



Newsletter

Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor
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Edition 1 | March 2009

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The consultations are producing fairly consistent responses, helping us identify which recommendations have widespread support as well as those which require clarification or further debate. This feedback will help shape the White Paper to come to Academic Board in May. In the meantime, given the questions raised about how widely supported recommendations could be implemented, I have convened a working party to develop a detailed implementation plan to be released at the same time as the White Paper.

If you haven't had an opportunity yet to share your thoughts or concerns about the Green Paper, I encourage you to email me at dvcac@latrobe.edu.au.

Curriculum Pilot Projects

Leading on from the Curriculum Taskforce work in 2008, 10 curriculum pilot projects, representing each of the Faculties and the Library, have been established for 2009. On February 13 representatives from each project met with CTLC Director and Pro-Vice Chancellor (Curriculum and Academic Planning), Professor Tom Angelo, to discuss the required design elements and methodology to be used to manage each project.

The CTLC has appointed project managers to assist each project team with the development of a detailed project plan and budget, and to negotiate a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Most projects will soon start collecting data, reviewing and redesigning curricula. It is anticipated that each project will be completed by the end of November with project teams presenting their findings and recommendations at the 2009 Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Colloquium (to be held on Dec 3rd and 4th).

Green Paper Consultations

Following the launch of the Green Paper on Curriculum Review and Renewal in December, Tom Angelo and I have embarked on a schedule of faculty, school and campus consultations. So far, we are meeting staff who are keen to engage with the educational principles that underlie the recommendations, who have important questions about some of them, and concerns and suggestions about how they could be implemented within their disciplines.



Registrar and Deans hard at work....

New staff development programs for 2009

During 2008 the Academic Development Unit and its programs were reviewed and restructured, and the Curriculum Teaching and Learning Centre was established. The highest level program offered, the Graduate Certificate in Higher Education, has been reviewed and will be re-launched shortly. Meanwhile, since the start of the year new shorter programs have been attracting high levels of interest:

- 48 teaching staff enrolled in the new three-day *Effective Teaching at La Trobe University: Practical, Research-based Strategies*.
- More than 250 tutors and demonstrators participated in *Effective Tutoring at La Trobe* workshops; sharing their experiences and strategies for more effective teaching of students in small groups
- 61 staff attended orientation for the new lecture theatre consoles provided by the Flexible Teaching and Learning Team of the CTLC.

Any staff who missed out on this round of workshops or who are interested in attending future sessions should check the CTLC web pages <http://www.latrobe.edu.au/ctlc/> for updates or send an email to learn teach@latrobe.edu.au

Sustainability Taskforce

I am very pleased to say that the Vice-Chancellor has supported the establishment of a Sustainability Taskforce to ensure that the value the University has explicitly placed on sustainability is translated into sustained and integrated action plans. The Sustainability Taskforce will take an integrated and systematic University approach, building on the excellent local initiatives that are already in place.

We are fortunate at La Trobe to have many experts in sustainability, and one of them, Carol Adams, Professor of Accounting and Sustainable Development Strategy, has agreed to chair this Taskforce. The focus of the Sustainability Taskforce is as much on the operations of the University as on research and teaching, and I am delighted that senior officers with responsibility for buildings and

grounds, procurement and other critical portfolios, have agreed to work together on this. Watch out for forthcoming announcements about this Taskforce and ways in which we hope to mobilise the knowledge and influence of staff across the institution to achieve explicit and ambitious targets.

Promotions Policy and Procedures

In some parts of the University, particularly Health Sciences, the focus on preparing graduates for professional practice requires the appointment of academic staff who are also expert practitioners themselves. Our current appointment and promotions policies provide no guidance on how to determine the appropriate level for such staff, so I have asked a small working party to see if the proposed promotions policy could be adapted to include practitioner focussed appointments and promotions. This work will cause a minor delay in bringing the full proposal to Academic Board, but allow time for some further consultation around the changes.

At the same time I am preparing a proposal on the future of Personal Chairs at La Trobe, as requested by Academic Board. For the present, applications for promotion to Level E and submissions for consideration for Personal Chairs are not being accepted. Applications for promotion to Level E will, of course, be considered later this year, along with all other levels.

Report of the Review of Academic Language and Learning Support (ALLS)

Over the months that the Curriculum Taskforce met last year, it became increasingly obvious that there was a group of staff working across all campuses that would be critical to the success of any curriculum reforms. These are the staff who provide academic language and learning support to our students, as well as educational advice to our teaching staff. They are probably better known to you as LAS/ESL or Study Skills Advisers.

In order to gain a better understanding of the work they do, and how they can best support the strategic

goals of the University, I asked Dr Kay Souter, Associate Dean (Academic), Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, to chair a comprehensive review late last year.

The report of the review can be found at www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/dvca/reports.html

In summary, the review panel found that the work of ALLS staff was highly valued by both staff and students. It made a number of recommendations about how this work could better support the University's teaching and learning priorities, and how it might be provided in the most equitable way possible.

Over the next couple of months I will be consulting with Deans, Associate Deans, Campus Directors, ALLS staff and other stakeholders to consider the report's recommendations. I encourage you to be part of the process by reading the report and sending your feedback to me at dvcac@latrobe.edu.au.

Bradley Review

Even if you haven't read the Bradley Review cover to cover, by now I'm sure you're aware of its main recommendations. As the Vice-Chancellor reported on 17 December in his University email, they are largely consistent with many of La Trobe's strategic goals, particularly around promoting higher participation rates, social inclusion, new pathways into higher education, and significantly increased funding of various kinds.

The Minister for Education is now consulting with Vice-Chancellors and other groups before the Government releases its response next month. Sadly, many of the specific proposals for increased funding will likely fall victim to the global financial crisis, meaning that other proposals will require extremely careful scrutiny.

2009 Learning and Teaching Performance Fund

We were pleased to be informed a fortnight ago that the University will be allocated \$2.48m from the 2009 Learning and Teaching Performance Fund (LTPF). The allocations have been unpredictable in the past and this year was no exception. The inclusion of a new 'improvement' measure worked in the University's favour, with La Trobe receiving \$1.4m for its improvement in all discipline groupings on this measure. The only disciplines scoring well enough to receive 'excellence' funding were humanities, arts and education. And in these disciplines our performance was best in relation to the percentage of our students continuing in full or part-time study or finding full-time employment.

These LTPF monies will be used to support the work faculties are doing to implement the University's strategic priorities in teaching and learning over the next three years, since there is no guarantee that the LTPF will continue in its present form into 2010. We will also recognise the particular contribution made by humanities, arts and education to our success.

