

La Trobe University
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Teaching and Learning Plan 2007

Introduction

During the planning period we will continue to attract and retain a capable, diverse student cohort. Through the excellence of our programs and our teaching and by adopting strong student-centred approaches we will produce distinguished graduates who will make a difference to their communities.

Objective: To achieve excellent learning outcomes

Strategies :

1. To develop and maintain a culture that values and rewards quality teaching and learning by

Staff

- 1.1. developing and implementing regular peer review of teaching throughout the faculty.
- 1.2. promoting, encouraging and supporting application for Faculty, University and Carrick teaching awards.
- 1.3. Encouraging applications for Carrick grants
- 1.4. Increasing participation in learning and teaching training activities

Students:

- 1.5. articulating student learning goals clearly, and evaluating student work in accordance with Faculty Grade descriptors. Modes of assessment and measures for assessing them will be further developed in accordance with good educational practice.
- 1.6. continuing to offer scholarships that reward high academic achievement.
- 1.7. expanding opportunities to recognise student academic achievement.
- 1.8. identifying and encouraging high achieving students early in their degree as potential honours students

2. To make maximum use of research and university data to inform teaching enhancement by

- 2.1. continuing to develop staff familiarity with CEQ outcomes

- 2.2. conducting colloquia to acquaint staff with new developments in the scholarship of Teaching and Learning
 - 2.3. collecting and analyzing data regarding student withdrawal, retention and progression at the subject and program level
 - 2.4. Undertaking focused research to obtain student input regarding preferences regarding subject delivery, design, content etc
3. To strengthen support structures, including technology and other infrastructure, to enhance student learning by
- 3.1. developing a Faculty strategic directions statement for the use of technologies to enable learning and teaching.
 - 3.2. identifying and where possible working with student mode preferences and flexibility concerns.
 - 3.3. making consistent use of official student email addresses.
 - 3.4. ensuring the online handbook is accurate and version control in place, and that every unit outline is drawn from a single authoritative source.
 - 3.5. ensuring that all undergraduate units have an online presence in the university L.M.S by end of 2007, and all core/essential undergraduate unit materials are provided online.
 - 3.6. further developing support for innovation in Learning and Teaching, including the use of technology.

Objective: To be the University of choice in the communities we serve

Strategies :

- 1. To monitor and anticipate changing community demand for higher education by
 - 1.1. identifying new and emerging areas of demand
- 2. To review and restructure course offerings to ensure sustainability and strategic focus by
 - 2.1. reviewing and restructuring course offerings to ensure sustainability and strategic focus.
 - 2.2. developing sustainable and strategically focused 1st year programs
 - 2.3. establishing a discipline profile for the Faculty
 - 2.4. reviewing policies and processes, and course and unit approval.
 - 2.5. continuing to embed graduate attributes in all undergraduate programs
 - 2.6. developing the provision of cross campus teaching in appropriate subjects
 - 2.7. developing subjects that can form the part of more than one major

- 2.8. reviewing trends and levels of enrolments in subjects and programs
3. To strengthen the focus on life-long and continued learning by increasing flexibility in programs and delivery by
 - 3.1. developing courses with flexible pathways and multiple entry and exit points.
 - 3.2. reviewing current practices and developing strategies for new entry pathways and articulation.
 - 3.3. reviewing and consolidating provision of academic skills support at all campuses.
 - 3.4. developing interdisciplinary courses/programs.
 - 3.5. encouraging Faculty collaboration with international Universities.
4. To monitor and promote participation of students from under-represented groups by
 - 4.1. promoting and extending an 'inclusive curriculum'.
 - 4.2. providing learning materials which are accessible to disabled students.
 - 4.3. ensuring a high quality experience and appropriate support for all students.
 - 4.4. actively promoting strategies for expanding participation.
 - 4.5. identifying barriers to participation and developing targeted participation scholarships.
 - 4.6. Providing comprehensive information about expectations and requirements of learning experience in handbook.

B. Graduate Attributes

The Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences aims to produce graduates with the following attributes:

1. Effective communication in writing, speech, and/or other media across a range of genres.
2. Problem solving skills.
3. Social, ethical and cultural understanding of self and others.
4. The ability to work as a team member.
5. The ability to work independently.
6. Planning and time management skills.
7. The ability to use a range of techniques to tap creative ideas
8. The ability to perform critical analysis and synthesis, and develop and evaluate arguments.
9. The ability to locate information relevant to the question at hand.
10. An interest in life-long learning and in understanding the global context of learning and knowledge.

C. Uniform Faculty Learning and Teaching Policies

Program Coordinators must

1. Report on Coursework Teaching: by mid-February each year, provide a report to their Head of School on the previous year's coursework teaching in their Program. (Where a subject is taught at a rural or regional campus, a copy of the report should also be forwarded to the Head of Faculty at the campus.) The report should comment on:

- i. **Results** in each subject (percentages in each grade from A to NS, and the various withdrawal and special classifications) with a breakdown by campus where applicable
- ii. **Anomalies** including variation across campuses
- iii. **Changes** made to the subject since it was last taught, the reasons for the changes, and any apparent effects of these

- iv. **Analysis of student evaluations** (where applicable, with a breakdown by campus) and plans for future changes to the subject in the light of student comment or other considerations.

2. Appoint Student Advisers: appoint staff to be available to students during enrolment and reenrolment periods and to advise on discipline-specific matters throughout the year.

3. Make provision for Student Consultation: ensure that non-casual teaching staff:

- i. **set aside at least two hours each week** for student consultation without appointment during any semester (including examination period) in which they are teaching;
- ii. **post these “office hours” on their doors** and, normally, on the Program web site;
- iii. **make available a reasonable amount of further time** for student consultation by appointment, including, where applicable, making arrangements for students from other campuses to consult by e-mail, telephone, and in person during visits to regional campuses.

4. Induct new staff: ensure that all new staff, including casual staff:

- i. **are inducted** into University, Library, Faculty, School and Program procedures;
- ii. **have adequate training** in their teaching and marking duties through ADU and/or Program-based training schemes if they are inexperienced teachers;
- iii. **have a designated mentor** whom they can rely upon for support and advice during their first year in the Program.

Honours Co-ordinators must:

1. Report on Honours outcomes

by the end of April each year, supply a brief pro forma report to the Associate Dean (Academic) on the honours (and joint honours) results for the preceding year. This report will include

- i. numbers in each honours grade
- ii. numbers of students who have taken up higher degree studies at La Trobe or other universities (with and without scholarships) , and any available information about other relevant employment outcome.

Subject co-ordinators must

1. Ensure that:

- i. **A Subject Guide** and, where necessary, a Program Guide, is prepared in conformity with Faculty, School and Program requirements, made available to every student in the subject in print form, and also posted on the Program web site within a Web CT framework. Subject guides must include the following information.:

- **Aims and objectives of the subject** (including contribution to development of graduate attributes and a list of appropriate generic skills);
- **Contact details** for staff;
- **Class requirements**, times and locations;
- **Assessment** scheme including, in subjects offered at more than one year level, a clear statement of the different expectations of student performance at each year level;
- **Submission dates and submission procedures** for all work other than examinations;
- **Marking policy** including Faculty grade criteria, extensions, late submission penalties, double-marking and re-marking on appeal;
- **Return of marked work:** procedures

- **Subject resources**, including a reading list and information about web-based materials and how to access them;
 - **Writing conventions** in the discipline, including requirements for referencing, use of direct quotation etc.;
 - How to avoid **plagiarism** and other forms of academic misconduct.
- ii. Appropriate class rooms and times are requested for the subject;
- iii. Students are assigned to tutorials, seminars and workshops as necessary;
- iv. Adequate consultation time with tutors and other staff is provided including, where necessary, electronic or telephonic consultation;
- v. Written work submitted by students is returned promptly and with informative comment;
- vi. Students are advised of all changes to arrangements due to staff illness, changes of teaching rooms, etc
- vii. School and Program policy regarding assessment is adhered to, including standardization procedures, double-marking and re-marking on appeal;
- viii. Final Results in the subject are available in good time for submission to the Chief Examiner;
- ix. A report is prepared for the Program Coordinator no later than the end of December in the year in which the subject is taught. (Where a subject is taught at a rural or regional campus, a copy of the report should be forwarded to the Head of Faculty at the campus and to the Associate Dean — Regions.) The report must include:
 - **the results in each subject** (percentages in each grade from A to NS, and the various withdrawal and special classifications) with a breakdown by campus where applicable;
 - **analysis of and comment** upon the results, especially noting anomalies;

- **comment upon any changes** made to the subject since it was last taught, the reasons for the changes and any apparent effects of these;
- **an analysis of student evaluations** (where applicable) and plans for future changes to the subject in the light of student comment or other considerations.

Marking Policies:

7. Late Penalties: Except in the case of work required for a particular class, such as a class paper or journal where late submission is not practicable, a late penalty of 2% of the available marks applies for each working day beyond the due date (either original or extended) up to but not exceeding ten working days. Work submitted more than ten working days after the due date (either original or extended) will not be accepted. Extensions will normally be granted to students who have medical or comparably serious reasons for seeking an extension, but not otherwise. The Subject Coordinator will normally consider applications for extension of time, and these will normally be sought prior to the due date; however, extensions may be granted retrospectively at the discretion of the Subject Coordinator, Program Coordinator or Head of School.

8. Marking procedures: In subjects from first to third year level the all individual written work worth 25% or more of the available marks must be marked in the following manner. It is the responsibility of Schools to ensure that where non-written work, such as a performance, is assessable, comparable procedures are adopted to ensure reliable assessment.

- All student work will be marked in accordance with Faculty Grade descriptors.
- Double-marking** of all As and Ns; this need not be “blind”, but may simply be a check on the appropriateness of the mark;
- In the event of disagreement**

- the markers are to discuss the work and attempt to arrive at an agreed mark which will then stand;
 - where agreement cannot be reached on the mark, the result will be the average of the two marks provided the markers agree on the grade;
 - where agreement on the grade cannot be reached the Program Coordinator (or Head of School if the Program Coordinator is one of the markers) will appoint a third marker who will, after considering the opinions of the two previous markers and the work in question, act as an adjudicator and determine the final mark;
- iv. **Assessment meeting:** subject co-ordinators must arrange a meeting of all staff involved in assessment in the subject to discuss criteria and to expose new markers to the expectations of the subject;
- v. **New markers will be involved in cross-marking** with an experienced marker either at the assessment meeting or by submitting a sample of their marked work to an experienced examiner before returning it to students.

9. Appeals: In subjects from first to third year level students have the right to appeal against the initial mark given to any piece of work worth 20% or more of the available marks, or against their final mark for the subject. Normally, an appeal must be in writing, must set out the reasons for the appeal, and must be submitted to the Subject Coordinator not more than ten working days after students have been informed that the work is available for collection. If the Subject Coordinator is the original marker the appeal should be to the Program Coordinator, and in the event that this person should be the original marker the appeal should be to the Head of School. If, in the opinion of the person dealing with the appeal a case has been made, the following procedure must be observed:

- i. **A second marker** will be appointed and the work marked “blind”;
- ii. **In the event of disagreement** the markers are to discuss the work and attempt to arrive at an agreed mark which will then stand;
- iii. **Where agreement cannot be reached on the mark**, but there is agreement on the grade, the result will only be lower than the original mark if both

markers agree on this, otherwise it will be the average of the two marks or the original mark which ever is the higher;

- iv. **Where agreement on the grade cannot be reached** the Program Coordinator (or Head of School if the Program Coordinator is one of the markers) will appoint a third marker who will, after considering the opinions of the two previous markers and the work in question, act as an adjudicator and determine the final mark;
- v. **Students who are unsatisfied** with the outcome of this process are to be advised of their right to appeal to the University Ombudsman

11. Response to written work: With the exception of work produced under examination conditions, individual pieces of work worth less than 20% of the available marks, and work submitted late, markers of written work should normally provide sufficient written comment to assist the student to learn from the exercise and to justify the grade assigned. However, in the case of work submitted at the end of a subject, the Subject Coordinator may decide that detailed comment will not be provided except at the request of the student. In this case students are to be provided with a clear opportunity to request normal written comments.