

# Ed News

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Firstly congratulations to all staff who were successful in gaining a Faculty research grant in the current round. There are some important projects which will be supported through these grants and which will potentially contribute to the research strength of the Faculty. Congratulations also to staff who have had publications launched in the last few weeks, amongst whom are Ramon Lewis and Ray Nichol, with significant book publications and book chapters. As you will be aware the final details of the impending RQF are still not known, however it is essential that we continue to build the research profile of the Faculty. The appointment of 3 new Professors and one new Associate Professor will provide significant research support for staff in all 3 Schools and across all campuses. We hope that by at least the start of semester 2 most of the new appointments will be on board within the Faculty. There are still some senior appointments to make and a search is underway for suitable candidates for these key positions.

Congratulations are also due to Faculty staff as a whole for reaching and exceeding the 110% enrolment figure for which we were aiming. I am aware that this has placed a great deal of pressure on space and facilities to accommodate the growing numbers within courses and the senior management of the University has been extremely conscious of these issues and has worked to alleviate problems to the best of their ability. There are plans afoot to attempt to address these issues on a more long term basis and staff can be assured that our requirements and concerns are being taken most seriously at the highest levels of University management.

A strategic planning review process is underway within the University and already 4 staff from this Faculty have been involved in 2 one day workshops to discuss issues concerning the future directions of the University as a whole. As a result of the feedback received from these workshops, there is to be a 2 day senior staff workshop in Beechworth on March 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> where the feedback gained from the staff workshops will be fed into the strategic planning process. Once the University Strategic Plan is approved and in place in its reviewed form, Faculty Plans will need to be revisited in light of the University Plan. In the case of this Faculty I envisage that this will not be an onerous task given the currency of our Plan. However, staff will be kept informed and asked to have input into whatever decisions regarding the Faculty Plan are required.

As you are also aware I have been asked to undertake the role of Bendigo Campus Director as from mid May this year when Professor Sullivan moves to a new appointment at Monash. With the academic and administrative alignment of the Bendigo campus, and in light of the clear direction to ensure that the regional mission of La Trobe is enhanced and focused,

the role of the Director of Regional Campuses is differently constructed. The Deans of the Faculties are the academic heads of the programs that operate on the campus within their Faculties. The Campus Director is there as a facilitator of academic programs within Faculties and as a liaison between the Faculties and the community. It is critical that this role is seen as assisting in the development of all programs across the campus including undergraduate, postgraduate and international. I will work in close collaboration with all of my colleague Deans and will also work closely with the heads of the various administrative units represented on the Bendigo campus.

An all staff meeting day is being planned currently at which the focus will be on Learning and Teaching across the Faculty for both academic and administrative staff. In light of the vast sums of money which are available through the Learning and Teaching Performance Fund and the fact that as a University La Trobe is working hard to move into a position to receive some of this funding, it is imperative that we put strategies in place to allow this Faculty to contribute positively to the University profile in this area. More details of this day will be publicized in the near future and all staff will be involved in this day.

There have been 2 graduation ceremonies this year within the Faculty so far. There are ceremonies on each of the other campuses planned to take place in the next month or so. It has been extremely exciting to be able to present graduands as Faculty of Education students in their own right and the message that this gives about the strength of education across the University is a most positive one. Thank you to all staff who have so far attended these ceremonies and in advance to those who will attend the next few ceremonies in the near future. As we enter the second year of the Faculty, the signs are that we have great potential to be innovative and creative and to provide programs that are responsive, flexible and highly desirable, for a range of different audiences and contexts. Our challenges are to boost the postgraduate numbers and to boost the international student numbers. These will be some of the issues that we as a Faculty can attempt to face in the immediate future.

Cheers,

Lorraine

