



Monthly e-Newsletter – June 2008

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EDITORIAL

Late again. Sorry about that. I'm sure you've found your way to the Bradley Discussion Paper by now – a link to it is probably redundant, but just in case:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/policy_issues_reviews/reviews/highered_review/

This Education Revolution seems to be a variable speed experience. The VET revolution has been swift, higher education's revolution has a bit of the Long March about it, and school education's revolution is happening by skirmishes. Keeps you on your toes, I guess.

The newsletter mentions a few resources that explain what IR is good for. There are, of course, some excellent papers on the AAIR website that also do this job: <http://www.aair.org.au/jir/Index.htm>

Subject to space and relevance to members, the newsletter can run job vacancies and items on upcoming events. And always keen to include items you think will be interest to others. Please contact me at: [rob@](mailto:rob@sharpwords.com.au) with sharpwords.com.au

AAIR FORUM 2008

19-21 November
Hyatt Hotel, Canberra

Hosted by ANU

The 2008 Forum website address is:

<http://www.leishman-associates.com.au/aair2008/index.php>

Registrations are now open

Our 2008 theme is:
**Enhancing Quality Research:
a Global Perspective**

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

**Now is the time to pen your 250
word abstract. Oh so easy.**

Step 1: Download an abstract template:

http://www.leishman-associates.com.au/aair2008/abstract_submission.php

Step 2: Download the Abstracts
brochure and instructions here:

http://www.leishman-associates.com.au/aair2008/downloads/AAIR_CallForAbstractsFINAL.pdf

Step 3: Submit by 4 July

Step 4: Relax

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 Thakur, 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/>

POSITION VACANT

– SOUTHERN CROSS UNI

Team Coordinator Enrolment Services Southern Cross University (Lismore Campus)

I've let down the team at Southern Cross – if I'd managed to get the newsletter out last week you'd have had plenty of time to get this application together. But now you've only until Monday 16 June. Sorry to rush you.

The Team Co-ordinator is responsible for the management and supervision of a team of Enrolment Services employees and will focus on the following area:

Fees, Systems and Reporting: Manage the rapidly expanding function which underpins curriculum review with a particular focus on Student Self Management (SSM). This area is concerned with course analysis and course structure and planning, and building the parameters and configurations that underlie course structures and templates. It also manages system set up, Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR) data integrity and fee setting including the annual fee review process and fee setting (in terms of DEEWR compliance and notification).

Closing Date: Monday, 16 June 2008

Further information can be found at the following website
<http://www.scu.edu.au/jobs/index.php/12/#general>

IT IS WRITTEN

Kindle or swindle?

The hype is that the e-book is coming. Maybe. Amazon's Kindle reader is the latest attempt to turn the hype into something the market actually wants. I reckon it's a dud. Maybe I'm a Luddite. More on Kindle here from the *Columbia Journalism Review*:
http://www.cjr.org/cover_story/the_future_of_reading.php

... and here in the Autumn 2008 edition of the ever-so-slightly bolshie *Overland*:
<http://www.overlandexpress.org/190%20lee.html>

How will we know if we know?

UNESCO has produced *Towards information literacy indicators: conceptual framework paper*. The preliminary information literacy skillset reads:

- Recognise information needs
- Locate and evaluate the quality of information
- Store and retrieve information
- Make effective and ethical use of information,
- Apply information to create and communicate knowledge

The report is here:

<http://www.uis.unesco.org/template/pdf/cscl/InfoLit.pdf>

Good writing and gud riting

There's no end of conversation about whether writing as we know it is endangered by the rise and rise of writing online. Will too many young people know too little about how to string together a few good words? In late April the PEW Internet and American Life Project released *Writing, Technology and Teens*. Based on extensive conversations with young people, the report tells us teenagers make very clear distinctions between good writing and e-writing. They know the diff:

http://www.pewinternet.org/pdfs/PIP_Writing_Report_FINAL3.pdf

‘;!

I love punctuation. A couple of years ago, I got involved in an animated and distressing conversation at an editors' conference about the dim future of the semi-colon. Anyway, I urge you all to join the Apostrophe Protection Society:
<http://www.apostrophe.fsnet.co.uk/>

AIN'T IT THE TRUTH

The best of lectures are sheer artistry, and to dislodge their role in the rush to the web is to destroy one of the oldest, most motivational forms of teaching.

Tara Brabazon, *Digital hemlock: internet education and the poisoning of teaching*, UNSW Press, 2002.

(There's a fascinating chapter in this book about the physicality of teaching – something I've never really reflected on before.)

PLACES TO GO – THINGS TO DO

e-Exemplars: exciting developments in e-learning

Online mini-conference –

- **Wednesday 18 June: 10.30am-9.00pm AEST**
- **Thursday 19 June: 10.30am-4.30pm AEST**

The Australian Flexible Training Framework is arranging this online event which focussed on what's new in VET e-learning:

The sessions include:

- innovation & leadership in teaching and learning
- 'blended baking' – e-learning successes with apprentice bakers
- e-learning marvels with fitting & machining students
- networked learning & use of Wikieducator at Otago Polytechnic New Zealand
- using wikis for online learning & teaching platforms.

Conference details here:

http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au/flx/webdav/site/flxsite/shared/Networks/2008%20e-events/2008documents/e-exemplars_flyer.pdf

English Australia Conference

18-20 September, 2008

Canberra

The Conference website announces a widening of scope after twenty years of conferencing: 'The Conference Program will maintain its longstanding TESOL focus for teachers of English to international students, but will now also offer a program for the business and administrative staff of ELICOS providers, targeting broader areas of management, marketing, student support and service delivery.' Details:

<http://www.eaconference.com.au/>

Engaging students in assessment

The Australian Technology Network Assessment Conference

20-21 November, 2008

University of South Australia (City West Campus)

Topics will include:

- transforming assessment and feedback for student engagement
- cultural and academic diversity: designing assessment to engage *all* students

- discipline-based practices in engaging students in assessment
- using technology to enhance engagement in assessment.

<http://www.unisa.edu.au/atnassessment08/>

ALIA Information Online Conference & Exhibition

20-22 January 2009

Darling Harbour Convention Centre, Sydney

The Australian Library and Information Association is holding its 14th Conference in 2009. It's a way off yet so the program isn't up for you to view, but plenty of other information is:

<http://www.information-online.com.au/>

You can check out the papers from the 2007 Conference at the website above, but it's easier for me to give you the link than tell how to find the link, so here's the link:

http://conferences.alia.org.au/online2007/conf.papers.html?vm_key=7C6FFDA7-07D2-F8BA-AFF45F51C2132CD2

Dean's Lecture series – Melbourne Uni

Fancy a Tuesday night out in Melbourne Town, (the World's 17th Most Livable City:

<http://www.mercer.com/referencecontent.jhtml?idContent=1307990>)? Well then, pitch up to the

Dean's Lecture Series organised by Melbourne Uni's Faculty of Education. The next lecture on 22 July will be delivered by Prof. Alma Harris, Pro-Director (Leadership) and Chair in Educational Leadership, Institute of Education, University of London:

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

FOR THE PODDIES, VODDIES & BLOGGIES

An Apple for the learner

University College London has thrown its lot in with iTunes U. Here's the press release:

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/news-articles/0806/08060301>

... and here's the download site:

<http://itunes.ucl.ac.uk/>

... and here's Apple's run down on iTunes U:

http://www.apple.com/education/itunesu_mobilelearning/itunesu.html

NEWSLETTER NOTES

1. What's an AAIRie good for?

In 2005 Margaret O'Flanagan wrote a paper I should have known about in 2005. Better late than never. Her paper, on the website of the All Ireland Society for Higher Education, is called *What institutional research can do to support the individual academic*. Readymade marketing for AAIRies:

http://www.aishe.org/readings/2005-1/oflanagan-What_Institutional_Research_can_do_to_support_the_individual_academic.pdf

2. How an AAIRie shines a light

From 2002, this is an oldie but goodie along the same lines as the previous entry. From the US Association for Institutional Research, *How institutional research can reduce anxiety, or resources for institutional research*:

<http://www.airweb.org/images/AIRanxiety.pdf>

3. Stats that count

You might remember from a recent newsletter that Anonymous from Queensland tipped us off to the OECD's Seminar on Innovative Approaches to Turning Statistics into Knowledge in late May. Inconveniently, it was in Stockholm so I couldn't get there. You too, eh. Shame. But you can get along to the presentations secondhand by clicking on the 'Programme' link on this page:

http://www.oecd.org/document/54/0,3343,en_2157136_1_31938349_39800246_1_1_1_1,00.html

4. Putting AUSSE to work

The ACER has issued a companion piece to AUSSE called *Using AUSSE data for enhancement*, authored by Marcia Devlin, Hamish Coates and Jillian Kinzie:

http://www.acer.edu.au/documents/AUSSE_Using_DataForEnhancement.pdf

5. AB. CD 🐟. MNO 🐟. SAR! OS. IC.

I can't tell you why that nonsense sentence from childhood popped into my head when I thought about the OECD, but it did. Let me know if you need help with the translation. Tip – just say fish when you come to 🐟. Now, the *OECD Factbook 2008: economic, environmental and social statistics* is online and excellent:

<http://caliban.sourceoecd.org/vl=1018807/cl=13/nw=1/rpsv/factbook/>

And the OECD has upgraded the behaviour of its online database which makes a visit here much more fun. And productive of course:

http://fiordiliji.sourceoecd.org/vl=5598097/cl=34/nw=1/rpsv/statistic/s36_about.htm?jnlissn=99991004

6. Vale BAFROP!

I'm none too disappointed to farewell the *BAFROP Newsletter*, just because the name was so ungainly – *Backing Australia's Future Realising Our Potential Newsletter* just didn't chime. Now we have the *Higher Education Newsletter 2020* from DEEWR – much more of a jingle to it:

http://www.dest.gov.au/sectors/higher_education/publications_resources/2020_newsletter/default.htm

7. Green blueprint for the built environment

The Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability (ARIES) at Macquarie Uni has produced a pearly in *Shifting towards sustainability: education for climate change adaptation in the built environment sector*. It hit the streets in October last year, I gather, but I've only just caught up with it. The focus is on professional development for the professions that put the built environment on the ground. There was input from the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects, the Planning Institute of Australia, Engineers Australia and the Royal Australian Institute of Architects.

The purpose of the project that led to the report was (and I quote): 'to investigate opportunities to improve the capacity of graduate practitioners and existing practitioners to effectively respond to climate change adaptation challenges through accredited university courses and professional development.' Just the ticket for curriculum development and short course delivery planning, and a nice insight into what we need to do in practical terms to turn the greenhouse back into a backyard hobby:

<http://www.aries.mq.edu.au/pdf/climateChange.pdf>

8. Ranking Taiwan highly

Australian Education International has released *Taiwan's Aim for the Top University Program: innovation, internationalisation and opportunity*. It tells the story of a ten year plan to put one of Taiwan's universities into the top 100, and to grow

acknowledged expertise in at least ten other universities in particular areas. Apart from the well-considered plan, it's an interesting insight into a university system I didn't know much about. The report notes the interest these Taiwanese top flight institutions have in establishing solid partnerships, where there are complementary strengths, with Australian universities:

http://aei.dest.gov.au/AEI/PublicationsAndResearch/Publications/Taiwans_Aim_Top_pdf

9. Guess ...

Okay, smartie. Right off the top of your head, how many students are going to sit university entrance exams in Vietnam in 2008? Now, what's the percentage increase on sitters from 2007? Check your answers here:

<http://english.vietnamnet.vn/education/2008/05/783251/>

10. CEOs and innovation

This is a very handy document. The Australian Industry Group and Deloitte conducted a national survey of nearly 500 CEOs and produced *Skilling for innovation*, released in April. The report establishes the links industry seeks and sees between skills and innovation. The report turns the turf being cut by the Innovation Review:

http://pdf.aigroup.asn.au/publications/reports/general_reports/Skilling_For_Innovation_CEO_Full_Report.pdf

11. Contact and contract

The *Times Higher Education Supplement* put together a long tale about the differences between types of universities and teaching hours by discipline. Part of the tale is how much contact time students get and whether they are getting what they paid for. 'Clocking On' is here:

<http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/story.asp?storycode=401632>

12. More OzLit in NSW schools

John Della Bosca, the New South Wales Education Minister, has a fair bit of unhappy press lately. But the good news from Mr Della Bosca is that NSW school students will have the opportunity to read more Australian literature during their school years. Good thing:

<http://www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au/media-release/2008/mr-2008-05-19.html>

13. Once upon a school

This is a terrific stuff. A raft of stories about how people have involved themselves in creative and exciting ways with their local public schools. Loads of ideas for engagement here:

http://onceuponaschool.org/?page_id=191

14. Leading schools

From ACER comes *The leadership challenge: improving learning in schools* by Bill Mulford. Recommended reading. The review rounds up the multiple challenges for school leaders and deals with them in an integrated way. The section on 'adjectival leadership' is illuminating – readily applied across the education spectrum:

http://www.acer.edu.au/documents/AER_53-TheLeadershipChallenge.pdf

15. Teaching talent (1)

Last year the Business Council of Australia put a price tag on the really good classroom teacher: about \$130,000. *Teaching talent: the best teachers for Australia's classrooms*, extends the argument for this price tag. It points to UK research that suggests one reason potentially good teachers don't teach, or leave teaching, is because the top salary level peters out at around \$70,000. The messy bit is still messy though – how do you measure great teaching? A messy problem worth solving all the same, because a great teacher makes for great learning:

<http://www.bca.com.au/DisplayFile.aspx?FileID=436>

16. Teaching talent (2)

The UK Higher Education Academy announced its 2008 Senior Teaching Fellows in mid-May. Two of the eight are from Flinders Uni – Iain Hay and Mark Israel. Here's the announcement:

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/news/detail/senior_fellows_2008

17. Assessing everything

Professor Gordon Stanley (formerly President of the Board of Studies in New South Wales) has a gig as founding Director of the new Oxford University Centre for Educational Assessment.

There's not much on the site yet, but it will be fascinating to call in from time to time. The brief is long – according to the website it will dabble in: 'schools-based learning, as well as vocational,

professional and higher education and support the move to lifelong learning, the needs of multinational employers and an increasingly global workforce.' Anything else you can think of?
<http://www.education.ox.ac.uk/assessment/>

18. Assessing everything really well

The University of Tasmania Assessment Working Group 2007 has produced a terrific resource called *Guidelines for good assessment practice*. Thanks for this, Taswegians:
<http://www.utas.edu.au/tl/docs/guide-for-good-assessment.pdf>

19. Changes in VET – pick a state

There are so many changes underway or in the wings for VET across Australia you need as many eyes as a spider to keep it all in view. Let's pick a state – any state. Let's see. What about WA. Good choice. In mid-May the Minister for Education and Training announced changes to the way in which industry will have input to planning for skills formation. Here's his brief statement to the Parliament:
<http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/hansard/hans35.nsf/NFS/5e695e67109f87c825744b002da9d0?OpenDocument>

Some important changes to the management of apprenticeships and traineeships come with the Education and Training Legislation Amendment and Repeal Bill 2008, which got its second reading on 15 May. The Explanatory Memorandum is probably the easiest way into it. You can get by with just the first 11 pages or so:
<http://www.parliament.wa.gov.au/web/newwebparl.nsf/iframewebpages/Bills+-+Current>

Going back a bit, to May 2007, you can see the work behind these changes in *Careers for life: creating a dynamic and responsive apprenticeship and traineeship system*, which was a report of the WA Skills Formation Taskforce. The 201 page blockbuster is here:
http://www.stb.wa.gov.au/docs/Final_Report_SFT.pdf

20. VET reforms from an industry perspective

Two years ago Industry Skills Councils were under threat of extinction. Now the Commonwealth government is ramping them up, and establishing Skills Australia for good measure. These changes are having knock on effects across the country – see the WA changes (referred to above) for

organising industry input. So, for the VET-obsessed amongst us, there's mandatory reading in the Joint Industry Skills Councils Response to the *Skilling Australia for the future* discussion paper:
<http://www.agrifoodskills.net.au/uploaded/file/ISC%20Response%20to%20SAF%20Discussion%20Paper%20FINAL%20Apr%2008.pdf>

21. VET investigation at VU

Victoria University has launched a Centre for Vocational and Work-based Education Research. The founding Director is Berwyn Clayton who is moving from Canberra Institute's Centre Undertaking Research in Vocational Education:
http://www.vu.edu.au/About_VU/Media_Releases/Cutting_edge_research_in_Vocational_Education_at_VU/indexdl_91064.aspx

22. Learning on the job

I make the journey once a month or more to the NCVET website. Always a wonder, this is particularly wonderful – a bunch of Queenslanders have put together *Effective models of employment-based training*. This is practical thinking tailor-made for the upcoming challenges of fast-tracking qualification delivery and supporting existing workers into training:
<http://www.ncvet.edu.au/research/proj/nr06012.pdf>

23. The CAP

The Australian academic profession in 2007: a first analysis of survey results was delivered unto us just a few weeks ago by UNE's Centre for Higher Education Management and Policy and ACER. There were some surprises in here; check out Figure 2 for a stark picture of the gender splits for Levels A to E:
<http://www.une.edu.au/chemp/resources/project/cap/cap080311analysis.pdf>

More background on the Changing Academic Profession (CAP) survey is here:
<http://www.une.edu.au/chemp/projects/cap/>

24. Where in the world is Guelph?

I ended up at University of Guelph's IR website for roundabout reasons. There were a couple of reasons to tarry longer than planned. Have a look:
http://www.uoguelph.ca/analysis_planning/reports/

25. Dopey

I will defend to the death your right to speak, even if what you say is intellectually barren. In case you thought we all knew that IQ doesn't discriminate, just drop in here for a minute:

<http://education.guardian.co.uk/higher/news/story/0,,2281404,00.html>

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY'S CERTIFICATE IN INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH SUMMER COURSES

Lachlan Murdoch from UniSA alerted me to this PD opportunity for AAIRies. The pity of it is you don't have to go to Florida. You can stay home and still do the course. Never mind. It still sounds good.

The Certificate in Institutional Research at Florida State University is an online certificate program, consisting of 18 credits of graduate-level course work, designed to provide academic and professional development opportunities for institutional researchers, administrators, graduate students, and faculty from all areas of higher education. Students will enhance their knowledge and understanding of Institutional Research, have the opportunity to explore national databases, and apply their knowledge to practical applications.

All courses can be taken individually or as part of the Certificate. Courses are completely online and will run June 30-August 8, 2008. For more information, please visit <http://www.fsu.edu/~elaps/he/certresearch.htm> or email: ircertificate@mail.coe.fsu.edu

Course offerings:

Introduction to Institutional Research (EDH 5055)

The course provides an introduction to the theoretical and practical application of institutional research as a discipline in higher education. Institutional research has direct applications to many, if not all, administrative and strategic activities within the institution. Course content addresses local, state, and national issues in institutional research, examines organizational, administrative, political, and ethical issues in institutional research, and exposes students to national databases.

Special Topics: Data Mining (EDH 5931, Section 07)

This course will provide an introduction to the basic theories and practice of data mining. Data mining is the process of searching through and analyzing large amounts of data in order to identify data that best fits the researcher's intended purpose. No previous experience with data mining is necessary. Students should have some basic knowledge of statistics and/or experience with database software (i.e., Excel or Access), but expertise is not required. Course content will include exposure to data mining software and the opportunity to use one of these programs. Lab exercises will be used to provide basic experience with data analysis research.

Special Topics: Student Success in College (EDH 5931, Section 09)

American higher education is changing dramatically as an increasingly diverse population gets ready to go to college. This change provides an exciting opportunity to strengthen our human resources. Meanwhile, the college graduation rate has been just around 50% for decades, so one common question in the minds of policy makers and administrators is: How can the educational system effectively promote student success in college? This course examines the theories and research on student success and explores the effective policies, programs, and practices that can be adopted to promote student success in higher education.

LATE MAIL

Wendy Marchment from Griffith Uni has emailed to alert us to the most recent edition of *New Directions in Higher Education*, which is dedicated to Institutional Research. The special issue is titled 'Institutional Research: More than Just Data.'

You can track it down through your library I guess, but here's Wiley's advertising: <http://www3.interscience.wiley.com/journal/86011349/home>