

# academix

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issue eleven

MAGAZINE OF  
THE CENTRE  
FOR LEARNING  
AND RESEARCH  
IN HIGHER  
EDUCATION

Semester 2 2013



New directions

Academic writing

CLear Fellowships

Online assessment

Ahead of the game in elearning

Working towards institutional change

PG Cert Alumni research & publications



It is an honour to be invited to write this first editorial for *aCADemix* since the formation of the new Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education (CLeaR). We have retained the title of the publication to acknowledge the origins of CLeaR in the past work of the Centre for Academic Development (CAD).

CLeaR's mission is to provide research-informed institutional leadership in Higher Education learning and teaching. It is

committed to working in partnership with Māori to achieve shared aspirations, and to collaborate with faculties, service divisions, and communities of practice to support and inform the strategic teaching and learning priorities of the University.

We aim for CLeaR to:

**Produce world class higher education research** that positions the Centre and the University as international leaders in the field of learning and teaching in higher education. We will achieve this aim through our own research and scholarship, through collaboration with colleagues interested in higher education research into teaching and learning elsewhere in the university and internationally, and through actively recruiting doctoral candidates to work alongside staff in the Centre.

**Promote and advance the scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL).** Although variously defined in the literature, SoTL refers to systematic inquiry into learning and teaching in the disciplines whereby the results of that inquiry become public through the processes of peer review and publication. In this sense, SoTL differs from the more private but nonetheless important process of scholarly teaching that is largely restricted to localised individual or collegial reflection and action on improving the learning experience for students. CLeaR will continue to work to support scholarly teaching, but it aims also to work with interested colleagues to carry out inter- and trans-disciplinary inquiry into teaching and learning innovations at The University of Auckland and to advance practice by publishing the results of this work.

**Research student academic engagement, progression and success,** including Māori and equity groups. The University invests significantly in student support. CLeaR is well-positioned to research the outcomes of that support for the students it aims to serve. But CLeaR has a stronger, more proactive imperative. It is common to assume that students fail or leave because of something that is wrong with the student or some fault in their background or culture or circumstances. An assumption that is referred to as deficit-theorising and that Bishop et al (2003) argue, through the low expectations it engenders and downward spiralling self-fulfilling prophecy it feeds, is the major impediment to Māori students' educational achievement. There is significant work being carried out internationally in higher education aimed at addressing the teacher's responsibility for student retention and success. CLeaR aims to draw on this work and to work with colleagues to increase student engagement and success.

**Lead innovation in technology-supported teaching and**

**learning.** New media are significantly and rapidly changing university teaching and higher education learning environments. Much of this innovation is happening around this university. CLeaR aims to work with these pockets of innovation to expand the reach of successful innovation, and also to draw on best practice internationally to position the The University of Auckland as a leader in the use of new technologies to support learning.

**Build individual and institutional capacity in teaching, learning and research.** Successful research intensive universities do not achieve success for the quality of their research alone. They achieve it also for the quality of their teaching. Teaching matters because inspiring and knowledgeable teachers attract students and change lives for the better. It was striking at the Distinguished Alumni Dinner on March 1 how many of the alumni thanked, and named, those *teachers* who had been so influential to their later success. Those teachers were also leading researchers but the initial impetus came from their teaching. CLeaR aims to expand the capacity of teaching to inspire by working collaboratively with colleagues from across the University and by communicating best practice as widely as possible through publications such as this, and in forums and through the intranet.

The Faculty of Education is delighted to host this new Centre but in no sense to do we consider that we own it. Its mission is a University mission and we will do all that we can to support that and to add expertise and capacity where we can.

Graeme Aitken  
Dean  
Faculty of Education

## academix | blog

<http://academix-clear.blogspot.co.nz/>

We'd like to encourage conversation around *academix*, so we've created a blog where you can comment, contribute and engage in discussion on our feature articles.

You can access it from your computer, mobile phone, ipad etc.

Do visit. Put in your tuppence worth or just lurk in the shadows.

We're keeping the print version. We think it's useful to have something you can pick up and flick through when you have time.

PDF versions of the entire magazine are still available at: <http://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/index.php?p=magazine>

Links mentioned in the magazine are accessible from both the blog and the PDFs.

Liz Ramsay, Editor, *academix*

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# A fine bunch of Fellows

L-R: Andrew Luxton Reilly, Gerard Rowe, Stephen Turner, Dermott McMeel, Ross McDonald, Margot Bowes.



Deans have nominated 2014's CLear Fellows. They will research and disseminate new teaching strategies around a theme: "Rethinking the classroom: Interactive teaching and learning".

## Dr Andrew Luxton-Reilly (Science)

Andrew's background is in Philosophy and Computer Science. In 1995, he joined the Computer Science Department where he focused on first-year curriculum design and delivery. Since 2005, his Computer Science education research has focussed on software tools that facilitate collaborative learning, investigating the impact of assessment tools on learning, and the variation in ways that novices learn programming. He has participated in numerous International Working Groups investigating areas of interest to the Computer Science Education community. In 2002 he received a Teaching Excellence Award.

## Dr Dermott McMeel (NICAI)

Dermott holds a position in architectural research. His research seeks to advance understanding of technology's influences on what we do and what we create. This has significant bearing on teaching and learning. Dermott's particular focus is on design and on digital technologies that impact the built environment, both through its design and through its use. His current research has a focus on locative media and the disruptive effect of mobile devices on the 'craft' with design and construction, as well as technology's ability to delaminate the presupposed social, political and cultural geography of our physical environment.

## Associate Professor Gerard Rowe (Engineering)

Gerard joined the Electrical and Computer Engineering Department in 1984 and is currently Associate Dean (Teaching and Learning). He has taught at all levels and is particularly interested in identifying and correcting student conceptual misunderstandings and in curriculum and course design. His educational research concentrates on the secondary-to-tertiary transition, on threshold concepts and on the development of intelligent tutoring systems. His numerous teaching awards include a 2004 National Tertiary Teaching Excellence Award (Sustained Excellence in Teaching) and a 2005 Australasian Association for Engineering Education award (Excellence in Engineering Education, Teaching and Learning.)

## Margot Bowes (Education)

Margot is a lecturer in the School of Curriculum and Pedagogy and has a strong focus on interactive teaching. She is a subject expert in the ongoing development of national senior school

assessment and qualifications. Her interests include authentic interactive and digital learning to enhance student engagement. Her research areas include critical pedagogies, assessment and teacher professional development. She is currently doing collaborative research into 'Making Learning Visible through Feedback using Mobile Technologies' in higher education. Margot received a Faculty of Education Outstanding Teaching Award for sustained excellence in teaching in 2012.

## Dr Ross McDonald (Business)

Ross teaches social responsibility, ethics and sustainability in the Department of Management & International Business. He is a nationally awarded teacher and has recently been consulting with both the UN and the Royal Government of Bhutan where he has been designing foundation courses in positive values and resilient responsibility. Ross is particularly interested in models of educating based on collaboration across national and institutional boundaries. His latest book on Educating for Responsibility will be published in September.

## Dr Stephen Turner (Arts)

Stephen teaches in Writing Studies in the Department of English. He is interested in social scripts, writing technologies and programming, with particular reference to 'public pedagogy' and the settlement of new countries. Apart from on-going work in settler-indigenous studies, he has produced, with Sean Sturm of CLear, numerous talks and articles on the University, teaching writing and the econometrics of education.

## Dr Trudi Aspden (Medical & Health Sciences)

Trudi is a Lecturer in Pharmacy Practice (School of Pharmacy). She began her academic career after working as a community pharmacist in the UK and New Zealand for 15 years. Her research and teaching interests reflect this and include how, when and where to introduce cultural competence teaching into the BPharm curriculum; and how community pharmacy may reduce health disparities. She was recently awarded the 2013 FMHS Butland Award for Innovation in Teaching for introducing two cross-cultural simulations into the BPharm programme.



# Working together for institutional change



Two major developments on the learning and teaching landscape at our University this year are the establishment of the Centre for Learning and Research in Higher Education (CLeaR) and the role of Director, Learning and Teaching (DLT). *academix* was a fly-on-the-wall at an early conversation between Dr Kevin Morris (DLT) and the new Director of CLeaR, Professor Helen Sword, as they discussed how they might work together and also complement each other's contributions to achieve institutional goals.

## The roles of CLeaR and the Director, Learning and Teaching

**KEVIN:** I report to the DVC Academic and support him to implement the institution's strategy and its investments in teaching and learning. After three months in the role, I'm finding that I am spending a lot of my time connecting people who have similar interests and priorities. There is just so much teaching expertise across our campuses which needs to be celebrated and shared. My focus in the future will be realising the goals of the 2013-2016 Learning and Teaching Plan, which is currently under consultation. It is ambitious and there are some important projects which will really enhance the student experience.

**HELEN:** CLeaR is overseen by a University-wide Governance Board chaired by the DVC Academic, while our day-to-day line management is through the Dean of Education. I think CLeaR's work will align closely with yours, Kevin, although the levels at which we work may differ. My vision for CLeaR is that we will continue to help academic staff fulfil their individual potential as teachers and researchers, but at the same time our remit will expand to building institutional capacity in teaching, learning and research. Our new fellowship scheme illustrates one way we plan to achieve this. We asked each Dean to select a Fellow whom they saw as a potential 'mover and shaker' in their faculty. By bringing the Fellows together for a year and providing them with support and resources from within and beyond CLeaR, we aim to empower them to positively influence learning and teaching not only in their own classrooms but across the University.

## What they bring to their jobs

**KEVIN:** During nine years in the Business School, including four years as its Director of Learning and Teaching, I developed a keen sense of the needs and challenges within a faculty. I applied for this role because we are committed to evolving the learning environment, but it's also a time of great change in higher

education. It's forcing us to ask some very hard questions and the challenges in the upcoming years will be immense. I am really inspired by the current generation of students and the global opportunities they will have in their lifetime.

**HELEN:** I worked for many years in a faculty and continue to do some undergraduate teaching in the English Department, my disciplinary home. But in the nine years I've spent in an academic development unit, I've discovered the advantages of being at the centre of the institution. It's like being in a helicopter, zooming around getting a view of the whole landscape; every now and then I land and talk to people, find out what they're doing, do some work with them, and make connections between them. This university is full of inspirational people. An important part of CLeaR's role is to set up situations where people from across the institution can learn from and inspire each other.

## Disseminating innovation

**KEVIN:** In a large complex organisation we need to do more to share information, to foster innovation and to learn from good practice. In terms of developing teaching, I believe strongly in face-to-face interactions and personal relationships, but technology also allows us to access good information on any teaching issue. In addition to what's already on the web, teachers should also have access to contextualised resources and conversations in our own network about the common trends and issues in teaching.

**HELEN:** Disseminating existing research on teaching and learning is one way for CLeaR to take part in that information sharing; creating knowledge through new research is another way. When CLeaR was being set up, it was very important to me that the new Centre should have the word 'research' in its name. Not only is our own work research-informed; we also cultivate and support research on teaching and learning all around the



University. We've been doing this for years already through our PostGraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCert) and we hope to take the process to a new level through our new CLear Fellowship Programme.

### Leadership and innovation

KEVIN: I believe that teaching is a challenging and emotional activity and the peer environment for educators is critical, particularly when you are learning the craft. This means that departmental leadership and a supportive network is crucial to one's enjoyment and confidence. All teachers have the right to feel supported and encouraged—and hopefully inspired! Formal groups and the structures around teaching are important, but many teachers just need to feel like they're part of a larger team in an interesting and supportive culture.

HELEN: I'm pleased to see that the new Learning and Teaching Plan gives CLear a brief to work with teaching and learning leaders, such as the Associate Deans for Teaching & Learning, and to raise issues such as 'how do you support pedagogical innovation at the faculty or department level?' If an institution encourages its leaders to inspire and innovate as well as ensure obligations are met, you can achieve some really exciting institutional change. I believe you have personal experience of that, Kevin?

KEVIN: Yes, the Business School has been through some innovative projects and the Dean laid down the challenge on many fronts. He encouraged groups to develop ideas about creating completely different learning environments—so the School has become a culture of innovation where experimentation is accepted and well supported.

### Mapping the curriculum to graduate profiles

KEVIN: One of the big projects identified for the next couple of years is the importance of curriculum mapping and a stronger coherence with what are known as our graduate profiles. The spotlight shines brightly on universities and how we are preparing people for the changing world. It's all the things we know instinctively about our work, but employers and all our stakeholders want to understand more about how we are developing the skills and attributes of our graduates. As an institution we need to do more to understand the art and science

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**HELEN:** *"We complement each other... While CLear does a lot of work out in the faculties, we also bring colleagues together from across the University to talk to each other in a shared but neutral space."*

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of learning outcomes and how we engage students.

HELEN: I hope we can work together on that. I'd like to see CLear develop some intensive short courses on really meaty teaching and learning issues – for example, bringing departmental and faculty leaders together to work on curriculum mapping and course design. We have the skills and resources within CLear to support this process. It's the 'chalkface' meeting the institutional vision.

### Learning spaces and technology

KEVIN: The Learning & Teaching Plan also has a section on learning spaces and technology. It's really about understanding the opportunity we see for the future classroom, given our ability to support course delivery with technology. We are committed to blended learning and it raises important design questions about how we use physical teaching spaces and what they might look like.

HELEN: That's the theme for the 2014 CLear Fellowship year: Rethinking the classroom. I see it as CLear's role to help the leading edge move forward. Our Elearning Group has already made its mark around the University through our popular CourseBuilder platform and through Dr Cathy Gunn's research on sustainable elearning innovation. CourseBuilder grew up in a culture that welcomes design-based innovation.

### Communicating in the faculties and centrally

KEVIN: I guess the key thing I want to share is my open door and my willingness to connect with people who have ideas or thoughts to discuss about learning and teaching. I've already met hundreds of people I didn't know previously and it has been really useful for me to visit people in context to understand their work. From my point of view we should all contribute to the future agenda around learning and I am very keen to hear more about what is happening around campus.

HELEN: We complement each other in this respect. While CLear does a lot of work out in the faculties, we also bring colleagues together from across the University to talk to each other in a shared but neutral space. We provide opportunities for academics to meet people from outside their own disciplines and talk about teaching, learning and research. In this era of global communication technologies, bringing students together in and beyond the classroom is still at the heart of what our best teachers do. In the same way, bringing academics together to learn with and from each other is at the heart of what we do.

# New directions



## Making it CLearR

In his editorial (inside cover), Professor Graeme Aitken explains CLearR's goals. This issue of *academix* focuses on illustrating what those goals entail, and how new initiatives and past achievements will work towards realising them.

There have been role changes. Professor Helen Sword has been appointed the new Director of CLearR, from an international field of applicants. Dr Cathy Gunn is Deputy Director. She will continue to head CLearR's Elearning Group and serve as Acting Director of the Centre when Helen is away. Dr Barbara Kensington-Miller is now the Head of CLearR Research Development, providing leadership in research development within and beyond CLearR. Barbara will continue to support academic development. Dr Sean Sturm is the Head of the Academic Development Group (ADG) and coordinator of the PGCert in Academic Practice (PG Cert). Drs Susan Carter and 'Ema Wolfgramm-Foliaki have joined CLearR from Student

Learning. Susan's experience with the Doctoral Programme will bring an added dimension to our work with supervisors and 'Ema's experience with Pasifika students at all levels will be invaluable in her new role in academic development.

CLearR welcomes the opportunity to work with current and future teaching and learning leaders from across the University in programmes such as the CLearR Fellowship Programme (see p. 3) and the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (see p. 8). We are currently developing new initiatives and resources in areas including peer review of teaching; evaluation of supervision; academic career development for doctoral students; and culturally responsive pedagogies to improve outcomes for Māori and Pasifika students. Building elearning capacity across the university is an ongoing priority (see pp.13-16).

Visit our website for more information: [www.clear.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz)



## Libraries and Learning Services

On 1 January 2013, Student Learning – Tā te Ākonga and English Language Enrichment amalgamated as Student Learning Services (SLS), and became a brand new department within Libraries and Learning Services (LLS), formerly the University Library. Importantly, LLS' vision now includes facilitating excellent academic literacy (information, learning and language) development opportunities that will enable all our students to succeed in their programmes of study. This vision prompts SLS' Learning Advisors to work in collaboration - with each other, with LLS colleagues and with other colleagues across the University.

During Semester One, a group of Learning Advisors developed a suite of ten new generic workshops for undergraduate students. The workshops address central aspects of academic reading and writing, critical thinking and study skills and are designed to offer any student the opportunity to develop core academic literacy skills. This collaboration has allowed Learning Advisors' expert knowledge to inform workshop development; for example, that of Māori and Pasifika, Learning Disabilities, and English as an Additional Language perspectives. Concurrently, other Learning Advisors have engaged in a similar project for postgraduate students who are completing their academic programmes

through research or coursework. All workshops are offered and evaluated throughout Semester Two. Students register for these and any other LLS workshops via a new online booking system.

Developing this system exemplifies collaboration between SLS and other LLS colleagues, particularly those in Learning Support Services and Digital Services. The system's great advantage is that any student can now view, and book to attend, relevant academic literacy development workshops, including Doctoral Skills Programme workshops, in one place on the Libraries and Learning Services website: [www.library.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz)

The collaborative perspective has also inspired several Learning Advisors and Subject Librarians to get to know each other's roles and then join interested teaching staff to explore contextually relevant ways to develop their students' academic literacy. Projects of this kind are underway in several faculties including NICA, Arts, Science and Law, where a variety of approaches are being adopted and resources developed. A significant move involves permanently locating two SLS Learning Advisors in the Philson Library to work alongside FMHS Subject Librarians and in collaboration with Grafton Campus teaching staff.

## A lens on UMP



CAD's Photography and Television unit is now part of University Media Productions (UMP). You will still find them on the first floor of the Fisher Building in Waterloo Quadrant, at the Television Studio in Shortland Street or out and about working on location. They are, however, having the cobwebs blown away from bits that haven't been tickled for years. Justin Benn just blew in. He's worked in education and television and produced media for both big name commercial clients and NGOs. The latter work focused on facilitating 'participatory video', enabling people to produce their own media to spread ideas. He went on to train facilitators to continue the work.

Justin's excited at the idea of taking mainstream media's high production values and applying them to meatier and worthier subjects. Robert Hamilton (Technologies Architect) is 'all fired up' about that too. It's the goal that's kept UMP staff loyal and committed during numerous changes in name, reporting lines, management style and location over the past decade.

Justin says there is no plan to interfere with established working relationships. Existing clients can still contact UMP staff directly, though he would like to be brought into the loop. The television studio's specialised facilities remain available for University teaching and media productions as well as commercial clients. IT systems will keep track of requests in the background.

The Learning Environment Support Unit (LESU) will now manage

lecture recording at the lectern although UMP will still provide some support. The staff from the Lecture Recording Unit are now part of UMP. They are talented and keen to learn in their new home.

Justin hopes to broaden the type of work the unit offers and to build capacity. To do this, he plans to make the best possible use of permanent staff, casual staff, freelancers and experts from overseas. Justin wants to offer the casual staff opportunities to develop their skills both in the work the unit traditionally offers and in new types of media. He sees the original staff as 'the 'jewel in the crown', bringing a unique value to the unit. By removing some of the drudgery from their work, he hopes to free them up for more things requiring their expertise and to mentor the casual staff.

Big plans. First he needs a storage area network to enable projects to be accessed by people at different workstations. He wants projects to be more retrievable and flexible and provide greater opportunities for teamwork. We wish him luck.

[www.mediaproductions.auckland.ac.nz](http://www.mediaproductions.auckland.ac.nz)



Justin Benn

## International collaborations: Lorraine Stefani takes up a new role



Lorraine Stefani, former Director of the Centre for Academic Development (CAD), and Interim Director of the new Centre for Learning and Research has taken up a new role as Professor of Higher Education Strategic Engagement in the Faculty of Education. Lorraine is currently on a 12 month sabbatical carrying out research on academic leadership. While she and her partner Frances will base themselves in Scotland, her research will also take her to universities across the UK, Canada and Saudi Arabia. Before returning home, Lorraine will give a keynote presentation at the International Higher Education Teaching and Learning Association's (HETL) Conference in Anchorage.

In her new role Lorraine will provide leadership, vision and strategy in building strong international alliances and sustainable collaborations, particularly in learning and teaching. The role's primary aim is to effect sustainable institutional change. The

focus will be on working in partnership with institution-wide stakeholder groups to influence the strategic direction of learning and teaching and the development, dissemination and implementation of academic policy.

In one of her current projects, Lorraine is working with the Ministry of Higher Education in Saudi Arabia to support the establishment and development of a National Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching. This Centre will be the first of its type in the Middle East.

On leaving for her sabbatical Lorraine wishes CLear every success for the future. She says, "I am delighted to hand the leadership baton on to Professor Helen Sword. I believe Helen is the ideal person to lead CLear in making a significant contribution to achieving our institution's goals."

# PG Cert in Academic Practice

Over the years CLear has enjoyed meeting and working closely with many high calibre staff within The University of Auckland. This is no accident. Seven years ago, the Centre for Academic Development (CAD) saw a need to provide staff, particularly early-career academics, with the tools to become excellent teachers, while balancing the demands of teaching, research and service. So in 2006 it launched the two-year, part-time Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PGCert). The programme has grown from 4 graduates to 44, with another 21 staff members not too far behind. As the reputation of the programme grows, so does the number of alumni achieving outstanding results for our students, for our research and for the wider University.

They receive teaching awards, carry out research into their teaching and learning and disseminate their strategies through publications and presentations at conferences. Alumni have received awards including University and Faculty Teaching Excellence Awards, the Early Career Excellence Researcher Award, the Emerging Researcher First Grant Award, Ako Aotearoa Award and the International Central Network Fund Award. On completion of the programme's Independent Project, many have continued this work with the help of Teaching Improvement Grants, Learning Enhancement Grants and the Vice-Chancellor's Strategic Development Fund.

Alumni also influence teaching innovations as Deputy Deans (Academic) and on committees like the Teaching and Learning Quality Committee. And some find that they have a post-graduate qualification that excuses them from completing local mandatory teaching training in other countries.

Of course these energetic academics deserve the credit for their achievements; however, the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice provides a culture where networks grow, collaborations form and reflection on teaching practice occurs. The programme is particularly aimed at people working at the 'chalkface' who are passionate about their teaching, and would like grounding in the theory of teaching and learning to get traction. It allows those who see the benefit and excitement of networking across campus to share 'back stories,' strategies, and practical advice.

## ACADPRAC 703 Rethinking the Classroom: Interactive Teaching & Learning in the Digital Age

Do you aspire to provide a "...high quality learning environment that maximises the opportunity for... our increasingly diverse, demanding and technologically sophisticated student body" (the University Strategic Plan 2013-2020)? If yes, then this is a course for you. Drawing on international best practice in the use of new technologies, it is designed to promote and support research-informed innovation in teaching and learning that enhances student engagement and achievement.

Physical or virtual, effective learning environments are a thoughtful combination of pedagogy, space and technology. In "Rethinking the Classroom", we explore the strategies and tactics for interactive learning in contemporary university courses. Topics include design for learning, and planning the meaningful integration of technology in teaching, learning and assessment.

In practising what we preach, elements of this course will be completed online with assignments designed to be practical and relevant to your context. It is a 15 point course that can be completed as a Certificate of Proficiency or as part of the Post Graduate Certificate in Academic Practice.

Contact Ashwini Datt: a.datt@auckland.ac.nz

## ACADPRAC 704 Research Writing: Politics, Pleasure and Style

Are you aiming to develop your research writing, and interested in doing this with other writing-focussed academics? The object of this course is to take each participant's research writing to a higher level. Seminars cover the politics of research publication, within the institution, the discipline and within the social negotiation of peer review; strategies for pleasure in the creation of a writing identity; and the mechanical manipulation behind academic writing style—for clarity and for your readers' pleasure. Improved productivity, success and satisfaction with research writing are course goals.

Assignments will be tailored to support your own particular research writing development, whether you want to grapple with the mechanics of writing for improved clarity, produce a research article or two for publication, improve your productivity and/or style, or give better feedback on other people's writing. You will start this 15 point course by collaboratively designing your personal course assignments based upon what will help you to achieve your writing goals.

Contact Susan Carter: s.carter@auckland.ac.nz

## 2013 CLear Scholarships

Each year CLear awards up to ten \$2500 grants-in-aid to academic staff newly enrolling in the PGCert. The recipients of this year's CLear Scholarships (formerly known as Faculty Fellowships in Academic Practice) are: Karen Huang (School of Asian Studies), Julia Novak (Mathematics), Hanoku Bathula (Graduate School of Management), Neda Zdravkovic (Libraries and Learning Services), Bronwen Pearson (Pharmacology), Duncan McGillivray (School of Chemical Sciences), Peter Smith (Management and International Business).

## Alumni examples of SOTL (next 3 pages)

An intrinsic part of SOTL (the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) is dissemination. On the next three pages, we feature publications from PG Cert alumni. Their work applies action research methodology. Many teachers carry out the first stages of the process, even if oblivious to 'SOTL'. In action research:

1. an initial reflection about an aspect of teaching and learning identifies an area for improvement;
2. an improvement is planned ;
3. the plan is carried out ;
4. the results are evaluated to inform future practice; and
5. contribute to theoretical knowledge for the benefit of student learning.

(Kember & Kelly 1993; Norton 2008).

# Learning to walk the talk through tutorial assessments

Current research advocates making assessment an integral formative component of the teaching and learning process, rather than a separate thing, sometimes coming too late for students to learn from it. In 2008, Associate-Professor Jennifer Frost trialled short assessed tutorial assignments in a new History course. A sequence of ten interlinked, increasingly challenging tasks scaffolded students to develop the skills, thought processes and values of a historian.



Jennifer Frost

The most popular US History topic in NZ secondary schools is "Black Civil Rights in the USA, 1954-1970". This period reflects the 'master narrative', which the popular imagination often equated with Martin Luther King Jr. Jennifer's course, "African-American Freedom Struggles: USA, 1900-2000", covers a range of African-American activity over ten decades: the 'long civil rights movement'. In the context of these different chronologies, students debate and challenge the 'master narrative', just as professional historians are doing.

The tutorial assignments, each worth 2% of the final grade, aim to facilitate mastery of both historical skills and content. Student success is measured against criteria aligned with these aims. Jennifer hoped this assessment method would encourage individuality and diversity in critical thinking. Grades and comments give students frequent and timely formative feedback.

Students might discuss and analyse primary materials or give very short individual presentations for peer assessment. They revisit issues or aspects of the master narrative in the light of new historical content and methods introduced in lectures.

Assisted by Genevieve de Pont (Tutor) and Dr Ian Brailsford (at that time Academic Advisor, Centre for Academic Development) Jennifer researched the effect on students' skills and engagement. They looked at student coursework and feedback, tutorial attendance and participation and teachers' reflections.

Tutorial assignments provided data for quantitative and qualitative analysis, with Ethics Committee approval and student consent. The researchers carried out a chronological textual analysis of all assignments, seeking signs of students moving beyond recollection and regurgitation to the deeper historical issues.

They found them. Assignment marks rarely fell below a 'B' and they were consistent, showing that students continued to engage as tasks demanded higher levels of critical thinking. Student coursework and feedback show they developed a familiarity and facility with the conceptual framework for the course.

Attendance at History tutorials can be low unless it is rewarded or required. 81% of students came to more than 80% of these tutorials. Just as importantly, the assessments motivated preparation, enabling lively, productive discussion and scholarly

debate that emulated the thinking of professional historians.

One student said the course "reminded me how important it is not to accept conventional wisdom - or the master narrative - as the definitive account of a period in history... By challenging these preconceptions...not only is our understanding of what happened in the past greatly enhanced, but also our understanding of the challenges that still remain in the present and future."

However the weekly assessments were very time-consuming. Both lecturer and tutor went over their allocated marking workload by nearly 20% and a few students indicated the constant pressure damaged their desire to learn. In response, Jennifer halved the number of tutorials in 2009. Staff workloads fell back to allocated levels and no students complained about the frequency of tutorial assignments. Jennifer says, "The implication is that the principle of regular tutorial assessment was more important for student learning than the volume. Moreover, as we used questions from the discarded assignments in lectures and as the basis for tutorial discussions, students appear to have received many of the same cognitive benefits as in 2008."

Jennifer received the following grants to enable this research:

- Teaching Improvement Grant: The University of Auckland.
- Support for curriculum development and research: National Endowment for the Humanities Summer Institute Award (US).
- Research Grant: University of Auckland Faculty of Arts.

## More information

The sources for this article are available online from our library.

Frost, J., de Pont, G. & Brailsford, I. (2012): "Expanding Assessment Methods and Moments in History" *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 37:3,293-304

Frost, J. (2009) "Teaching the US Civil Rights Movement in New Zealand", *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 28:2 49-64

Frost, J. (2012) "Using Master Narratives to Teach History: The Case of the Civil Rights Movement", *The History Teacher* 45, 437-446.

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These articles (Pp10 - 12) emanate from research projects begun on the PG Cert in Academic Practice.

# Finding - and minding - the gap between evidence and practice

Evidence-based practice (EBP) in healthcare aims to improve outcomes for patients. But do we really understand what it means to apply research evidence in practice? Could we teach for this synthesis better? Gillian Robb and Dr Susan Wells (Epidemiology and Biostatistics) and Professor Felicity Goodyear-Smith (Goodfellow Unit) piloted the Values-Exchange – an online educational environment where students explore the factors at play in this gap between evidence and practice.



Gillian Robb

As well as improving practitioners' knowledge and skills, EBP teaching aims to change their attitudes and behaviour so that their clinical decisions incorporate epidemiological evidence (about the incidence, distribution, and control of diseases).

To keep up to date, practitioners need to become self-directed lifelong learners. In 2005 Dawes et al published a five-step model to support such learning. The model forms the core curriculum and defines the learning outcomes for most EBP courses. Students/practitioners:

1. ask a focussed clinical question (identify an information need);
2. access (search) appropriate information sources to locate the relevant literature;
3. critically appraise it for validity and applicability;
4. apply the results in practice; and
5. evaluate (audit) performance of their EBP skills in applying research evidence in the clinical setting.

The Dawes framework, like Bloom's Taxonomy of Learning, implies that at the highest learning levels, you can synthesise information from multiple sources to create new understanding and translate this into effective action. Healthcare practice should take account of relevant cultural, ethical, economic, legal and social issues. But research shows a significant gap in translating evidence into practice. With this in mind, Gillian and her colleagues piloted the Values-Exchange with a Masters course in Public Health. At the time, this was a 4-day face to face course with online learning elements. It is now taught wholly online.

The Values-Exchange makes transparent the underlying values influencing practitioner decisions. It provides a forum for users to respond to case scenarios and discuss proposed courses of action. Its analytical framework prompts exploration and reflection across a number of ethical domains, including the law, human rights and dignity, equity, and risks and benefits. It further stratifies these domains into patient, health provider and society perspectives.

Students were given an orientation session where they registered (anonymously if they wished) and completed a simple demographic template. Staff devised case studies linked to each of the four critical appraisal assignments. Each case study described a scenario and proposed a solution. Students had to decide whether they agreed or disagreed with the solution and to analyse the case using the Values-Exchange decision-support frameworks. They then viewed individual and overall class responses and discussed issues arising from the overall class response.

Gillian and her colleagues evaluated the impact of this innovation on student learning. After students had used the Values-Exchange for three of the critical appraisal assignments, independent facilitators held focus groups that were recorded and transcribed. Facilitator field notes augmented the data.

Overall responses to the Values-Exchange were positive. Students enjoyed the experience and found it added value to their learning. Some said it added 'fun' and 'entertainment' to what was otherwise seen as a 'fairly dry topic'. Three key themes emerged:

- The Values-Exchange exposed students to new concepts relating to healthcare decision-making. Students found the prompts they were given promoted deeper levels of thinking and engagement.
- The diversity of other students' values broadened their perspectives.
- The experience brought reality to what it means to apply evidence in practice.

The Values-Exchange made students reflect on their own values, which sometimes clarified their thinking. Reflecting on other students' values meant they re-thought and often broadened their perspective. They focused less on being right or wrong and more on multiple points of view. Those who didn't find the experience particularly provocative, evocative or challenging still appreciated the insight into other people's values.

Since this study, the Values-Exchange has been included as part of the evaluation process for the course for two subsequent years in which the course has been delivered fully online. Substantial time and effort is required to generate scenarios and work with the tool. Since the key focus of the course is on learning critical appraisal skills, rather than the 'ethics' of clinical decision making, Gillian and her colleagues are investigating ways to achieve their objectives more simply.

## More information

Robb, G., Wells, W., Goodyear-Smith, F. (2012): "Values add value: An online tool enhances postgraduate evidence-based practice learning" *Medical Teacher* 34(11):e743-50  
<http://informahealthcare.com.ezproxy.auckland.ac.nz/doi/abs/10.3109/0142159x.2012.689439>

Lees, A. & Goodbold, R. (2011). Engaging ethics education - exploring the potential of the Values Exchange decision making software: A case study. [www.ece.salford.ac.uk/programmes-2011/papers/paper\\_53.pdf](http://www.ece.salford.ac.uk/programmes-2011/papers/paper_53.pdf)

The Values-Exchange (<http://www.values-exchange.com/>) was developed by David Seedhouse.

## Can students solve a big problem in a little time?

“In the Disney Pixar movie “Up”, 78 year old Carl Fredricksen attaches a large number of balloons to his house and flies it away. How far would a house lifted by balloons travel before landing?” Teams of summer school students spent a day applying mathematical modelling to this question, as part of an Engineering Science course. Teaching Fellow Peter Bier, Engineering Science, designed the assessment and surveyed the students on the value they attached to the experience.

A key aim of Engineering Science’s first year Mathematical Modelling course is for students to learn the process of iterative mathematical modelling and apply it to non-trivial problems. For this to happen, students need to wrestle with at least one large-scale problem. Unfortunately time constraints mean that lectures and weekly assignments are oriented towards smaller scale problems. Larger projects offer a possible solution but class sizes can make assessing individual projects problematic. Spreading the marking load has implications not only for consistency but for the task itself. To allow marking consistency, students are usually directed down the same solution path, leaving little opportunity to encourage creativity or exploration.

For the 2012 summer school course, Peter trialled a project-based learning approach. He wanted to see if applying the mathematical modelling process to a large-scale problem would increase students’ understanding of the process. Students were given the problem at the start of the day and worked in teams of four to produce a written report for submission eight hours later.

Summer school presents its own challenges with a shorter time span and a particularly diverse cohort of students. Some students are repeating the course, some are from other faculties and others are part of the Accelerated Pathway program, aiming to complete the four year Engineering degree in three years. The one-day format fitted the tight time-scale and offered authentic experience in working under pressure to a deadline.

Because this was a new project design for the Department, Peter researched relevant literature. Capraro and Slough (2009) define project-based learning as “an ill-defined task with a well-defined outcome”. Peter crafted an open ended question (above) that students could answer with their current skillset. It required groups to make appropriate assumptions and examine the effects of their assumptions; key parts of the modelling process.

Working in groups encouraged students to collaborate and work together, skills that will prove valuable in the workplace. It gave them the opportunity to accomplish more than a single student could achieve over the same time span, while also allowing them to help each other learn. It has been shown that groups that are balanced in academic ability generally perform better in engineering design projects (which require a similar set of skills). Peter formed balanced groups of four by dividing the class into quartiles, based on their performance in a foundational mathematics skills test, and then randomly selecting one student from each quartile.

Using groups of four quartered the amount of marking, enabling one person to mark all the reports, ensuring consistency while allowing students free rein to choose their methods. Each group submitted a single report, with members receiving the same mark. This was logistically simpler than tracking individual

contributions and also mirrored the reality of the workplace. To reduce the chances of group members free-riding, students assessed the effort and contribution of each team member the following day. Only the marker saw these self and peer assessments, so students could comment freely on fellow group members. They knew that if this process revealed a significant workload imbalance, the marker would discuss the situation with group members and then assign individual marks based on individual contributions.

### What the students thought

Peter sought student feedback at three points via short anonymous questionnaires. Students’ perceptions changed over time. In the first week of class they had a very positive outlook, but their reactions were somewhat more jaded the day after completing this intensive project. By the end of the course the majority agreed the project day was a valuable learning experience that improved their understanding of mathematical modelling.

Students performed very well in the project. Each group demonstrated excellent mathematical modelling skills but individuals were generally unhappy with the quality of submissions, so there was a gap between their perceived performance and their actual performance. They were more concerned with answering the question than applying the mathematical modelling process and demonstrating an understanding of it. Although fewer than half the students were happy with the quality of their work, the majority enjoyed working as part of a team and most students were happy with their group’s mark. Despite these positive outcomes, fewer than half were keen to do similar assessments in the future.

One concern when surveying students is that the very act of surveying them changes their thoughts and behaviour. For summer school 2013 Peter repeated the day-long group project but purposely avoided surveying the students to see how the project would run when a cohort was not being asked to reflect on the experience. The quality of the written reports was generally very high, demonstrating that the teams had again managed to apply their skills to a larger scale problem.



Peter Bier

*continued over page*



## DACM alumni share their experiences

Alumni, Rose Martin (left) and Stuti Misra (centre) chat with Carol Greene from this year's cohort of the Doctoral Academic Careers Module.

The Doctoral Academic Career Module (DACM) is a full-year programme that allows twenty select doctoral students to gear themselves up for a life in academia. When the programme was set up in 2011, we hoped that over time an alumni association would develop. Now, two and half years after the first cohort started, several of DACM's founding members have landed academic positions at universities in New Zealand, Australia and further afield. We thought now was a great time to invite two of them, Dr Rose Martin (Lecturer) and Stuti Misra (Senior Clinical Research Fellow), to pass on their experiences to the current cohort, and for participants from all three cohorts to share their experiences of academic life during and after DACM. The first DACM Alumni gathering of 25 past and present DACM participants was held on 15 May 2013, hosted by CLear.

*academix* talked with Stuti and Rose a few weeks after the event. They come from very different disciplines with Stuti in Ophthalmology and Rose in Dance Studies and had found hearing perspectives from different disciplines refreshing and informative. They both stressed how incredibly useful they found DACM in preparing them for academic life, including practical aspects rarely mentioned elsewhere. Rose says, "It helps you with the juggling act of academic life by giving you insights into expectations and covering key aspects of what you'll encounter around teaching, research and service, especially in the first couple of years. Practical advice like 'make sure you keep documentation for APRs from the very beginning'. As an early career academic, you tend to think you need to say yes to everything if you're to move forward. The module alerted me to these challenges and provided insights on how others had

*negotiated them, helping me find my own way to manage them. I found it helpful to hear that others also find it isn't all smooth sailing."* Stuti says she's using a bit of everything she learnt and, at the least, knows where to start when new things are asked of her. It helped that experienced academics shared the way they met challenges, particularly around time management.

Rose believes that having the nuances of academic life explained in detail, and then discussed, practised and refined, helped her get her current job in NICAI. She says, "By the time I went for the interview, I'd written my teaching philosophy, had a better understanding of service and had looked at my research in the light of funding, publication and how it related to my teaching. I felt like I'd already had a practice run by the time I was sitting in front of the interview panel."

Rose's background and research is in dance education but she noted that many on her cohort got a huge amount out of looking at active learning and new learning strategies and philosophies. Stuti is also no newcomer to teaching and she really liked the module's format, saying "I would like to call them workshops because we were so involved. It wasn't just the sage on the stage. I teach a section of a course to a different set of students every few weeks. I give them a few questions to think about and every student, every batch, comes with different mindsets. Involving them changes things so that it doesn't become boring."

The DACM experience has provided them with a network of alumni that they can call on when the need or desire arises. They appreciate this and see CLear staff who taught the module as part of this helpful network as well.

### Can students solve a big problem in a little time? (contd from previous page)

An interesting correlation is that the two times that the day-long group project was used have also been the only times when every student passed the course. It is possible that the inclusion of this kind of group work promotes more engagement with the course, which in turn leads to better academic performance.

Given that the students performed very well and generally enjoyed working in groups, Peter was a little disheartened that fewer than half the students expressed an interest in doing similar day-long group projects in the future. What do they dislike about this form of assessment? Future survey questions may help provide an answer.

### More information

For much more detail, read Peter's paper in the AAEE 2012 Conference proceedings at: <http://www.aaee.com.au/conferences/2012/documents/abstracts/aaee2012-submission-182.pdf>

For more information on Project-Based learning see *Project-Based learning: An Integrated Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) Approach*, Edited by Capraro R. M & Slough, S. W. 2009, Sense Publishers.



## More online assessment tools available at the University

### Turnitin: not just a plagiarism detective

Most of you know Turnitin for its “Originality Check” tool but you may not know its Grademark, QuickMark and PeerMark assessment tools. Grademark enables you to mark and grade papers online, to create rubrics and give qualitative feedback. Its QuickMark tool lets you develop ‘tags’ for frequently-used comments. You just drop the tags onto the relevant passages of student work. Peermark allows students to give structured, anonymous feedback on other students’ work. Due to popular demand, the Library has added these tools to its Turnitin Licence. ITS is administering the software.



Dr John Egan, Director of the Learning Technology Unit (FMHS)

Dr John Egan, Director of the Learning Technology Unit (FMHS) used these tools extensively at the University of British Columbia. Always keen to help people develop mechanisms to select and deploy the technology that best suits their needs, John has made his “Getting Started” Guides for PeerMark, GradeMark and QuickMark available to all University staff. He likes several things about Grademark:

- You can refine the way you use it to suit your needs.
- It helps you mark efficiently and consistently by making it easy to use the same feedback to comment on the same deficiencies across students’ papers.
- Because everything is digitised, archived and backed up, it creates a digital paper trail of all the assessments providing a record of feedback to students.
- It provides authentic examples illustrating both good and bad grasp of difficult concepts. (As with any exemplar, it’s best to get students’ permission and ensure you use a block of text that doesn’t identify them.)

Anuj Bhargava (Physiology) has long been a fan of peer assessment. He says the rich feedback that students give each other is unparalleled. Not only do their assignments improve, students also develop deeper understanding as they take on the critical perspective of the reviewer. Anuj gives students a rubric for their marking. His students can choose whether or not to implement the feedback in their final assignment but they must

include a summary of the review. Anuj uses all three Turnitin tools. He and his students benefit from being able to use the same platform for multiple assessment needs. Once you have set up an assignment in Turnitin, you can set up a secondary assignment in PeerMark. You can assign who students review and how many reviews they do. Anuj was one of the first to adopt the newer Turnitin tools. He finds GradeMark’s statistics on the individual student and the overall class help him get an overview of students’ progress not only in their understanding but also in their writing skills. His students enjoy the flexibility of submitting their assignments online.



Anuj Bhargava

Large classes can be an administrative nightmare for the novice. Anuj says giving students clear instructions avoids most problems. For example, if you tell them to register in Turnitin with surname then first name, then GradeMark will align with Cecil class list.

### More information

To use GradeMark or PeerMark, just ask the IT Help desk, x 85100.

Join the Yammer Group *Turnitin’s Grademark and PeerMark Tools* on the University’s social network ([www.yammer.com/auckland.ac.nz/](http://www.yammer.com/auckland.ac.nz/)) Discuss the tools with users and get quick access to John Egan’s Getting Started Guides, and Anuj’s Student Instructions for Turnitin.

Read about Film TV & Media Studies’ experience of GradeMark, on P15.

You can still use Aropā for peer assessment. Contacts: John. Hamer@glasgow.ac.uk or Helen.Purchase@glasgow.ac.uk

### MCQResults: doing more with scantrons and teleforms

MCQResults takes the plain text output from the Scantron and Teleform MCQ marker machines, marks it and enables customised downloadable files by allowing you to add variables. It has instructions on how to set up courses, create and mark tests, check Scantron details against the Cecil class list, send results and learning points to students (adapted from Daniel Exeter’s Pro-Results system), include version decoding information and delete faulty questions.

Website: <http://medprog.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/mcqresults>

Contact: [rj.booth@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:rj.booth@auckland.ac.nz)

# Ahead of the game in elearning?

A working group chaired by Associate Minister of Education Nikki Kaye identified key areas already in focus at our University in *Inquiry into 21st Century Learning Environments and Digital Literacy* (2012). Professor Stuart McNaughton and Dr Steve Leichtweis from Faculty of Education and Dr Cathy Gunn from CLear met with the Minister in June to discuss university staff expertise in areas recommended for action by government. While our leadership in some aspects of digital literacy has yet to morph into mainstream practice, some of our top elearning innovators have produced internationally acclaimed systems such as PeerWise and BestChoice. Nic Mason, Faculty of Education Research Opportunities Manager is keen to 'catch the wave' which a swell of research funding will surely follow. A fact-finding tour of the University identified initiatives related to the Minister's recommendations in some key areas.

## Improving data and research to create an evidence base

Kevin Morris, in the new role of Director of Learning and Teaching, is leading an exploration of the productive potential of learning and business analytics data. Improper use of data collected as a matter of routine by online systems has received a lot of bad press in recent months. Covert surveillance and passing on information without consent make good headlines but ignore the positive aspects. This data creates new opportunities to understand student learning behaviour and inform course and curriculum design. It can also identify students at risk of failure or attrition while there is still time for support services to help steer them towards success. Common systems such as CourseBuilder, Cecil LMS and online assessment tools Turnitin, GradeMark and PeerMark collect data that serves these purposes. The challenge is to find ethical and manageable ways to translate raw data into meaningful feedback for teachers without a high level of IT expertise.

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***This data creates new opportunities to understand student learning behaviour and inform course and curriculum design. It can also identify students at risk of failure or attrition while there is still time for support services to help steer them towards success.***

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Another increasingly important evidence base is generated by research into teaching and learning. CLear promotes the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) and Educational Design Research (EDR). Both methods apply theory to learning design, and then gather data on learner responses and learning outcomes to evaluate strengths and plan improvements. Many teachers apply this process in an intuitive rather than an explicit way, which makes findings hard to disseminate or share. The methods have evolved to address the limitations of quantitative research in education, which explain *what* happens better than *why*, and qualitative studies that are too context specific to support generalisation. Both offer systematic ways to explore the impact of changing conditions such as larger classes and the introduction of new pedagogies and elearning technologies. They also promote a scholarly approach to teaching that mirrors the rigour already applied to research.

## 21st Century learning spaces

The term 'spaces' takes on a new meaning in a sentence with '21st Century learning'. Spaces can be physical or virtual, formal

or informal, or an unlimited range of variations on these themes. A shift away from predominant use of lecture theatres - which imply a transmission model of teaching - to flexible spaces where students congregate, with or without teachers and various technology tools, is visible around the institution. Recorded lectures are a frequently used resource, particularly in large 1st year classes. BYOD (bring your own device) is a buzzword reflecting the high level of individual ownership of smartphones, mobiles, tablet PCs, iPads and laptops. This reflects a sea change in the way people connect to information and each other that is not bereft of effects on teaching and learning. Researchers are busy separating the affordances and practicalities from hype about the impact of technology in the various spaces populated by teachers and learners. At The University of Auckland, new buildings and refurbishments continue to provide a complete range of learning spaces.

## Professional development

Professional development (PD) of staff teaching the current generation of learners in 'the digital age' is core business for CLear and faculty-based units with similar remits as well as various central service units. The conception of PD as a few workshops to introduce and hone new skills belongs firmly to the 20th Century. Current approaches involve sustained engagement with the ultimate aim to transform educational practice in positive ways. Some examples are the highly rated PG Cert in Academic Practice, with 44 graduates, collaborative elearning development projects and capacity building through the provision of intuitive development tools such as CourseBuilder.

## Improving access to NZ content

Libraries and Learning Services are working in partnership with DigitalNZ on a national initiative to make library collections available locally and internationally through easy to use search engines. The way people search for information has changed in recent years, with expectations shaped by experience of search engines like Google and Amazon. What is referred to in the industry as 'web scale discovery services' mirror the simplicity but maintain the integrity of search results, revolutionising end user access to library collections in the process. These services provide seamless discovery, delivery and relevance ranking across vast repositories of local and licensed content, including images, music and audio along with text. The days of trawling through multiple 'silo system' databases to find relevant information are over. Advanced search options are also available. While the 'engine room' is invisible to users, sophisticated

technologies and metadata aggregation are key enablers of the new approach. New Zealand is among world leaders in web scale discovery services, thanks to collaboration between the National Library, universities, publishers and other professional organisations. With Creative Commons licensing and digitisation of various archives in process, these developments are making rich sources of information more accessible than ever before.

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**...‘web scale discovery services’ ... maintain the integrity of search results, revolutionising end user access to library collections in the process...The days of trawling through multiple ‘silo system’ databases to find relevant information are over.**

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Examples of archives available online include:

- The Anthropology Photographic Archive, 50,000 photographs from New Zealand and the Pacific Islands in the field of archaeology and social anthropology from 1950 to date.
- Early New Zealand Books, the full text of over 250 19th Century books about New Zealand between 1800 and 1870.
- The New Zealand Electronic Poetry Centre, a gateway to poetry resources in New Zealand and the Pacific region.
- and Digital Zealand, a national collaboration of libraries, museums and archives with access to more than 25 million digital items.

### Developing 21st Century skills

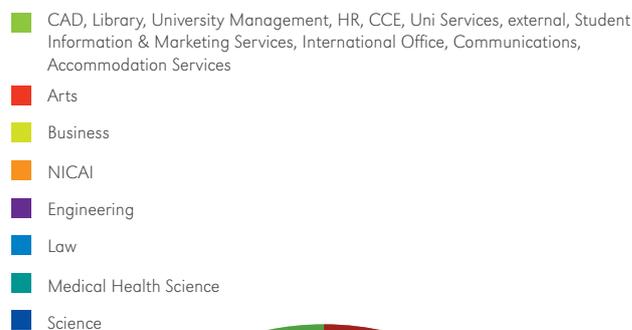
Web scale discovery is also a powerful tool for libraries and lecturers to increase information literacy skills for students in large, diverse classes. The ability for students to ‘discover’ content from scholarly collections, rather than from the web at large, begins to address issues with accurate, relevant and reliable sources. Information literacy is just one of the academic skills receiving an innovative makeover from Libraries and Learning Services. A combination of learning design and technology (mainly CourseBuilder) is being used to produce online tutorials for lecturers to embed within courses, or in the case of the Academic Integrity tutorial, for all students to complete as part of their first year studies. Partnerships with teaching departments have resulted in a range of resources and activities – both online and face to face – to address academic literacy issues and focus on graduate attributes. The 21st Century skills of subject librarians and learning services staff are a model for others to aspire to.

A Film, TV and Media Studies (FTV&MS) trial of Turnitin’s Gradermark tool is another productive application of technology for learning in large classes. The challenge of returning large numbers of assignments in time for feedback to be useful is common across the faculties. Gradermark helped lecturers to lift the game in at least one department. Brenda Allen found working with rubrics sets good standards for tutors and streamlines moderation of different markers. The tool makes easy work of feedback on common errors with the use of pre-prepared scripts. A more significant result was students logging in immediately to check feedback following a Cecil announcement

that marks had been published. With around a third of students not picking up hard copy assignments that took many hours to mark, the expectation that feedback will be useful has been reset with Gradermark. (For more information on GradeMark, see P13.)

PeerWise is another excellent system used by FTV&MS. Students create, answer and rate each other’s multichoice questions. This much-maligned form of assessment comes into its own with students as authors and quality assessors of questions rather than simply selecting from pre-set options. This ‘flipped’ assessment strategy has proved to be a catalyst for students to do course readings and write good essays, as well as building a large item bank of high quality, student generated questions. More than 700 universities, schools and technical institutes around the world are currently using PeerWise, which was developed at The University of Auckland by Senior Tutor Paul Denny from Computer Science.

Peerwise is just one of a number of online learning and assessment tools that are helping to reshape pedagogy for the current generation of learners. The University has produced more than its fair share of these innovations over the years, and some see the limitations of a home-grown learning management system as a catalyst for such developments. Others consider it the tangible expression of creative teaching by technology-enabled staff. Whatever the drivers, local developments such as Aropa, PeerWise, Oasis, BestChoice and CourseBuilder make us at least front runners, if not ahead of the field in elearning for the 21st Century.



Overview by faculty of the elearning project requests CLeaR received from 2010 – 2012

# Opportunities for online student engagement in CourseBuilder

CourseBuilder (CB) is often used to provide resources for face to face engagement. Some teachers also use elements such as Student Pages, Comments and Student Notes to facilitate group work, encourage informal discussion, and scaffold critical thinking. The Student Page element lets you allocate webpages to individuals or groups where they have access to CB's editing tools. Comments are used for informal discussion. Student Notes enable learners to take notes, reflect on resources in context, and get feedback. They can collate a summary of these notes for download in editable form. These are all made possible by logging in with EPR (aka UniSign).

## Scaffolding critical thinking

Although the reflective exercises were not assessed, they were very popular. Approximately 85% of students participated.

What the academic did	CourseBuilder elements	What the students see
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified needs: motivate students to think critically about for lectures and provide more contact between the lecturer and students.</li> <li>Developed a wishlist.</li> <li>Met CLear elearning staff to develop a template and establish where professional expertise was needed.</li> <li>Accessed appropriate media.</li> <li>Devised reflective questions and 'expert' answers.</li> <li>Inserted them into CB.</li> <li>Encouraged and participated in informal chat.</li> </ul>	Freertext, image gallery, and YouTube elements	Various resources (image/video/text)
	Accordion element for each question	Reflective questions about the resource
	Student Note (only visible to students)	A place to submit their reflection on the question
	Student Note (feedback)	An expert opinion (after they submit)
	Student Comment	Facebook-like informal chat

## Group Work using a WebQuest

In this first example, students develop a multimedia web resource which they use for face-to-face presentations. Peers give feedback and rate the presentations for a reward. The activity is very popular and competitive and the quality of the output very high.

What the academic did	CourseBuilder elements	What the students see
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identified a need for flexibility in access and completion.</li> <li>Met CLear elearning staff to discuss options.</li> <li>Designed the task scaffolded as a webquest (using a hypothetical scenario to guide students through the task).</li> <li>Provided resources on effective group work and presentation.</li> <li>Copied upis from the class list and pasted them into CB.</li> <li>Allocated individual to group pages in the course website.</li> </ul>	Free Text, Tabbed Content	Task
	Free Text, with links to external websites, media etc.	Instructions with links to their group pages
	Student Pages	Their group's page

## Other examples of group work that involves Student Pages

- The lecturer aimed to motivate students to think deeply about a topic perceived as 'boring'. Groups of students produced videos and inserted them into designated pages on the course website. (No guidance was given on video-making). They rated their peers' work. An associated professional organisation judged the videos and awarded a prize. The standard was high and one group received work as a result. Student feedback was excellent.
- Paired students produce a document in the course website in a wiki-like activity, receiving a combined group mark. Individual contributions to their own page and in asking questions and providing feedback on others' pages were assessed indirectly via the participation and contribution grade. Being able to use CB enabled the academic - who is not confident technically but has worked in CB - to guide students in its use. Not having to log-in to a different environment was another major plus. Students received customised instructions on using CB.

### Useful links

CLear elearning Showcase:  
[www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/index.php?p=elearning\\_showcase](http://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/index.php?p=elearning_showcase)

CourseBuilder: [www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/index.php?p=coursebuilder](http://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/index.php?p=coursebuilder)

Request an elearning project:  
[www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/index.php?p=project\\_development](http://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/index.php?p=project_development)

## Acknowledgements

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# FIRST IN THE FAMILY



Many of our Pasifika students are the first in their family to come to university. They embody the fulfilment of their parents' dream when they came to a new country in search of better opportunities. The project was initially conceived by Dr 'Ema Wolfgramm-Foliaki (CLear) and Associate-Professor Emmanuel Manalo. Sharon Televave joined 'Ema after Emmanuel left to work in Japan. 'Ema and Sharon are currently gathering data and stories about these students' experiences at university. They hope the research project will give us a deeper understanding of the challenges these students face and insight into how we can further support them and improve the quality of their learning experience.

The literature refers to both 'first generation' and 'first in the family' students as students whose parents have education at secondary school but haven't attended institutions of higher learning. International research indicates first in the family students often underperform, are under-prepared, disadvantaged and at risk of dropping out. The most significant factor is that they live on the margin of two or more cultures and report feeling 'out of place' at university.

'Ema and Sharon's project will add to this body of research, with a study that focuses on 'first in the family' Pasifika students. They don't believe any of the existing body of published research on Māori and Pasifika students focuses solely on this group of Pasifika students.

Many issues for first in the family Pasifika are also likely to impact first generation students from any other ethnic group. 'Ema says that despite our improved awareness of difference in students, we still need to learn how to use this knowledge to mobilise these students to achieve. It is important that we don't make generalisations but take our cues from the students.

Our Pasifika students already exist on the fringe of at least two cultures. The academic culture and language doesn't only impact Pasifika students. It's not easy to question or engage in discussion when you're struggling to interpret the new language of a discipline.

Although it is early days, several themes have emerged.



## They say we don't ask or answer questions

One student says learning to function in this new culture is one of the biggest challenges. English is already a second language for her.

She says, "I am quiet, I am listening, I am observing...I am trying to get used to the situation. I'm quiet in class because I'm trying to figure out the language, the process, and the concepts. It's hard to ask a question when I'm busy working out all these things in my head."

## Do you know any first in the family Pasifika students?

'Ema Wolfgramm-Foliaki and Sharon Televave would like to hear from Pasifika students who are the first in their family to come to University. It doesn't matter what stage of their study the students are at.

Students who attend focus groups will receive a small koha for their time. Focus Groups are held according to faculty. Student details will be kept confidential.

Both 'Ema and Sharon were the first in their families to attend university. You can contact them by email:

[ea.wolfgramm@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:ea.wolfgramm@auckland.ac.nz)

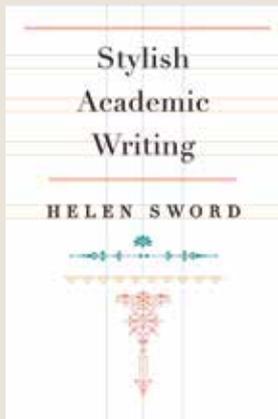
[s.televave@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:s.televave@auckland.ac.nz)



## Respect

In our culture we are taught to respect others and not to ask questions especially of our elders. Here (at university) you have to ask questions, you have to find the confidence to venture out and go and get help. I struggle to look for help. In some cases, when we finally get the confidence to ask for help, 'those people' [the lecturers] are too busy or they are not there, ....I don't go back.

# STYLISH ACADEMIC WRITING



One of CLearR's aims is to "produce world class higher education research that positions the Centre and the University as international leaders."

Helen Sword's research and publications on academic writing surely fills this brief. Her 2012 book, *Stylish Academic Writing*, has caused quite a stir.

*Writing*, has caused quite a stir.

## A Stylish Writing Event



Helen was recently invited to speak about Stylish Academic Writing to a large audience of academics at the Harvard University Faculty Club. View Helen's address on YouTube: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQsRvAVSVeM](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nQsRvAVSVeM)

## Beware of zombie nouns (nominalisations)

Beware Zombie Nouns! "They suck the life blood from adjectives and substitute abstract entities for human beings". Check out the video created by Helen (Educator), Bran Dougherty-Johnson (Animator) and Hatfarm (Sound Designer) at: <http://ed.ted.com/lessons/beware-of-nominalizations-aka-zombie-nouns-helen-sword>



## Go Gonzo, cast off the conventions of scholarly writing

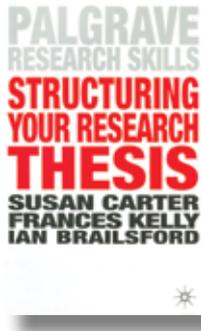
Read Helen's article Narrative Trust, which was featured in the Times Higher Education Supplement of 6 September 2012.

[www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/421045.article](http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/421045.article)

# Recent CLear publications

## Structuring your research thesis

Carter, C., Kelly, F. & Brailsford I., *Structuring Your Research Thesis*. Palgrave Research Skills (2012)



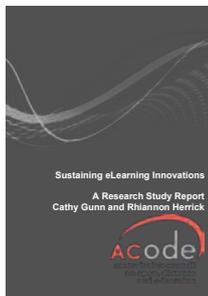
Structuring your research thesis emerged from research and teaching in the University's Doctoral Skills Programme (DSP). When Dr Susan Carter found from talking to PhD students that many were plagued by structuring indecision, she designed new teaching material for her writing workshops in the DSP. She also launched a questionnaire probing research students, to find out more. With her colleagues Dr Frances Kelly and Dr Ian Brailsford, she has brought guide book literature, student anecdotes, insights from their surveys and from years of classroom teaching about thesis writing and structure into a short useful book.

Susan's full-time work with doctoral students and their writing showed her that difficulty structuring a thesis is surprisingly common. Some thesis writers go for the generic model – intro, literature, methods, results, discussion, conclusion – but many are torn between satisfying examiners' expectations and respecting the complexity of their data, their topic, and perhaps their discipline. Some research students want to be innovative, without this risking failure. Because the thesis becomes part of its writer's identity, decisions about something as deeply inherent as structure are troublesome.

The book principally aims to assist students trapped in indecision. Supervisors can direct students to this book and expect them to find their own route to solutions. However, the shortness and clarity of the book, and its insightful understanding that thesis writing itself influences which argument will come through as the prime thesis, makes this a good book for most thesis writers.

It's a practical little book. Its 84 pages offer a range of ways to approach the problem. After a framing introduction, it splits 'structure' into order of contents; effects on what is emphasised; and the establishment of cohesion through joinery. Inset accounts from students and survey data enlivens a sensible approach—a reasonable read for a useful book.

## Sustaining eLearning Innovations: A Research Study Report



A study funded by the Australasian Council for Open, Distance and eLearning (ACODE) concluded that universities could be more active supporters of elearning innovations their staff are involved in, and innovators could produce better evidence to justify investment by the host institution. Sixteen of twenty-two 'grass roots' elearning innovations selected as case studies did not meet all the criteria for sustainability. To be considered sustainable, a proof of concept phase would show evidence of benefits to teaching and learning, and potential to be adopted or adapted for use beyond the development context. Most of the cases passed these initial tests, but failed a final one because they continue to rely on one or a few committed individuals for user support and ongoing maintenance.

Gaining support from central systems and integration into operational budgets is rare, even where funding was provided through start up grants or other initial investments. Large internal and often international user groups relying on these systems seem to be an insufficient case for institutional adoption. Some of the people driving these innovations reported 'staying off the radar' to experiment, then develop tools that extend functionality of the enterprise learning management system, which they found useful to be limited. If they succeed, and come back onto the radar as fully implemented systems, technical design can make it difficult to integrate with enterprise tools at any more than a superficial level.

The report suggests that early conversations and ongoing communication with central services could go some way to alleviate the problem. Innovators tend to show and share their work in journals and at conferences or with discipline or elearning networks rather than stakeholders within their institutions. The research highlights tensions between priorities, as institutions aim for secure, standardised 'one size fits all' elearning systems that scale across an entire university. Innovators want to experiment with emerging technologies and develop creative solutions to specific learning challenges. Many tools are either discipline- or function-specific, so do not fit institutional criteria for support. Resolving the tension between these competing aims could increase return on both creative and financial investment. Download the report from <http://hub.acode.edu.au/mod/resource/view.php?id=847>

### A note from the Editor

In earlier issues of *aCADemix*, we mentioned all publications by CAD staff. CLear staff continue to regularly publish on their own and collaborative research in journals, refereed conference proceedings and so on. Please visit staff pages on the CLear website to see all publications. [http://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/index.php?p=contact\\_us](http://www.clear.auckland.ac.nz/index.php?p=contact_us)



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 Middle Row L-R: Susan Carter, Lynette Herrero-Torres, Cathy Gunn, Ashwini Datt, Kaye Hodge Helen Sword (Standing)  
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