



Newsletter

Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor
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Edition 4 | October 2009

Design for Learning	1
Curriculum Pilot Project - Faculty of Education	1
Annual Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Colloquium	2
Staff Development Opportunities	2
Visiting Speakers	2
Language & Academic Skills	3
Encouraging Language Learning	3
Sustainability	3
Donydji	3

Design for Learning

I hope that all academic staff have received a copy of 'Design for Learning'. If you haven't, or if you are a general staff member who is interested in the curriculum review and renewal project, then please contact Sally Went (s.went@latrobe.edu.au). The four DfL Working Groups have been meeting for several weeks now, focussing on their respective agendas:

- The First Year Experience
- Curriculum Design Guidelines
- Learning Outcomes and Standards, and
- Program Mapping and Review.

Each group, with research support from the Library, has started by gathering the most significant empirical research and examples of best practice wherever they are to be found, from inside La Trobe to the other side of the world. This preparatory work will be used to inform a series of policy recommendations to be submitted to the DfL Steering Group by mid November.

Many staff have been concerned about the resources that would be made available to support this very large program of work. I am pleased to say that in budget planning for 2010-2012 substantial central teaching and learning resources are being clearly targeted to support the work that will need to be done in the

Faculties, and Faculties are themselves giving this work high priority in resource allocation.

To keep up with what is happening in DfL, you can follow developments at www.latrobe.edu.au/teaching/curriculum/dfl-project

Curriculum Pilot Project – Faculty of Education

During the preparation of the Curriculum Green Paper and subsequent White Paper, a number of pilot projects were established to test some of the Design for Learning principles in a local setting. One such project is being conducted in the Faculty of Education, and includes:

- *A more integrated curriculum approach to the whole year of a program*
- *A re-conceptualisation of assessment tasks to support learning across the program*
- *A continued investigation of skills required for the transition to being a tertiary learner*
- *Further development of the community learning dimension of the program*
- *Conceptualisation of the capstone semester that will complement the foundations set in first year.*

The project is in the final stages of reviewing the cornerstone subjects and work has already commenced on planning the capstone experiences.

A presentation will be given on the ten Curriculum Projects at the University's Annual Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Colloquium in December.

Annual Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Colloquium

The annual **Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Colloquium** will occur on December 3-4 at the John Scott Meeting House. This year's Colloquium will focus on two main themes – curriculum design and evaluation, and the student experience. The first day of the program will focus on *Design for Learning*. The Working Groups will present their proposals for curriculum design guidelines, assessing graduate attributes, enhancing the first year experience, and mapping and reviewing programs. This is an opportunity for staff to inform themselves about what is in store as *Design for Learning* is rolled out, and also to provide valuable feedback to the working groups on the proposals and how they might be implemented.

Other confirmed highlights of the program will be a student panel looking at their experiences of first year at La Trobe, the Vice-Chancellor's Awards presentation and an intriguing session called "The Pitch".

La Trobe staff (including sessional teaching staff) and postgraduate students are warmly invited to submit proposals for Colloquium presentations. To find out more go to www.latrobe.edu.au/ctlc/colloquium

Staff Development Opportunities

An impressive 112 academic staff have already completed the successful three-day workshop, *Effective Teaching for Higher Learning: Practical Research-Based Strategies*, this year. If you haven't yet participated, the Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Centre is taking registrations for two more groups this year. These workshops will be on 23-25 November and 9-11 December, both in Bundoora. More information and registration at www.latrobe.edu.au/ctlc/ Both the Vice-Chancellor and I have enrolled in the February course next year and we look forward to seeing some of our Deans and Heads of School there too...

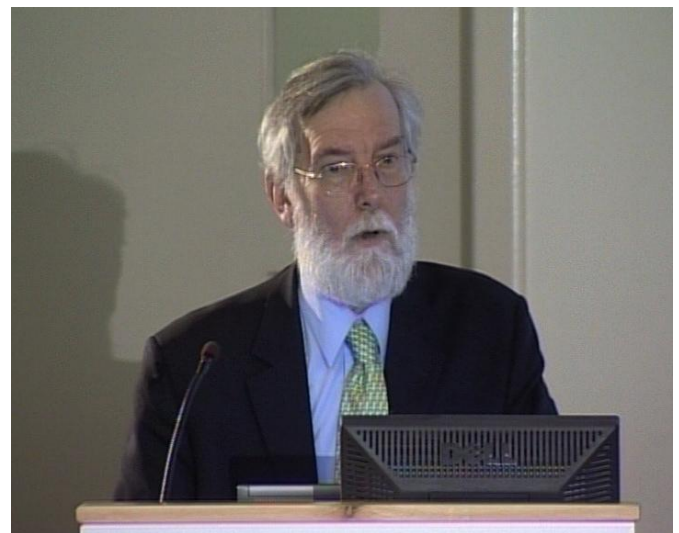
More **Design for Learning workshops** are planned for Monday 7 December covering the following topics:

- documenting teaching for promotion
- writing learning outcomes
- designing cornerstone subjects, and
- multi-campus teaching.

Look out for more information on the CTLC website.

Visiting Speakers

We have had a remarkable set of visiting speakers at La Trobe University this year talking about curriculum, teaching and learning. At a recent meeting with the Associate Deans (Academic) we agreed to coordinate our seminar/visiting speaker plans to ensure that the maximum number of staff are able to participate.



Professor Richard Teese

In the meantime, the latest eminent speaker was Professor Richard Teese, Director of the Centre for Post-Compulsory Education and Lifelong Learning at the University of Melbourne. Professor Teese was the first invitee in the new Vice-Chancellor's Colloquia held on 11 September. Richard presented his research on how universities create failure and how they might create success instead, challenging us to confront the negative impact that university selection policies have on school curricula.

A podcast of Professor Teese's presentation can be downloaded from iTunesU.

Language and Academic Skills

The search for a Director of the newly re-organised area of Language and Academic Skills is taking longer than we would have liked. This is because we have high ambitions for this critical area of student support and have developed selection criteria for the position of Director that are not easily met. We are now in active search mode, and will do everything we can to fill the position without too much delay.

Encouraging Language Learning

The Green Paper on Curriculum Review and Renewal recommended the establishment of a working party to examine ways to make the learning of languages other than English more attractive and feasible for the widest possible range of students. A working party has now been established under the leadership of the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Tim Murray.

With members Kaori Okano, Anamaria Ducasse from HUSS, Howard Nicholas from Education and Lachlan Bachelor (SRC), the working party is now reviewing existing policies, the needs of particular faculties, options for teaching on all campuses, potential additions to the existing suite of languages offered, and the student perspective on impediments to learning languages at La Trobe. An options paper for consideration by the Curriculum Teaching and Learning Committee will be completed before the end of the year.

Sustainability

The University was happy to support the La Trobe Environmental Collective's involvement in the recent national youth vote on climate change – YOUth Decide. In mid September this allowed all young Australians to vote on this vital issue, as part of the lead up to the Copenhagen negotiations later this year.

In a small gesture towards sustainability, the Curriculum Teaching and Learning Committee has now agreed to ensure that all meetings from 2010 can be attended virtually by staff and students at other

campuses and we will indeed discourage unnecessary travel. This will involve more cultural change for Bundoora participants than our regional members.

Donydji

In the last week of August I spent two days at Donydji, in North East Arnhem Land, learning at first hand what the longstanding collaboration with La Trobe, through Neville White, has meant to this remote Homeland community. It was made abundantly clear to me that the community believes that the only progress they have made towards a self-sustaining future has been the result of the external partnerships created with Neville. Above all else they want to see the development of further education and training opportunities for the young people of the community through a partnership with La Trobe.

The latest visitors to Doyndji have been two La Trobe Archeology students and a small group of staff and students from Eltham High School.

While in the Northern Territory I signed MOUs with both the Northern Territory Department of Education and Training and Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education so we can explore possible areas of cooperation in the education and supervision of Indigenous Assistant Teachers, and the placement of teaching students from La Trobe in extended practicums in remote Indigenous communities.

