

Edition 2 – May 2008

Curriculum and Course Reviews	1
From Carrick to...	1
More bouquets	2
More RADICAL suggestions	2
And more technical difficulties	2
Workshops for the new Assessment Policy	3

Curriculum and Course Reviews



The University's Strategic Plan outlines the bold ambition to review every degree program to ensure that each is 'sustainable, high quality and relevant'. It also outlines the Institutional Values which will guide our teaching, including 'social justice, equal opportunity, cultural diversity and environmental sustainability'. We now need to translate this vision into explicit principles and guidelines for the review and renewal of our teaching and learning programs.

In the middle of this year I will establish a curriculum taskforce which will lead a process of consultation and debate to define these principles. I imagine that it will focus both on defining the principles of good curriculum design, teaching and assessment, as well as identifying any specific learning opportunities and/or outcomes that we agree should be part of the student experience at La Trobe.

Once we have defined our curriculum principles we will be able to adopt a far more systematic and well informed process to review the sustainability, quality and relevance of our courses. These reviews will begin in earnest in 2009. Under the leadership of Professor Tom Angelo, the new Centre for Teaching, Learning and Curriculum will design a streamlined and well supported review process, based on what Tom defines as a **RADICAL** approach:

**Reducing
Administrivial
Documentation and
Inefficient
Committee work to
Advance
Learning**

From Carrick to....

While there were some who objected to the Carrick Institute for Learning and Teaching in Higher Education being named after a still living Liberal Minister from the Fraser Government (and as many who had never heard of him), we might have hoped for something less anodyne than the new name – **The Australian Learning and Teaching Council**. Hard to know what the abbreviation could be... The change was required because another member of the Carrick family had already established something called the Carrick Institute here in Melbourne and there was growing confusion.

More importantly La Trobe staff are continuing to develop applications for the different granting schemes, and are increasingly successful. We will let everyone know once the ALTC part of our Teaching and Learning website is up and running.

Office of the
Deputy Vice-Chancellor
(Academic)

03 9479 3447
learn teach@latrobe.edu.au

More bouquets

On Wednesday 21 May at 5.30pm (on the Dance Floor on the 3rd floor of the David Myers Building) there will be a ceremony to present the La Trobe Citations for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning to the 2008 recipients. It was a great pleasure for me to find out about the work of these staff:

Adrian Jones and James Leibold from H&SS; Thomas Fisher and Rajiv Khosla from L&M; Fiona Bird, Susan Lawler, John McDonald, Luke Prendergast. Katherine Seaton and a team involving Robert Glaisher, Rodney Lindrea, David Osborne, Glenys Shirley, Sabine Wilkens and Chris Bradley from STE.

My warmest congratulations to you all.

More RADICAL suggestions.

Following a request from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, a proposal is being developed to allow Faculties to take over some of the unit and minor course change approvals which currently come to Academic Committee. The current policy requires that all new units and revisions to units, as well as minor course changes, must be approved by Academic Committee. This involves wheelbarrow loads of administrative documentation being submitted, which is then wheeled (metaphorically) round to Academic Services who do the work of checking against the guidelines. Once checked the wheelbarrows come out again for proposals to be forwarded to Academic Committee, where I am told there is generally very little discussion.

Clearly we need to ensure that we have adequate quality controls in place, that faculties do not become too creative with the ASCED codes they propose, and that they do not start pinching the core disciplines of other faculties. With the assistance of Bruce Carboon (Director of Academic Services) and Raelene Reece (Registrar H&SS) and under the watchful eye of Julie Jackson (PVC Quality Enhancement), a proposal will be forwarded to Academic Committee (and eventually Academic Board) which might meet the RADICAL criterion.

And more technical difficulties...

It has become increasingly clear that we really do have a serious disconnect between academic staff and their plans to use audio visual and information technologies to support their teaching and the staff who install and maintain these technologies, not to mention the process by which the university decides to invest in particular technologies. While we work collaboratively to make these relationships absolutely clear and to devise policies and processes which will prevent staff discovering at the last minute that they cannot do what they had planned, I would like to repeat one key point I made in the first newsletter:

Newsletter from the Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)

Teaching involving any significant technological support should be discussed in advance with both your faculty IT support staff and ICT to ensure that appropriate technical capacity or support in fact exists. The first point of contact in ICT is Max Colebourn, Director, Teaching Technology Services (m.colebourn@latrobe.edu.au extension 9793).

In my dreams this means that no academic staff member will be sending a distressed email to everyone during the first week of Semester 2 announcing that their teaching plans have been knocked sideways by the discovery that they cannot communicate with their students.

Workshops for the new Assessment Policy

The University's new Assessment Policy (www.latrobe.edu.au/policies/) now needs to be implemented. Members of the Academic Development Unit are available to meet with groups of staff (perhaps as part of Faculty or School meetings) to outline key aspects of the Policy, and to help identify the kinds of assessment practices that the School or Faculty would like to review. These might include student feedback, summative or formative assessment, and criterion-based assessment. The ADU will then work with staff on these aspects of assessment.

Please contact Dr Erika Martens on #2323 or e.martens@latrobe.edu.au to arrange a suitable time for ADU staff to introduce the Policy.