

Faculty of Education

Research Bulletin

Big event month!

In the Faculty of Education research calendars November (and early December) is the big event month. The list includes:

- Finalising student assessments, including honors dissertations
- Completing faculty research projects and writing the reports
- Post-graduate scholarship rankings
- Conferences including AARE (several staff are presenting papers)
- International conferences at NIE Singapore, Bangkok and beyond
AND the Retreat

The Retreat

The Faculty Retreat for Scholarship of Research and Learning and Teaching was conducted at the Beechworth campus on Monday and Tuesday (20th and 21st Nov.). Representing all campuses, fifty-two staff attended this important event on the research calendar for 2006. Participants were encouraged to be actively involved in describing their preferred research scholarship environment and suggesting ways forward to meet their needs.

Photographs of participants can be viewed at <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/education/research/retreat06>.

Providing the wider university research contexts were presentations from the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research, Professor Erich Weigold and Director of the IAS and Chair of the Research Higher Degrees and Post-Graduate Studies Committee, Professor Gilah Leder.

Professor Weigold described the Research Quality Framework process including implications for staffing, forward planning and strategies for increasing research productivity. The recent ministerial release of the RQF timetable means that La Trobe now has a framework from which to prepare for the first audit. The cut-off for this audit is March 31st, 2007. Research activity for all staff who are employed at La Trobe at this time at Level B or higher will be counted for the 2000-2006 output period. Full details of the RQF can be found on the Research website at <https://www.latrobe.edu.au/rgso/rqf/>. Some of the details have changed with recent announcements, however, the evidence portfolio will be based on outputs for the period January 1st, 2000 – December 31st, 2006.

Professor Leder described some 'myths' about academics' working lives with evidence from a research study indicating time 'on task' for various activities. The disturbing feature of this study was the disproportionate amount of time spent on administrative tasks. While these may be an important part of our working lives and an essential requirement of our responsibilities the need to streamline and work 'smarter' was the clear message. The teaching side of the scholarship equation was provided by Professor Lorraine Ling. Professor Ling referred to the Boyer notion of scholarship and distributed a paper to participants. Copies are available. Further information on the Boyer constructs can be accessed from <http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/about/index.asp>. Copies of Professor Ling's paper are available from Rebecca Townsend at R.Townsend@latrobe.edu.au.

Highlights included the cross-campus sharing and interactions between staff during formal sessions and the breaks. The parkland setting and the facilities at Beechworth provide a superb environment for reflection, conversation and debate.

Outcomes and Recommendations



Dr Margaret Robertson
Associate Dean (Research)

Participants provided a varied feedback on the faculty research change process. There appeared to be tacit agreement of the need for a structure (clusters or modification) and links with research active staff for advice. To make the process of conducting research several recommendations were made which are currently being considered by the Dean and Heads of School.

These included the following (not in priority order):

1. Senior and active researchers need to be clearly accessible and available to share their expertise and mentor early career researchers.
2. We need a common timetabled period which is 'free' of teaching and available for research sharing.
3. The Faculty research (portal) website needs a major overhaul.
4. Online sharing using podcasts and 'groupshare' software needs to be installed to facilitate sharing across campuses.
5. We need a strategic plan that targets visionary thinking that can better international standards.
6. Active researchers should be encouraged to share their research activities.

More news on progress in the next Bulletin.

Grants - money available NOW in the 2006 budget!!



**Don't let this be a burden....
"Be a winner today"**

**Expressions of Interest forms are on the Faculty Research
web page**

- * Starter grants
- * Writers' workshops
- * ARC seed funding

Research Snippets

Congratulations to Dr Ria Hanewald for having her paper accepted for publication in the Applied Linguistics Association of Australia post-conference book. Title *Facilitating Synergy of Local and International Postgraduate Students Through Best Practice In Tertiary Teaching And Learning Environments* by Ria Hanewald & Christiane Momberg
AND Dr Wan NG and colleagues have done it again!!

More money for research – wonderful news.

Wan writes:

"Just letting you know that I will be getting another \$60 000 from the DEST funded ASISTM grants for the project 'Emerging Sciences for Middle Years' for 2007. The three schools involved are Balwyn High School, Balwyn Primary School and Balwyn North Primary, School, and NanoVic is a partner organisation. This brings to date for 2006-2007 a total of over \$330,000 in ASISTM grant for Science & Technology education for SES. Every project has some research funds tied to it only needs time to write up articles!!" **[Editor's note: Wan now has access to the Writers' Workshop funds to help with this important part of the research process – her application is in already]**

Finally, **GOOD LUCK** to all our colleagues who are presenting conference papers at AARE in Adelaide and other places near and far. Reports will be very welcome for our last Bulletin for 2006.

**Comments and inputs very much welcomed.
Best wishes.....**