



Newsletter

Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor
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White Paper on Curriculum Review and Renewal adopted by Academic Board

There was spirited debate at Academic Board last Wednesday about whether the University should add 'quantitative reasoning/literacy' to the list of shared graduate capabilities for all La Trobe undergraduate programs. Even though the motion was lost, it was good to see the Board debating these important topics, and I think we can safely say that the debate is not over. Meanwhile there would appear to be very strong support for all 15 of the White Paper recommendations. All that remains is to begin the lengthy process of implementation!

Seriously - we have now set ourselves some very ambitious goals for curriculum review and renewal. I am confident the implementation of the White Paper will greatly increase our effectiveness and success in educating students to high standards - while enabling staff to contribute to these goals in ways that are fulfilling in professional and personal terms.

The implementation of the White Paper recommendations will involve a set of complex and interrelated projects between now and 2013, relying on strong central co-ordination and support. We will be launching a new newsletter to keep everyone

informed of the work being done and opportunities for involvement.

The White Paper, with an appendix which identifies what happened to each of the original 34 Green Paper recommendations, and a draft implementation calendar is available at www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/curriculum/index.html

New Academic Promotions Policy and Procedures adopted, as well

At the same Academic Board Meeting support appeared to be unanimous for the new Academic Promotions Policy and Procedures, and these will be implemented for second semester this year. The new policy was designed to

- create a clear and consistent framework for career development;
- develop a transparent system for the recognition, reward and promotion of staff who excel in curriculum development and teaching
- provide clarity about what constitutes evidence of excellence in teaching, as well as university service and leadership, and external service and leadership at each level
- design more efficient and effective procedures to make it easier and less stressful for staff to make successful applications.

From now on academic staff will be able to make an application for promotion at any time of the year, and all applications will be judged by one central committee meeting on a monthly basis.

Information sessions (Q and A) will be provided at Bundoora on Thursday 28th May, 1-2pm, HUED Lecture Theatre, with videoconference links to Albury-Wodonga and Shepparton, and at Bendigo, Tuesday 2nd



June, 1-2pm, Ironbark Centre. These sessions will also be videotaped so that staff who are unable to attend can see what was discussed. Workshops for staff hoping to apply this year will be held in July, with the new Promotions Committee holding its first meeting in September.

The policy, procedures and evidence matrix can all be found on the University's policy website at: www.latrobe.edu.au/policy

Citations for Outstanding Contribution to Student Learning

Many congratulations to these staff who are the recipients of La Trobe's 2009 Citations.

- Mr Paul Emery, School of Management
- Ms Nicola McNeil, School of Management
- Dr Nora Shields, School of Physiotherapy
- Dr Ana Maria Ducasse, School of Historical and European Studies,
- Dr Alberto Gomes, School of Social Sciences
- Dr Svetlana Petelina, School of Engineering & Mathematical Sciences
- Alternative Format Service (Team Leader: Darren Britten), Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Centre

Six of these prize winners, and one from 2008, have been invited to submit applications for the national awards administered by the Australian Learning and Teaching Council. The ALTC winners will be announced later this year. Teaching Awards of this kind provide externally reviewed and independent evidence of teaching excellence and are significant in supporting applications for promotion. Staff interested in applying should contact David Hirst in the CTLC for advice. (Tel Extn. 5348, Email: d.hirst@latrobe.edu.au)

Federal Budget

Last week's Budget gave universities perhaps more than most of us expected, for both teaching and learning and research. There is relatively little detail as yet, but the Government confirmed its goal of having 40 per cent of all 25 to 34 year olds with a bachelor level qualification or higher by 2025, with a specific target of 20 per cent for students from low SES backgrounds. Approximately \$400 million in

new funds over the next four years are identified to support this low SES participation, with over three quarters of this as a financial incentive to increase low SES enrolments and ensure successful retention and completion. The Government will also make a number of changes to income support for students, particularly Youth Allowance, though these are proving contentious.

In order to improve the student experience generally, and to improve staff-student ratios, the Government plans to restore indexation by 2012. The quid pro quo will be a new Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, which among other things, will evaluate our performance in 'areas such as student selection, retention and exit standards, and graduate employment'. With the adoption of the White Paper on Curriculum Renewal, La Trobe should be well placed for this new approach to standards and performance funding. Indeed, a general theme in all the proposed extra funding is the use of pre-determined performance targets or indicators.

The Government has posted a number of documents relating to the education budget on the DEEWR website. The most helpful summary of the implications for higher education is provided in *Transforming Australia's Higher Education System*, www.deewr.gov.au/Department/Publications/Documents/TransformingAusHigherED.pdf



Vice-Chancellor, Professor Paul Johnson and Steve Gibbons MP on Budget night

Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Centre

The new Curriculum Teaching and Learning Centre has been offering a greatly increased level of service and support to academic staff. More than 450 academic staff, casual and continuing, have taken part in CTLC workshops and events this semester.

In second semester the CTLC will continue to offer

- centrally supported workshops for tutors, demonstrators and casual lecturers
- the three day workshop for continuing academics
- and will launch the new Graduate Certificate in Higher Education Curriculum Design, Teaching and Learning.

For information about the full range of CTLC offerings please see

www.latrobe.edu.au/ctlc/workshops/index.php

It is rumoured that very senior academic staff in the University may be asked to undertake the 3 day workshop to make sure they understand what it is that we are now, following the adoption of the White Paper, going to require all continuing staff to undertake.

Fortunately, the CTLC is about to reach its full staffing complement with the arrival of two new Academic and Curriculum Developers, Dr Judith Lyons and Dr Jeanette Fyffe. Jeanette (PhD in Physics, Melbourne), previously Academic Programs and Projects Coordinator with the University of Melbourne School of Graduate Research, arrives in June. Judith (PhD in Education, Monash) arrives in July from Oxford Brookes University. She has had extensive industry and higher education teaching and academic development experience, including several years at RMIT.

Teaching across more than one campus

Following my incendiary email about the need to adhere to university guidelines on the use of videoconferencing and other forms of recorded lectures there has been a great deal of useful discussion about how to ensure students on every campus have equitable opportunities to learn. I will send out a supplementary newsletter in the near future with information about how we propose to make the best of some of our less desirable practices in the short run, and how we will work with academics in the longer run to design curriculum that is not so dependent on the reproduction of lectures for students at a distance.

In the meantime, the University guidelines on videoconferencing, developed by the CTLC, can be

found at

www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/assets/downloads/Vid_eoconferencingGuidelinesVer6.pdf

Donydji

Those of you who come up the stairs to the 3rd floor of the David Myers Building will notice a change of art works on either side of the doors through to the Vice-Chancellery. Gone will be the slightly disturbing teddy bear, to be replaced by two works by Aboriginal artists. One of them, painted by noted Yolngu artist, Roy Wuyngambi Ashley, was painted in 2003 to celebrate research links between the Yolngu people of the Wagilak clans and La Trobe University. The painting reflects the importance of Dr Neville White from Molecular Sciences and his 37 years of affiliation with this community. It features two eagles – about which you learn more if you stop to look at the painting.

Neville's long standing relationship with the Donydji Homeland Centre in north-eastern Arnhem Land provides staff and students with a unique opportunity to learn about Aboriginal history and culture, and to contribute to the development and sustainability of this remote community. In 2009 a small number of staff and students from Archaeology will visit Donydji, while two young women from the community, who are determined to be teachers, will undertake professional teacher training in the Faculty of Education. On a recent visit to Melbourne, organised by Neville, they met with the Hon Jenny Macklin, as well as staff and students from Eltham High School.

La Trobe will extend its Education outreach program to assist staff and student exchanges and shared cultural experiences between Donydji and Eltham High School.



Professor Lorraine Ling (Dean, Education), Joanne and Sonia Guyula, Professor Belinda Probert, Deputy Vice-Chancellor