecture also provides practical strategies for working as a member of a team and ways to work effectively on group assignment tasks. The lecture has both an immediate and a future focus for the students. The content of the lecture, delivered by the various members of the lecturing team, draws on an range of expertise to ensure students are introduced to the emotional, social, intellectual and professional dimensions of team work and group assignment tasks.

The teaching intent of this lecture is to build understandings about the roles of leaders in early childhood contexts, and to identify and analyse some strategies for effective team leadership.

Students reflect on their practical experience using new knowledge

In the second tutorial, students work in their assigned groups and reflect on the initial tutorial task in light of the content of the lecture. Each group is provided with a series of photos from their team building exercise and the record they made of their group's strategies from this task. The group is asked to produce a poster with the photos and to include captions depicting ways in which the strategies they use related (or did not relate) to the strategies presented in the lecture.

The teaching intent of this tutorial is to support students to reflect on their own leadership and group experiences, and to understand professional practice by linking their own experiences to strategies identified in literature.

Group establishes goals and task plan

Following this task, groups are introduced to the concepts of project management, shared group goals and group contracts. Each group is asked to use their new knowledge of, and reflections on, group work to develop a project plan and group contract for their group assignment task.

The teaching intent of this stage of the process is to emphasise the collaborative nature of partnerships and the strategies that support collaboration. Students are introduced to conflict management and are challenged to reconceptualise conflict from a credit perspective, focusing on points of disagreement as starting points for growth in partnerships, rather than as a breakdown in relationships (Rodd, 2006; Ebbeck & Waniganayake, 2003).

Individual reflection following completion of the group assignment

Each student is required to complete an individual reflection as part of the group assignment task. This task is completed and submitted individually. This is done to ensure confidentiality and to encourage the student to be honest and reflective in regard to their experience. The reflective task requires each student to identify what they have learnt about team work and partnership, what worked well and what did not work well in their team. However, the students are required to take their thinking beyond this level of reflection and to engage in critical reflection by considering why particular elements of their group functioning were positive or challenging. The students are then asked to apply this to what they have been learning throughout the unit in regard to the importance of partnership in the work of early childhood teaching.

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Transition to Clinical Practice

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Abstract: *Clinical transition programs (CTP), though available to all at MacKillop Bachelor of Nursing students, were initially a response to the increased enrolments of international students at ACU, of which the MacKillop campus School of Nursing currently has 48% (ACU's statistics). Interdisciplinary collaboration is central to the CTP's success. Results of evaluations demonstrate improved confidence and awareness of academic and clinical communication, and the CTP has evolved to meet the identified needs of all students. National implementation is recommended.*

Keywords: transition, student engagement, academic literacies, clinical competency

Introduction

Research studies emphasise the need for transition programs for all students entering Australian universities, especially those from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds (Takeno, 2010; Konno, 2006). At MacKillop campus, a transition module (TM) for students has evolved to run in parallel with HLSC110 Beginning Professional Practice. The TM provides first year Bachelor of Nursing (BN) students with a range of lectures and hands-on workshops on foundational academic literacy and clinical communication skills. By embedding the TM early in the BN curriculum, using an interactive, collaborative, assessment-focussed pedagogy, and developing a system of referral to interdisciplinary CTP resources, the attendance in curricular and extra-curricular programs has increased exponentially. Relevance of the CTP is demonstrated by student evaluations providing evidence of a positive impact on their transition into tertiary study and clinical practice.

Rationale

Students enrolled in the BN at ACU MacKillop are from English-speaking backgrounds as well as from international and local CALD backgrounds. In 2009, the Vice Chancellor recognised the need to better integrate CALD international students and funded two 0.5 Academic International Advisors to initiate programs to better prepare students for clinical transition at MacKillop campus. This initiative was subsequently taken up in 2011 by the School of Nursing (SoN), and has enabled a collaboration with Academic International Advisors and support services to provide a structured approach engaging not just international but all BN students in progression towards academic and professional competence.

Materials for the CTP are developed and delivered by an interdisciplinary team, including SoN, Academic Skills Unit (ASU) and Library staff, and integrated into the curriculum with direct relation to assessments. Learning activities encourage social integration and intercultural engagement consistent with inter-professional criteria. Students encountering difficulties are individually referred by a letter from lecturers and clinical facilitators to academic and professional support services, which are openly available to all BN students. **Figure 1** provides an outline of these services. TM evaluations are carried out by ASU in Week 1 and Week 5 to establish students' perceived need for the skills taught, and attendees of the clinical and generic communication workshops are asked to evaluate those session, ensuring the ongoing effectiveness and relevance of the CTP.

Method

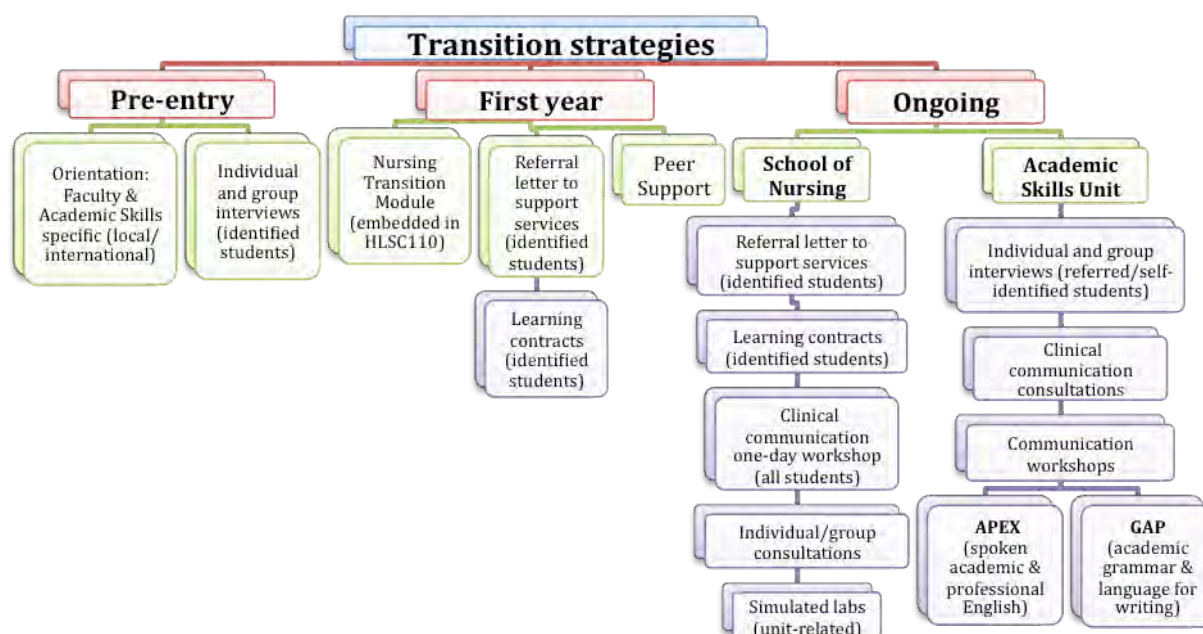


Figure 1: Strategies for effective transition to clinical practice

Findings

Table 1: Perception of need for Transition Module based on prior learning

Week 1:	Don't need	Poss. interesting	Could be useful	Need it	No answer	Total
Number of students	2	76	181	79	7	345
Percentage of total	0.5%	22%	52.5%	23%	2%	100%

Week 5:	Didn't need	Was interesting	Was useful	Needed	No answer	Total
Number of students	6	41	148	106	7	308
Percentage of total	1.5%	13.5%	48%	35%	2%	100%

Table 1 illustrates students' perceptions of their need for a TM, taking into account their prior academic experience. Although two-thirds of the students already had some experience with academic literacies, three-quarters initially felt the module could still be useful or necessary to improve their skills. By the end of the TM that figure had increased to 83 per cent, the majority of students finding that the module improved their academic literacy and communication skills and/or confidence in applying those skills. The overall percentage of students who considered the TM essential increased by over 50 per cent, with only 1.5 per cent considering the module unnecessary. Table 2 shows a similar trend in students' confidence in skills increasing dramatically as a result of attendance at clinical communication workshops over the last three years, validating the transition process as a whole.

Table 2: Evaluation of clinical communication workshops (Likert Rating 1: Low/7: High)

Sessions	Confidence before	Confidence after	Overall rating
2010 (Autumn/Spring – 69 students)	3-4/7	5-7/7	6/7
2011 (Autumn/Spring – 52 students)	2-4/7	5-7/7	6/7
2012 (Autumn – 33 students)	3-5/7	5-7/7	6-7/7

Conclusion

The CTP is a model of embedded discipline-specific academic literacies which clearly addresses the needs of students and engages them in the process of establishing both tertiary learner identity (Briggs, Clark & Hall, 2012) and professional proficiency, with subsidiary clinical and academic programs enhancing this process. Though initiated as a strategy for CALD international students, the CTP at MacKillop campus has proved effective for the successful engagement of all BN students. National implementation of an embedded CTP at ACU could provide a significantly positive impact for the School of Nursing and its entire student body.

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Using iPads to Improve Pre-Service Teacher's Engagement, Confidence and Knowledge When Teaching Movement Skills in Physical Education

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Abstract: This paper provides an overview of a study that uses iPads to improve pre-service teacher's engagement, confidence and knowledge when teaching movement skills in Physical Education. The use of iPads complements the teaching of Physical Education in the Bachelor of Education (Primary) course and develops the acquisition of movement skills, concepts and strategies that enables the pre-service teacher to confidently and competently teach children in the twenty first century. The use of iPads enhances this learning significantly as it offers experiential learning along with a curriculum which is relevant, engaging, contemporary and physically active. Supporting the pre-service teacher with relevant learning opportunities that lead to exploration and inquiry, allows the pre-service teacher to be active participants in the use of technology and ensures that they feel supported and engaged in deep and powerful learning.

Keywords: pre-service teachers, iPads, physical education, movement skills, technology, contemporary learning

There is a general perception that teaching Physical Education is actually easy as it is extraordinarily visible. However research has shown teaching movement skills is a very difficult form of professional practice (Labaree, 2008).

Physical Education is unique as it can transport and illuminate effective pedagogy in many ways. The knowledge, understanding and skills required to teach Physical Education are complex in an ever changing contemporary world. Providing the important nexus between theory and practice for our current pre-service teachers is integral to building the confidence and knowledge of our future teachers. This requires a reframing and rethinking of Physical Education to confidently and competently teach a curriculum which is relevant, engaging, contemporary, enjoyable and developmentally appropriate for future students (ACARA, 2012).

The aim of this study is to develop a pre-service teacher's engagement, confidence and knowledge when teaching movement skills in Physical Education and will endeavour to develop positive attitudes towards teaching Physical Education in a Primary school context. This study will use iPads to:

1. Engage the pre-service teacher in teaching movement skills
2. Improve the pre-service teacher's confidence to teach movement skills in Physical Education
3. Increase the pre-service teacher's knowledge and understanding of teaching movement skills in Physical Education

This paper will discuss relevant literature and will provide an outline of the theoretical framework of the study.

Literature Review

Many advances in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have made their way into schools and classrooms as a focus of student centred learning. These advancements have dramatically changed the notion of effective pedagogy and significantly enhancing the teaching

content making it accessible, dynamic and fascinating (Collins, 2011). For teachers of Physical Education to inspire, motivate, and prepare learners to live in a technologically advanced ever-changing world there needs to be a reframing and rethinking worldwide on Physical Education teacher preparation and Physical Education programs (Edginton, Chin, Geadelmann & Ahrab-Fard, 2011). Physical Education should move beyond 'easy street' and make clear and coherent links between theory and practice for pre-service teachers to help them deliver and develop programs for contemporary conditions of the 21st century (Bulger & Housner, 2009; Meldrum, 2011). Universities worldwide have been inundated by waves of emergent technologies and the release of the iPad since 2010, as the new 'state-of-the-art' mobile device (William's, Wong, Webb and Borbasi 2011) could revolutionise the current teaching and learning of Physical Education.

The nexus or central point where theory and practice bind together in pre-service teacher education to contribute significantly to the development of quality Physical Education teachers is crucial and requires a reframing of current practices. This reframing of Physical Education has remained a challenge for pre-service teacher education programs particularly the notion of how to create teaching and learning experiences that are meaningful, engaging and contribute to the preparation of the students' life (Tinning and Hunter, 2006). Research into pre-service teacher preparation indicates the importance integrating ICT into units of work, as pre-service teachers highlighted they needed to be comfortable with the new technology before they will consider integrating it. (Amade-Escot, 2006).

Physical Education and physical activity for young people has been linked to positive self-esteem, skill development, skeletal and cardiovascular health, and general healthy development. It is now widely established that childhood is the best time to establish positive attitudes and behaviour relating to physical activity and a healthy lifestyle. Young people spend a significant amount of time at school and therefore school environments need to be supportive of students being physically active. Physical Education teachers and programs are an important part of a comprehensive approach to providing this support. Teacher Education programs and pre-services teachers must connect with advances in technology to encourage and engage students in using ICT as key tools to communicate, collaborate, analyse performance and access information to enhance movement performance (ACARA, 2012). It is proposed that the pre-service teacher's engagement with iPads will develop their knowledge and understanding, enabling them to select, implement and maintain an appropriate Physical Education program enhancing the health and wellbeing of students in a school context.

Research Design

A pilot study will be conducted in Semester 2, 2012. The participant group of pre-service teachers will be participating in a tutorial group when completing a Physical Education Unit as part of a Bachelor of Education (Primary) course. The study will use a mixed method approach to the data collection including a pre and post questionnaire, also, the researcher will observe, video and make notes of a practical tutorial. Data analysis will be conducted over three stages and the pre-service teacher will:

1. Complete a pre (week 1) and post (Week 4) questionnaire in Semester 2, 2012;
2. Participate in a practical tutorial using the iPads for EDPH 306, Personal Development, Health and Physical Education (Week 2 and 3) of Semester 2, 2012, and;
3. Allow the researcher to observe video record and make written notes about the tutorial.

Installed on each iPad will be the 'Coaches Eye Application' which will support and help the pre-service teacher when they are learning how to teach movement skills in physical education. The particular iPad application allows the pre-service teacher to slow analyse footage in real-time, slow motion or frame by frame.



Figure 1: The Coaches Eye App on the iPad (left) is used by Pre-Service Teachers at ACU, Melbourne Campus.

Conclusion

Pre-service teachers graduating from universities need to be able to use a range of tools and technologies to support students in learning Physical Education. This study intends to provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to engage with technology using iPads and gain confidence and knowledge when teaching movement skills in Physical Education. It is hoped that the use of the iPads provides opportunities for individual and collaborative responses, immediate feedback on performance, and the development of high order thinking and will endeavour to develop positive attitudes towards teaching Physical Education in a Primary school context.

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POSTER ABSTRACTS

Graduate Certificate in Higher Education

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Abstract: *The Graduate Certificate in Higher Education (GCHE) promotes the scholarship of learning and teaching in higher education through evidence-based practice. It formally qualifies staff members to teach in higher education settings. The GCHE provides academic and professional staff from all universities with the opportunity to reflect on contemporary educational theory and their own professional practice. Emphasis is placed on engagement in a collegial learning environment that focuses on enhancing learning outcomes within the context of ACU's Mission. The GCHE meets the Australian Qualifications Framework guidelines for a graduate certificate. This course is studied in a part-time capacity. ACU is committed to the professional development of its staff and, as such, the University will waive the enrolment fees of eligible staff members.*

Keywords: postgraduate study, learning and teaching, flexible learning

Breaking Down Barriers to Learning: Applying the Information Technology Revolution in Overcoming Print Disabilities

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Abstract: *The Library has developed a service whereby students who are assessed by Disability Advisors as having a print disability, receive their required text books and readings in an alternative format via personal web pages. Students registered with the service are better able to meet their academic potential through the removal of barriers to learning that they may otherwise experience as a result of their disability. Elizabeth Hayward received an ACU citation (2011) for her role in designing and implementing this service. A hands-on session demonstrating file formats and assistive technologies will be included during the lunchtime session.*

Keywords: assistive technology, learning difficulties, print disability

