

Faculty of Education

Research Bulletin



"The tragedy of life is not death; it is destined for us all. The tragedy of life is to die with convictions undeclared and service unfulfilled."

- Ernest L. Boyer, Sr. at Messiah College, 1928-1995

Emerging Researcher of the Year Award

Congratulations to Dr Athena Vongalis-Macrow on receiving the inaugural Emerging Researcher of the Year Award. A certificate will be presented at the next Annual Awards and Prizes Ceremony on the Bundoora campus. Athena also receives a monetary award of \$2,500.

The RQF is hot news this week

The Research Quality Framework – the final specifications are available. We now know the panel composition and timeline. The submission will leave the University in January and the outcome announced by the Minister in November, 2008. It is happening!! Our panel is as follows:

11.LAW, EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL PRACTICES

Panel 11 – Law, Education and Professional Practices consists of 13 disciplines including:

Education Studies;
Curriculum Studies;
Professional Development of Teachers;
Other Education;
Journalism, Communication and Media;
Librarianship and Curatorial Studies;
Other Journalism, Librarianship and Curatorial studies;
Social Work;
Law;
Professional Development of Law Practitioners;
Justice and Legal Studies;
Law Enforcement; and
Other Law, Justice and Law Enforcement.

As you can see we are 'clumped' in with disciplines that have at best a tangential link with education. The Panel Chair is Professor Hillary Charlesworth (Law) from ANU. In the panel of 12 people there

are 3 Professors of Education. For full details including the definitions of the research assessment process see:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/research_sector/policies_issues_reviews/key_issues/research_quality_framework/

Workloads and definition of 'research active'

After this interesting reading you may not be surprised to hear that many University's schools and faculties are using the RQF guidelines for their definition of 'research active'. This is particularly relevant for the current workload discussion. To refresh your mind our current definition is:

From 2007, for a staff member to be designated 'research active' he/she will need to have:

- *published at least one (C1, B) DEST publication in the last year;*
- or*
- *an average of five publications (C1 or B) in the last five year period;*
- or*
- *have published one research related book (B) in the last three years.*

There is opportunity for input to discussion on changes but it will need to be soon as workload decisions are close to being finalised.

What's on the Calendar?

Faculty Research Retreat – Friday September 28th, Bendigo Campus, Ironbark Centre, 10.00 am – 4.30 pm

University Research Grants – applications close October 19. More info below.

University PhD Scholarships – applications close 31st October. More info below.

Faculty Research Grants

Applications for research support in 2008 have been reviewed and letters to recipients are currently 'in the mail'. All applicants are to be commended for their efforts and commitment to developing their research profiles as 'research active' staff.

University Research Grants - Applications are due October 19th

The process requires submission to the Faculty for initial feedback before final submission. For details see <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/rgso/grants/ltu-schemes.htm>. Advice: read the guidelines and follow them slavishly! These grants are a brilliant opportunity to learn the research ropes. I hope we have at least 5 submissions!

"The La Trobe University Research Grants Scheme (LTURGS) supports high quality research projects in all disciplines at the University, but with a strong focus on those in [areas of research strength](#). The objectives of the LTURGS are to:

- *support, on a competitive basis, staff newly appointed to the University (ie. who commenced since 1 January 2005), and Early Career Researchers who are not named as a Chief Investigator on an externally funded award and show clear evidence of high research capacity; and*
- *provide support for pilot research projects of modest cost conducted by researchers who are not named as a Chief Investigator on an externally funded award; and*
- *encourage the development of grant application skills. "*

University PhD Scholarships

The closing date for applications for the Australian Postgraduate Award and the La Trobe University Postgraduate Research Scholarship for students commencing in 2007 is the 31st October 2007. If you know of anyone who may be a potential applicant please advertise. We need to make sure that our allocation remains in the Faculty for 2008 and beyond!

For details see:

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/rgso/scholarships.htm#Scholarships>

A Research Day will be held at the Bendigo Campus this Friday 28th September The purpose of the research day is to provide support for individual staff or group current research needs, and to identify future needs/ opportunities. For example, are there future international conferences where we can present a symposium on a linked theme? No formal presentations are planned, but the intention is to have some group discussions and/or individual consultations. Please contact Gail McNaulty if you are able to attend.

University 'break' week

This week is University 'break' week which roughly speaking translates into catch-up time. This may mean marking and assessment and lots of meetings. I hope it also provides an incentive for 'time-out' to locate dusty research drafts and move them along towards submission for publication. Sometimes a little inspiration works. In education the works of Ernest L. Boyer are helpful for making sense of our complex jobs.

Boyer's contributions to our understanding of scholarship remain significant. In his view there are four interacting elements in scholarship. They are particularly relevant in our field of education where research informs practice. Brief excerpts follow (for full text see

<http://www.ptjournal.org/cgi/content/full/84/6/571>

DISCOVERY: *The scholarship of discovery, at its best, contributes not only to the stock of human knowledge but also to the intellectual climate of a college or university. Not just the outcomes, but the process, and especially the passion, give meaning to the effort. The advancement of knowledge can generate an almost palpable excitement in the life of an educational institution.*

INTEGRATION: *By integration, we mean making connections across the disciplines, placing the specialties in larger context, illuminating data in a revealing way, often educating non-specialists, too. In calling for a scholarship of integration, we do not suggest returning to the "gentleman scholar" [sic] of an earlier time, nor do we have in mind the dilettante. Rather, what we mean is serious, disciplined work that seeks to interpret, draw together, and bring new insight to bear on original research.*

APPLICATION: *The first two kinds of scholarship—discovery and integration of knowledge—reflect the investigative and synthesizing traditions of academic life. The third element, the application of knowledge, moves toward engagement as the scholar asks, "How can knowledge be responsibly applied to consequential problems? How can it be helpful to individuals as well as institutions?" And further, "Can social problems themselves define an agenda for scholarly investigation?"*

SCHOLARSHIP: *Finally, we come to the scholarship of teaching. The work of the professor becomes consequential only as it is understood by others. Yet, today, teaching is often viewed as a routine function, tacked on, something almost anyone can do. When defined as scholarship, however, teaching both educates and entices future scholars. Indeed, as Aristotle said, "Teaching is the highest form of understanding."*

Perhaps the wisdom in Boyer's work can be applied to discussions around workloads and also help us make sense of our competing time demands!!

Cheers,

