



Monthly e-Newsletter – August 2007

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EDITORIAL

Thanks to several readers for positive feedback about the newsletter.

Despite those fine words, it's the last two newsletters showed signs of haste in layout and text. For those I apologise.

I'll be away from mid-September to early October. The upshot is that September's newsletter will be shorter and the October newsletter will be shorter and late. I'd apologise for any inconvenience except that I've already apologised once, and anyway, I'm going to have a wonderful time.

As always, ideas and content for the newsletter are welcome, as is your feedback. Subject to space and relevance to members, the newsletter can run notices about job vacancies and upcoming events.

The newsletters eventually find their way to the AAIR website. Back copies here:
<http://www.aair.org.au/Pages/Newsletters.html>

JOB VACANCIES

AUQA is looking for two Audit Directors

AUQA is advertising for two Audit Directors, one to commence asap and one to commence early in 08. Applications close on 10 August.

The ad is on SEEK, in *The Oz*, *The Age* and *Campus Review*. The PD is on the AUQA website:
<http://www.auqa.edu.au/aboutauqa/news/index.shtml>

SUCCESSFUL AAIR EVENT IN SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Andrea Matulick, AAIR Committee Member and Business Analyst: Student Load Planning at UniSA, reports that AAIR organised recently a meeting of Strategy and Planning units from South Australian unis, hosted by the University of Adelaide. More than 25 staff from the Adelaide, South Australia and Flinders unis attended.

Richard Symonds (Director, Higher Education Directorate, Department of Further Education, Employment, Science and Technology) spoke about the South Australian government's involvement in HE. He highlighted a number of targets in South Australia's strategic plan which include HE goals.

Topics which promoted discussion included:

- state government assistance for overseas higher education providers to locate in Adelaide
- possibility of changing state/federal government roles in administering higher education.

AAIR Committee members

President: Ivan Skaines, University of Western Sydney
Immediate Past President: Wendy Marchment, Griffith University
Vice President: Josephine Palermo, Deakin University
Hon Secretary: Dean Ward, Edith Cowan University
Hon Treasurer and Membership Secretary: Marian Mahat, Monash University

General Committee:

Bruce Guthrie, Graduate Careers Australia
Don Johnston, Southern Cross University
Dave Marr, Australian National University
Andrea Matulick, University of South Australia
Rob Sheehan, Sharp Words Editing & Writing Services (Victoria)
AAIR website: <http://www.aair.org.au/>

AAIR 2007 Forum

CHANGE, EVIDENCE & IMPLEMENTATION: IMPROVING HIGHER EDUCATION IN UNCERTAIN TIMES

When: 28-30 November

Where: Crown Plaza, Darling Harbour, Sydney

Program details and registration information:

<http://www.aair.org.au/Forum2007/Index.html>

Latest news from Ivan Skaines

As mentioned in an earlier newsletter, we have received more than 50 proposals for papers to be given at the AAIR 2007 Forum to be held in Sydney in November. The review panel has now assessed the papers and has accepted 45 papers for presentation over nine parallel sessions at the Forum. There is a very good mix of papers, which were received from both Australia and overseas, and from both practitioners and academics.

There is a number of papers around the theme of retention and attrition, in addition to papers on governance, online surveys and organisational change.

The draft program for the conference will be uploaded to the AAIR website in early August at: <http://www.aair.org.au/Forum2007/Program.html>

The url for the Forum registration is: <http://www.aair.org.au/Forum2007/Register.html> Please note that early bird registration closes at the end of September.

Planning is proceeding well and arrangements are being made concurrently for the 2008 Forum, the location of which will be announced at the 2007 Forum.

If you have any questions about the Forum please do not hesitate to contact Helen Angelakis or myself at the University of Western Sydney on 02 9678 7808.

The 2007 AAIR Forum is hosted by the University of Western Sydney.

The 2007 Forum is sponsored by Graduate Careers Australia

Regulating Cross-Border Education Quality

The Asia Pacific Quality Network APQN and UNESCO's Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational Innovation for Development have produced a toolkit called *Regulating the Quality of Cross-Border Education*. It's here:

http://www.apqn.org/files/virtual_library/other_reports/unesco-apqn_toolkit.pdf

There is a PowerPoint presentation available. It provides an overview of the Toolkit and its uses and was prepared by Wong Wai Sum, Exec Director of the Hong Kong Joint Quality Review Committee, and Tony Davies from Education New Zealand. The slide show is accessible here: http://www.unescobkk.org/fileadmin/user_upload/apeid/workshops/9th_convention/tony-powerpoint-APQN_Crossborder_Toolkit.pdf

PLACES TO GO – THINGS TO DO

CEQuery training in August and September

The redoubtable Bruce Guthrie – AAIR Committee Member and Research Manager at Graduate Careers Australia – tells us that GCA is running CEQuery training sessions across Australia in August and September.

CEQuery is the software package that analyses responses to two CEQ questions:

- What are the best aspects of your course?
- What aspects of your course are most in need of improvement?

The training sessions target new users, and cover the basics from opening CEQuery and importing comments to the more complex task of customising your data dictionary. Dates:

Melbourne –15th August

Sydney –22nd August

Brisbane – 23rd August and 24th August

Adelaide –11th September

Perth – 21st September

If you want to go, or want to find out more about CEQuery, contact Graeme Bryant at GCA:

- 03 8344 9280.

Sorry – you'll have to work on the weekend

Yep. That's all there is to it. Everyone. In Madrid. 20-22 October – Saturday, Sunday, Monday. It's:

The Fifth International Conference on the Book

Find out more here:

<http://b07.cgpublisher.com/welcome.html>

If you have a thing for books, check out the International Journal of the Book homepage and all its delicious links – *Community Newsletter* recommended: <http://ijb.cgpublisher.com/>

Asia Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity 2007

From 6-7 December, UniSA is hosting the 3rd Asia-Pacific Conference on Educational Integrity: Creating a culture of integrity. Here are the

challenging questions the conference is posing to attendees:

- Who is responsible for educational integrity? Is it students, educators, administrators, senior managers or policy makers?
- How can a culture of integrity be created so that the current model of 'police action' is replaced by self-regulation and mutual respect?

Good program, to which you can add your two bits worth – call for papers closes on 31 August.

Here's the inside running:

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/educationalintegrity/conference/>

Chulalongkorn University

Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, has maintained its continuing educational development, producing over 190,000 graduates working in all sectors in the country and abroad. In 2007, the University will celebrate its 90th anniversary.

Dec 12-15, 2007 – Distance Learning and the Internet Conference (DLI) explores global issues in distance learning and the utilization of current information technology in education amongst Pacific Rim universities. The theme for the 8th DLI is "Sustainable Learning in a Global Information Society".

Sub-themes include, but are not limited to:

- Faculty development for tomorrow's teaching;
- Challenges to learners' center culture;
- Key learning quality;
- E-content development: Applications and Implementations; and
- Methodology and future trends in ICT assisted education.

<http://www.academic.chula.ac.th/dli2007/>

Papers from 2006 Conference:

<http://apru2006.dir.u-tokyo.ac.jp/program/>

IT IS WRITTEN

On a mission

Higher Education Perspectives is an online, open access, peer-reviewed journal published by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. Now in its third year of publication, you can call up all papers from earlier issues.

From the latest issue, planners might be interested in the analysis of Canadian university mission statements, and internationalisers might be interested in the primer on internationalising a business schools curriculum – the reference list to the primer looks pretty useful too. Latest issue right here: <http://aries.oise.utoronto.ca/highered/index.php>

Newsy R&D

Australian *R&D Review* is a snappy publication that brings you up-to-speed with science, technology and business. There's a universities section and a state roundup. It's eclectic and incredibly wide-ranging. The March edition runs to 24 pages, energetically informatively.

The *Review* is co-published by Julian Cribb who is an Adjunct Professor in Science Communication at UTS and a science communicator of note.

There's a back issues button on the following page so you can bring yourself up to date, and I'm thinking of giving it to the kids:
<http://www.coretext.com.au/R&D/index.html>

NEWSLETTER NOTES

1. HE, globalisation and Arab countries

I haven't plumbed this any further than a news release, but you might want to trek more determinedly. The Global University Network for Innovation reports briefly on the (deep breath) Regional Research Seminar for Arab States on higher education and research of the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge. GUNI says: 'The possible impact of globalisation on higher education and research in Arab countries was the main issue discussed'.

More here: <http://www.guni-rmies.net/news/detail.php?id=1077>

2. Another way of being America in the Middle East

The audio production is appalling, especially at the beginning. But that aside, this is an hour well worth spending. The podcast, titled *Teaching and learning in the Arab world*, features the Presidents of four American Universities in the Middle East. The oldest uni goes back to the 1830s, the newest to the early 1990s.

They cover the park. They don't duck any tricky questions. They tell stories. They are hopeful. They are funny. The Presidents are:

- David Arnold, American University of Cairo
- Joseph Jabbra, Lebanese American University
- Winfred Thompson, American University of Sharjah
- John Waterbury, American University of Beirut.

Hear them here:

http://uc.princeton.edu/main/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1605&Itemid=8

3. Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation Regional Centre for Vocational and Technical Education and Training

Did you get all that? SEAMO (Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organisation) has a whole suite of sub-sections, of which Vocational and Technical Education and Training (VOCTET) based in Brunei is one. It publishes a newsletter with lots of news from around the region, and it publishes an e-Journal on an inconsistent basis. The next is promised imminently. The last (in December 05) has a clutch of good academic articles from Brunei, Australia and the US: <http://www.voctech.org.bn/>

4. *Tasmania Tomorrow* – rethinking pathways from Year 10 to HE, VET and work

As part of its 07-08 Budget the Tasmanian government launched *Qualifications and Skills for Tasmania Tomorrow*. I've been waiting ever so long for a debate about secondary education that looks at a junior/senior high school model. Incorporating VET into upper secondary schools, the emergence of the academy model in Queensland, have opened the window. But Tassie has gone the whole hog.

From 2009 there will be:

- an 'academy' model for Years 11 and 12 that will have a curriculum centred around preparation for university

- a 'polytechnic' model for Years 11 and 12 and mature age learners (TAFE plus, if you like) that will privilege practical learning, supported by academic courses, and provides a vocational pathway to employment
- a 'training enterprise' model delivering skills formation to employers/employees where the training fits individual business skill requirements.

The polytechnic model will provide clear articulation arrangements to HE.

Cause for excitement. More here:

<http://tomorrow.education.tas.gov.au/>

5. New skills policies in the Old Dart

In mid-July the UK government released *World Class Skills* – it's response to the Leitch Review of Skills, which reported in December last.

The policy settings are wide-ranging and bring schools, further ed, universities, adult learners and employers into a demand-led skills formation approach. There's so much in this reform it's impossible to summarise in 100-150 words. You'll have to read all 79 pages, I'm afraid. PM Brown has set up a new UK Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills so it's hard to be sure where things are located on the web just at the moment, but I hope *World Class Skills* is still here:

<http://www.dius.gov.uk/worldclassskills.pdf>

6. Quis custodiet ipsos custodies?

Who is watching the watchers? JCU's Audit and Assurance Unit has a Client Evaluation Questionnaire so the audited can watch the auditors:

<http://www.jcu.edu.au/office/intaudit/clientfeedbacksurvey2007.htm>

7. You're too late!

It is my melancholy duty to inform you that, if you were planning to make a submission to the MCEETYA Review of the National Governance Protocols then you're too late. Submissions closed on 31 July. (The protocols provide guidance to university councils on how to do their jobs).

You can still read the *Issues Paper* but be prepared for the need to dispose of a great big wad of the old red tape when you've finished. I don't get it, basically. I mean, I understand what I'm reading, but I don't understand – is this really necessary? If

Alfie's out there, get in touch and let me know what it's all about, existentially speaking:

http://www.mceetya.edu.au/verve/resources/Review_of_NGPs_-_issues_paper_-_final_paper.pdf

Perhaps Alfie's going along to this: University Governance & Regulations Forum. Perhaps I should go. In Sydney on 24th & 25th September. If you missed the early bird option, it's a princely sum of \$1974.50 to bowl along. More details here: <http://www.informa.com.au/universitygovernance>

8. One for the data junkies

It's over, but in June if you'd been better organised you could have been in downtown Istanbul at Measuring the Progress of Societies – Second OECD World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge and Policy. The following link will take you to the agenda which has links to papers and PowerPoint presentations – more PowerPoints than papers I'm sad to say. There are some excellent reads amongst the almost bewildering array of topics. If your work is in the depths of data and you feel under-appreciated, just scrolling through the agenda will make you feel like the Monarch of the Mountain.

Two good papers, in my humble submission, are 'How to Build a Knowledge Economy and How to Know When You Have One' and 'Evidence-Based Policy Making: Just a Myth or a Must?' Your ego boost is here:

<http://earli2007.hu/nq/home/>

<http://www.edu.u-szeged.hu/jure2007/>

9. Getting the measure of the social outcomes of learning

Understanding the Social Outcomes of Learning was released in July by the OECD Directorate for Education. I have read only the Executive Summary because the OECD wants you to buy the whole report unless you are from a subscribing institution. (Didn't we already pay our national membership dues to the OECD?)

As its focus is on measuring things related to education you might want to chase it up. Seems no-one knows how to measure social outcomes of learning, but the OECD has a research plan to fix that. So brush up on your French and watch for the job ads on the OECD website.

There's a podcast too. It's free:

http://www.oecd.org/document/5/0,3343,en_2649_33925_38905029_1_1_1_1,00.html

10. A quarter of Auckland

Auckland City Council has issued *Blueprint: Growing Auckland's creative industries*. The perspective is economic growth, but it casts a wide net. AUT and the University of Auckland both figure prominently.

One part of the proposal is to develop a Learning Quarter. The Council and the universities are working in partnership 'to develop a place-based plan to guide the social, economic, cultural and environmental development of the area over the next 10 years. The Learning Quarter aims to leverage the opportunities that come from having two of the country's most important universities in the economic heart of the city – through establishing a distinctive urban hub of learning, teaching and research in Auckland city'.

You can find the two pdfs (not long – 12 and 16 pp respectively) that make up the *Blueprint* at the following url:
<http://www.aucklandcity.govt.nz/council/documents/blueprint/default.asp>

11. Learning beauty

In March 07 *Educating for the Creative Workforce: Rethinking Arts and Education* was published – the work of the ARC Centre of Excellence for Creative Industries and Innovation in partnership with the Australia Council for the Arts. I'm stubborn on this – a good reason for studying music or literature is because it's beautiful or inspiring or personally and culturally enriching. There might be an economic spin-off, though as I recall, there wasn't much in it for Kafka or van Gogh.

Still, the market makes the call and this paper dispassionately sets out the evidence for the arts contribution to the economy, vocational success, social cohesion, research outcomes etc. I still reckon you can't buy beautiful, but check this out if you need to argue the toss with those of a less Romantic disposition than me:
<http://www.cci.edu.au/library/Oakley%20final%202011a.pdf>

12. Rewind ...

Pursuing the creativity theme, last newsletter carried mention of Barry Jones' lecture early this year - Education: Creativity, values, equity and changes in society. It kicked off the 07 Dean's Lecture Series at Melbourne Uni's Faculty of

Education. I mention it again because Jones makes the case for creativity and explains the split between the educational creatives and the education instrumentalists. It's a podcast, and there's a transcript, too:

<http://www.edfac.unimelb.edu.au/news/lectures/index.html>

13. Be alert, not alarmed

The Australian Strategic Policy Institute has issued a policy paper called 'Australian universities and terrorism' – too long a title for a fridge magnet, but still catches your attention, doesn't it?

The intro states the paper's topic reach very neatly: 'Universities are potential terrorist targets. They may also be a source of personnel, knowledge and materiel for attacks on other targets. Our universities can assist in delivering counter-terrorism solutions through their research efforts and by their teaching programs that produce better educated security professionals and well-informed citizens. Universities can also contribute to raising community awareness about the risks of terrorism through various outreach activities'.

In just 7 pages you can get an overview of how terrorism and the Australian university are related – link to the pdf is:

<http://www.aspi.org.au/publications/publicationlist.aspx?pubtype=9>

14. Funny that liberalism started with a Locke ...

It continues with A Norton who is a stimulating writer on HE. Andrew Norton is a Policy and Government Relations Advisor in the Office of the VC at Melbourne Uni. He's also a Research Fellow at the Centre for Independent Studies, where independent means small government, market-based solutions and libertarianism.

Norton has a wry sense of his inner 'burbs outsider status. His blog runs the byline: 'Observations from Carlton's lone classical liberal'. Anyway, the blog is worth a visit. You can select HE from the category list on the right hand side of the home page. There were 54 HE topics on offer when I was last here:
<http://andrewnorton.info/blog/>

15. And now, a number from the ABS

The ABS has released the *Directory of Education and Training Statistics, 2007*. In one handy and very long list the ABS provides links to the sources

of ongoing data collection activity by government departments/agencies. One to bookmark: <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/Latestproducts/1136.0Contents2007?opendocument&tabname=Summary&prodno=1136.0&issue=2007&num=&view=>

16. And now, an AIR from Wendy

Wendy Marchment – Director of Quality, Planning and Statistics at Griffith, and AAIR's Past President – reminds us of a couple of important information and knowledge sharing activities run by the US Association for Institutional Research.

First, there's the AIR Affiliated Groups Newsletter – you can find your way to the current edition here: <http://www.airweb.org/page.asp?page=577>.

Wendy notes two things from the July edition:

- the listserv established recently (Reshaping IR) is fairly active (p 3)
- if you're keen to contribute to recording AAIR's history, there's a history project underway (p 3).

Second, most uni staff should have access to some of AAIR's online journals. For example:

- the quarterly *New Directions for Institutional Research* – each edition explores a specific IR topic. The 07 Spring Issue is sub-titled 'Using Quantitative Data to Answer Critical Questions'. In 2007 a supplemental issue focussing on assessment will commence. More info at: <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/cgi-bin/jhome/86010818>
- *Research in Higher Education* hits the deck 8 times a year – it's the official peer-reviewed academic journal published by AIR: <http://www.springerlink.com/content/101599/>

17. Universities all over the place

The International Association of Universities (IAU), founded in 1950, is the UNESCO-based worldwide association of higher education institutions. It brings together institutions and organisations from some 150 countries for reflection and action on common concerns and collaborates with various international, regional and national bodies active in higher education.

Take the journey to this page – <http://www.unesco.org/iau/association/> – click the Newsletter button and work it out from there. The May 07 issue dwells on university league tables. Take the archive side-trip on the left of the page – for example, the October 06 edition focussed on

The State of Research in Higher Education, there was Global Trends in the Funding of Higher Education (March 05), and way back you can peruse Women in Higher Education (October 01).

18. Tour 10 countries in 70 whirlwind pages!

The Center for Higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS) at the University of Twente in the Netherlands has downloadable reports in English from its website. The one that led me here was *Issues in higher education policy 2006: An update on higher education policy issues in 2006 in 10 Western countries*. Australia is one of the 10.

The report covers quality, funding/finance, research infrastructure etc, though not every topic is covered for each country.

Vocational education gets a run, too, because the Europeans don't make rigid and silly distinctions between VET and HE.

The list of reports is here: http://www.utwente.nl/cheps/publications/downloadable_publications/downloadableenglish.doc/

19. Developing Postgraduate's Teaching Skills

The University of East Anglia at Norwich has ten training modules in pdf form (plus videos for sale) which comprise lessons plans for assisting postgrads who have teaching assistant roles in the sciences. However, the principles apply in most areas. Covers a range of topics – I've only looked at a couple but they look like pretty useful resources: <http://www.uea.ac.uk/csed/project/modules.html>

20. Australian Collaborative Education Network (ACEN)

ACEN is a brand new group which brings together those with an interest in work integrated learning, or co-operative learning or whatever you call it at your place. It has a website hosted by Swinburne Uni: <http://www.swin.edu.au/hosting/acen/>

You have access to papers from various conferences (amongst other resources) here: <http://www.swin.edu.au/hosting/acen/resources.php#conf>

Despite being brand new, ACEN successfully picked up a Carrick Discipline Based Initiative project titled *Work Integrated Learning: A national framework for initiatives to support best practice*.

The focus is on what works in ensuring that graduates have employability skills to go with their testamurs.

21. VU makes learning work

VU VC, Elizabeth Harman delivered a paper to the Australian Financial Review Higher Education Summit back in April: *Raised voices or raising voices? Taking business at its word in the new VU.*

Harman strides purposefully into the world of work as a point of differentiation. She writes: 'VU has long been more willing to align education and training to the workforce and workplace, rather than to the discipline or fields of study that are the norm in higher education (it was a pioneer for example, in Tourism and Hospitality). The alignment in future will be more deliberately adopted across the whole university and with the explicit intention of being coherent across the multiple sectors. This coherence will be informed by ongoing research and evidence.'

The full text is here, and worth your time: http://www.vu.edu.au/library/scripts/objectifyMedia.aspx?file=pdf/551/46.pdf&siteID=4&str_title=Raised%20Voices%20-%20April%204%202007.pdf

22. Critical mass ethics

The Ethics Centre of South Australia brings together Adelaide Uni, Flinders, UniSA and the state government to provide a focus for ethics in human research. ECSA pools ethics expertise, provides professional development programs (including for postgrads), supports research activity about ethics, and assists the university partners in managing cross-institutional research. A model worth investigation, and its website explains it very well: <http://www.ecsa.edu.au/>

23. Re-ranking

US education think tank, Education Sector, released in September 06 a short (under 30 pages) report titled *College Rankings Reformed: The Case for a New Order in Higher Education*. It takes a very big stick to the inadequacies of the most popular of the US college rankings, and proposes its own system. The report suggests rankings should be based on:

- Teaching – 20%
- Learning – 30%
- Retention and completions – 20%
- Life after college – 30%

No research, but that's a function of the system, I guess. So if rankings make you angry, curious or good-humoured, there's something for you here: http://www.educationsector.org/usr_doc/CollegeRankingsReformed.pdf

24. Improving access to Aussie unis

Good to see Universities Australia getting stuck right in to its new job. Amongst its first major policy excursions is to 'commission a study into equity and access to universities for low socio-economic status students'. The press release is here: http://www.universitiesaustralia.edu.au/content.asp?page=/news/media_releases/2007/avcc_media_13_07.htm

PODDIE'S CORNER

ANU pods get international gong

SkillSoup is an online radio program produced by ANU's Academic Skills and Learning Centre. It's so good it was named Best Educational Podcast in the Higher Education Category by Fordham University's Podcast for Teachers. More here: http://info.anu.edu.au/mac/Newsletters_and_Journals/On_Campus/096PP_2007/11PP_June2/skillsoup.asp

The podcasts are here ... <http://academicsskills.anu.edu.au/podcasts/skillsoup.php> ... and they are really, really good. They are much broader than managing citations, though there's that. They tackle the student experience in all its diversity with topics like managing your supervisor, knowing your rights and careers.

The funny side of US student loans

I'm not recommending you listen to this. The Student Aid team from Vanderbilt University in Tennessee do their very best to explain the weird world of US student aid. They're keen to make the system work for their students. But boy oh boy, what a system. These guys have to work so hard to manage the managed market it makes you pine for tight regulation. The genius of the market meets its old nemesis: the real world.

Simon Marginson from Melb Uni recently damned Australia's student financing arrangements as a schemozzle. True. But one country's schemozzle is another's well-ordered pantry.

The only way to get through this podcast is to keep a sense of humour about you at all times: http://uc.princeton.edu/main/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1872&Itemid=

(This has nothing to do with pods, but it is related to student loans and it's a lot easier to grasp. The Gray Lady, aka *The New York Times*, ran a story on 29 July titled 'Certain degrees now cost more at public universities'. This sounds just like home – a reminder that it's dangerous to generalise the familiar. Some US public universities have begun charging more for tuition in some disciplines. In a system with a praiseworthy bias towards a liberal education, it's causing some disquiet:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2007/07/29/education/29tuition.html?ref=education>

WEBCASTER'S CORNER

EUTube

This is a nice snapshot of the future of institutional communications. That ever-expanding club, the European Commission, now has a YouTube channel. Everything from history to biodiversity docs, or spend some with your favourite European Commissioner. There's a playlist at the bottom right that has a category called 'Culture, education and youth' – lot's of stuff about movies, not much book learnin' – but stay tuned.

EIDOS TV

EUTube was just the taster for Australasia's very own EIDOSTV – the Queensland-based mob that's all over education like a wide grin – is showing the EU a thing or two about how to netcast education.

There's all manner of things, from Tim Fischer on happiness to excerpts from the 2006 EIDOS Conference, *Data Sharing: Open Source, Collaborative Innovation & Integrated Platforms and Policies*.

Now some of you think I'm a bit over the top on podcasts. But pods are tame compared to what's coming on the PC screen – clunky platform for education policy, management, research just yet – but stay tuned: <http://www.youtube.com/eidostv>

Right now, amongst other things, you can view (in 3 parts) the address by Melbourne Uni VC, Glyn Davis, to the EIDOS breakfast series. I haven't watched it all yet – don't like telly. I might make an exception. The topic was the public/private mix in Australian universities (with a few thoughts about

the vagaries of central planning):

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CxKW5rKZ5Mo>

If you need a more traditional web experience, try the EIDOS site for an explanation of EIDOSTV:

http://www.eidos.org.au/news/results.chtml?filename_num=146853

SPATIAL CONCEPTS

Around every corner, it seems, someone is sizing up the adequacy of the spaces we learn in. There's a buzz about the places, be they purpose-built or intentionally serendipitous. Where to start?

Australian HE spaces

The Carrick Institute is doing a roadshow called 'Places and spaces for learning'. Between 17 & 28 September it will be Adelaide, Perth, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane. Purpose is 'to identify, consolidate and disseminate good practice in the refurbishment and development of innovative learning and teaching environments'. Seminars and site visits. All the details are here:

<http://www.carrickinstitute.edu.au/carrick/go/home/grants/pid/398>

British school spaces

There's an interesting outfit in the UK called the British Council for School Environments (BCSE). Website pitches specialised info to architects, teachers, students, and promotes sustainability and learning. Recently BCSE ran a poll in which a third of teachers said they are unable to teach effectively because of badly designed learning environments. BCSE is here: <http://www.bcse.uk.net/menu.asp?id=1>

British and Scottish HE spaces

The quaintly named, but vibrantly focussed, UK Joint Information Systems Committee has a work program called 'Designing spaces for effective learning'. Some great resources here: http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/elearning_innovation/eli_learningspaces.aspx

The Scottish Funding Council has published *Spaces for learning* – you can access it here, along with conference presentations on the topic: http://www.sfc.ac.uk/information/information_learning/spaces_for_learning.html

Library spaces

Can Hieronymus Merkin Ever Forget Mercy Humppe and Find True Happiness ... in the Library?

Never saw the movie, but never forgotten the title. I liked its length and the way I could always add a bit. This is long, too, but not as catchy:

Researchers' use of academic libraries and their services: a report commissioned by the Research Information Network and the Consortium of Research Libraries. (The title is a bit bland, but whoever did the write up is a good prose stylist, so you'll find it an easy read as well as a good one).

Released in April this year, in these 70 or so pages the library is dissected to see if it's still pumping blood to researchers who are working in new ways. The report suggests the library can't be at the heart of research unless it changes its behaviour.

Go to: <http://eprints.ecs.soton.ac.uk/13868/>

Maybe you should also go to the 2008 VALA conference on 'Libraries: changing spaces, virtual places'. Melbourne, 5-7 February. More at: www.vala.org.au

Cyberspaces

Of course, it can be cyberspace. Educational institutions have worked away for a decade getting handle on how to get learning and cyberspace in the same space. Now the business models are beginning to take shape. Massey Uni reports on a successful collaboration between students at Massey and Wilhelm's Uni in Germany: http://masseynews.massey.ac.nz/2007/Massey_News/issue-09/stories/06-09-07.html

The collaboration was supported by Wimba, which seems to be making a bit of corporate headway into taming cyberspace for learning: <http://www.wimba.com/>

MAN U!

No, no. This isn't about football. You're not even in the right country. Occasionally I just pick a university website and go trawling. And so it was with the University of Manitoba. A couple of interesting things to report.

Learning commons

A September 2006 report – *A Learning Commons Concept Plan* (written by a Task Force comprised of university staff) – appears to be accepted now as the map for change. The report begins like this:

'A Learning Commons at the University of Manitoba will be the focal point for a new learning experience in a student-centred environment. Integral to the concept of a learning commons is the understanding that students' social lives are not separate from their academic lives, and that informal learning is just as crucial to academic growth as classroom-centred learning.'

You can read the whole report here.

http://www.umanitoba.ca/admin/vp_academic/media/lc_report.pdf

Student blogs

The report checks in on Web 2.0, and as part of that gives a tick to student blogs in a surprising way – there are several of them on the uni website. Some bloggers are more active than others. Have a read: <http://umanitoba.ca/student/blogs/>

Candid camera

This is very old web – the webcam. Remember the excitement of looking the Taj Mahal or the Matterhorn on a static webcam? Kids these days don't know how lucky they are. Anyway, here's the Uni of Manitoba's Bisoncam website. And you get to choose from four scenes: <http://umanitoba.ca/bisoncam/>

Office of Institutional Analysis

There are some interesting things to view on the website of the Office of Institutional Analysis. Each year, it seems, the folks in the office produce the *IS Book* – that's IS for 'institutional statistics'. You can check volumes back to 1996-97. There are also loads of data in the annual *Institutional data in support of the resource allocation process*. All accessible here:

http://www.umanitoba.ca/admin/institutional_analysis/

STUFF YOU GET FOR FREE

This is pure editorial indulgence. Seeing I'm here, thought I might as well point you to two speeches that demonstrate how the speech as a public art form can do extraordinary things.

Griffith University offers a podcast (in two parts) of Noel Pearson's speech in May at the NSW Art Gallery. Call it a speech, a talk, a lecture – its public conversation at its best. The speech follows up Pearson's mighty essay, 'Unintended Consequences', in Griffith Review 16: http://www3.griffith.edu.au/03/ertiki/tiki-articles_cat_rss.php?categories=Podcasts

Andrew O'Hagan's opening address to the 2007 Sydney Writer's Festival is a must on several fronts – the powerful extolling of the role of literature, the humour, and the terrific rendition (well-served by O'Hagan's Glaswegian accent) of Rabbin Burns' grand poem, *A man's a man for a' that*. Here 'tis: <http://www.swf.org.au/content/blogcategory/158/152/>
