



ED NEWS

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Since the last *Ed News* there are a number of causes for congratulation. Margaret Robertson was approved through the Vice-Chancellor's Office and through the Academic Board of the University as a full Professor and has been awarded the title, Professor of Education. I sent around to staff earlier a list of Margaret's achievements since joining this Faculty and I am sure that it is clear why this appointment is so well deserved. We congratulate Margaret on this appointment. Chris Campbell and Glyn Thomas have both passed their doctorates and we congratulate them on this achievement. It is also noteworthy that the learning and teaching team at Albury-Wodonga has been recommended to go forward in presenting an application for the Carrick Awards following their successful University Learning and Teaching Award.

Preparation for putting up teams of staff for the Research Quality Framework (RQF) exercise is now well underway and staff are working hard to put together the requisite data and justification for inclusion in the Faculty submission. We have been fortunate to have the assistance and mentoring of Professor Richard Bates from Deakin University in assisting the Associate Dean (Research) and her team to gather data, evidence and material for what is a massive task. The University will have a process in place to select from the groups that submit for the RQF and to decide which groups will finally be put up for the audit in 2008. We thank Professor Margaret Robertson for her effort in leading this activity and for her guidance and expertise in putting the data together into a coherent and convincing presentation for this Faculty.

The Organisational Change Impact Statement (OCIS) for the academic restructure of the Faculty is currently with Human Resources and the University Council Executive for approval to be released to all staff for the formal discussion period. It is hoped that by at least mid June this document will be circulated to all staff in the Faculty. The OCIS for the administrative restructure is also well on the way towards completion and will be submitted to HR and the University Council Executive within the next week or so prior to distribution to all staff. Following this, discussion will be held across the Faculty and written comments will be invited and may be forwarded to the Office of the Dean (dean.edu@latrobe.edu.au).

The Faculty is currently at 101.9% of target and thus, wherever mid-year enrolments can be achieved, they should be pursued to ensure that we do not fall below 100% of Commonwealth Supported Places (CSP) by the final census date in Semester 2. The Commonwealth Government's budget did not hold many positives for teacher education. The

recommendations for increases in the amount of HECS for a teacher education student which came through the report of the bi-partisan inquiry into teacher education, which was released last year, were largely ignored. The inability for education to impose the additional 25% above HECS which all other disciplines except nursing can currently impose, remains unchanged. The additional few hundred dollars per student towards practicum expenses comes with strings attached in the form of the so-called "independent" body, *Teaching Australia* auditing all teacher education courses and marking them according to their level of what is perceived to be "good teaching and learning practices" demonstrated in the course. This means that any additional funding is competitively bargained for by all Universities with teacher education courses. This will also have the potential to rank and sort courses and make some more desirable and prestigious in the eyes of the applicants and of course the employers, than others. These are all dangerous directions especially considering that *Teaching Australia* gains its funding from the Commonwealth Government hence its level of "independence" is highly questionable. The newly introduced education endowment fund is also to be competitively bargained for and is likely to replace some of the direct block grant funding which currently flows to universities.

It is clear that an over-reliance on Commonwealth Supported funds into the future is dangerous and thus increasing the numbers of postgraduate coursework, research, international and full fee-paying students is crucial across the Faculty as a whole. The Vice Chancellor's Green Paper is due at the end of June or early July and in that we expect the directions for this University for the next 5 years to be clearly outlined. Faculties, Schools and Campuses will then be called upon to review all plans in light of the directions set in the Vice Chancellor's paper. It is also expected that a new University budget model will be brought in as from 2009. This is an era of change at all levels and remaining a strong and viable Faculty with sustainable processes and programs is a challenge which it is hoped the proposed Faculty re-structure will assist us to meet. Thank you to all for your continued efforts and commitment to learning, teaching and research within this Faculty.

Cheers,
Lorraine.