Australasian Association for Institutional Research

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Monthly e-Newsletter – May 2009

What's in this edition?

EDITORIAL OF SORTS

There were a couple of missed steps in last month's newsletter. A couple of links weren't right – apologies and thanks for pointing them out. I usually try to make time to check the links before I send it out, but sometimes the clock beats me.

There are a couple of references to Professor Afferbeck Lauder in this month's edition. For those who are unfamiliar with his extraordinary body of work, you can find out more from Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Afferbeck_Lauder

More familiar to you might be the names of Michael Fullan (University of Toronto) and Geoff Scott (UWS). I remember when people used to say Fullan was a utopian when it came to school leadership. Utopia seems to be arriving. Geoff Scott is also a change management wiz: we should all be grateful for his critical contribution to the ALTC Learning Leaders project and report. Which is all by way of saying that Fullan and Scott have paired up to author a new tome called *Turnaround leadership for higher education*, just issued by Jossey-Bass. Publisher details here: http://www.josseybass.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0470472049,descCd-authorInfo.html

As always, I look forward to your feedback and contributions during 2009. Subject to space and relevance to members, the newsletter can run job

IT IS WRITTEN

E-learning has not evolved to a point where a stable set of concepts and technologies has gained ascendancy. Common standards are now setting the scene for a convergence of technologies, but we are still far from a convergence of views on the nature and importance of e-learning and its contribution to the generation of all forms of knowledge within an organisation.

E-learning is born of the coupling of learning and technology. If the initial focus was on technology, attention is now turning to the critical issue of learning. The perceived potential for both technological and pedagogical advances has led to a great enthusiasm for exploring and investing in new applications and approaches. The task that remains is to establish more effective techniques for evaluating these divergent approaches and establishing a cycle of improvement…

> - MS Bowles, *Relearning to e-learn: strategies for electronic learning and knowledge*. Melbourne University Press, 2004.

vacancies and items on upcoming events. And always keen to include items you think will be of interest to others. Please feel free to contact me by email: rob@sharpwords.com.au

If you are receiving a copy of this newsletter and would prefer not to, please email me and I'll scrub you from the distribution list. My email address is: rob@sharpwords.com.au

Don't forget to visit the 2009 AAIR Forum website: http://www.leishman-associates.com.au/aair2009/

May I take this opportunity to wish all Australian readers a happy and prosperous Commonwealth Budget.

Data Warehousing Special Interest Group Forum 2009

27-28th August

Griffith University, Nathan Campus

Organised by AAIR's Data Warehousing (DW) Special Interest Group (SIG).

The theme for this year's forum is:
Getting the runs on the board.

The Forum is hosted this year by Griffith University.

The recent summer saw the Australian cricket team affected by curious board decisions, an inability to recruit and retain good performers and sniping from the larger cricket community. In Pakistan, the Sri Lankans have suffered external attacks. In the West Indies, the quality of the underlying grounds has been found wanting.

Sound familiar?

Come and share with the AAIR Business Intelligence, Data Warehousing and Performance Management forum how you have (or intend to) overcome issues of curious board decisions, recruitment and retention, internal and external attacks and basic quality, to get those runs on the board.

The Forum is open to anyone who is interested in data warehousing at tertiary education institutions, for the purpose of management information and decision making.

We encourage interested parties to join the AAIR Data Warehousing Special Interest Group (DW SIG) as all future communications about the Forum will be sent to the DW SIG listerv. You can find your way to the listserv (and to information about earlier DW SIG activities) at:
http://www.aair.org.au/Pages/DataWarehouse.html

Call for abstracts is open until 22 May

Further information about the Forum is on the Forum website:
http://www.griffith.edu.au/office-quality-planning-statistics/business-intelligence/2009-data-warehouse-forum

19TH ANNUAL AAIR FORUM
11-13 November 2009
Hyatt Hotel, Adelaide

The theme for this year's AAIR Forum is:

Turning water into wine: Institutional research as an essential ingredient in strategic decision making for tertiary education.

The Forum will focus on strategic priorities in the sector, including:
- supporting strategic planning
- adding value to measuring and predicting
- responding to skills shortages
- environmental and economic sustainability.

CALL FOR ABSTRACTS IS NOW OPEN

The call for abstracts closes on 29 June. Here you will find more about abstract submissions, along with details about the awards and prizes on offer:
http://www.leishman-associates.com.au/aair2009/downloads/AAIRCallforAbstractFINAL.pdf

REGISTRATION FOR THE FORUM IS NOW OPEN

Registration details are available at:
http://www.leishman-associates.com.au/aair2009/downloads/AAIRRegistraionV5.pdf

KEYNOTE SPEAKERS:

Emeritus Professor Denise Bradley AC

Dr Gavin Moodie
http://www.griffith.edu.au/vc/ate/moodie/

Nick Palousis
http://www.sbpractices.com/nick-palousis

CONFIRMED SPONSORS/HOSTS/PARTNERS

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The 2009 AAIR Forum is organised via a partnership of staff from UniSA, Adelaide Uni and Flinders' Uni.

101 MORE Ways to Make Training Active!

One day workshops – eight Australian capitals – start Melbourne (19 May), finish Hobart (7 July)

This is the second series of these workshops organised by Innovation and Business Skills Australia (IBSA). All the details are here:
http://www.ibsa.org.au/courseDetail.jsp?courseID=15563

2009 Conference – South-East Asian Association for Institutional Research (SEAAIR)

13-15 October 2009

Parkroyal Hotel

Penang, Malaysia

The theme for this year's SEAAIR conference is *The future of higher education*. The four sub-themes are:

- Visioning for excellence in higher education.
- Alternative learning environments for future learners
- Impact of quality on future higher education practices
- Institutional research and the growth of higher education.

You are gunna weep when you see the venue in Penang. Don't forget your togs/bathers/cossie: http://www.ptpm.usm.my/seaair2009/hotel.htm

Close by, on Penang Island, is George Town, now listed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. So just for the hell of it, here's the listing: http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1223/

For further information you can contact the conference organisers at: seaair2009@usm.my

But most of what you need to know is on the Conference website, so pay a visit to: http://www.ptpm.usm.my/seaair2009/

NSW Skills Recognition Conference 2009

25-26 May 2009

Australian Technology Park, Sydney

RCC/RPL fits into a larger context of skills shortages, workforce development and enhancing productivity through targeted training. The conference is hosted by the NSW Department of Education and the NSW Vocational Education and Training Accreditation Board. It promises to turn skills recognition inside out, to canvass a range of stakeholder perspectives, and to offer ideas for and models of effective RCC/RPL in big and small enterprise contexts. The conference also gives a run to the green skills agenda that TAFE NSW is continuing to press with gusto. The program looks both inviting and intensive: http://www.hotelnetwork.com.au/conferences/conferences/det3

2009 VELG National Conference

13-14 August 2009

Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre

The Voc Ed Learning Group (VELG) has chosen as its conference theme *Successfully maintaining training & assessment currency in vocational education*. A good choice, methinks. The National Quality Council's spotlight is but one shining on the need for VET professionals to continue improving assessment knowledge and skills. The program design incorporates targetted sessions for managers and for teachers. Here's the website: http://www.velg.com.au/default.asp?PageID=7

Higher Education at a Time of Crisis: Challenges and Opportunities

28-30 June 2009

Copenhagen Business School

The OECD's Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) is pulling this conference together. Probably a good idea to take stock of how the Global Financial Mess (GFM) is affecting higher ed, and to tally the ways governments are tapping the shoulders of unis to help get things sorted – whether that be policy advice, or investing in uni infrastructure, or welcoming more students. Might be appropriate that one of the conference locations is in Søren Kierkegaards Plads – he was the guy who invented the 'leap of faith', which is maybe what we need to get the GFM tidied up. Here you go: https://conference.cbs.dk/index.php/oecd/oecd/index.php

Society for Research into Higher Education Annual Conference 2009

8-10 December

Celtic Manor Resort near Newport, South Wales

That's Newport, South Wales, not New South Wales. Take the passport. The theme is *Challenging higher education: knowledge, policy and practice*. Looks meaty, considering the likes of:

- role of academic disciplines in knowledge creation with the growth of knowledge created in applied contexts (eg 'mode 2', professional)
- role and status of public higher education in the context of expanding provision by private and corporate universities
- the way student expectations are understood, evaluated and met.

More here: http://www.srhe.ac.uk/conference2009/index.asp

2009 Tertiary Education Management Conference
13-16 September
Darwin Convention Centre

The conference theme for this year's outing is *The real education revolution: sustainability in tertiary education*. The conference website tell us that: 'The conference will have the broad theme of "sustainability" which in this context will include not only environmental issues, but also strategic planning, financial management, facilities management and technology shift, community and regional engagement, student services, commercial partnering and staff management.'

The full program is expected on the conference website in the week commencing 13 May, so drop in around about then to see what's in store: http://www.temc.org.au./2009/index.php

ACEC2010: Digital Diversity conference
6-9 April 2010
Melbourne Convention & Exhibition Centre

If you already have a 2010 diary, mark it in. ACEC (Australian Computers in Education Conference) runs every two years. The 2010 conference theme is *Digital diversity*. This is a conference designed for the primary and secondary school sectors. But let me tell you, there's a lot of fertile experiment and bucketloads of innovation around ICT in those sectors – and the kids are coming to VET and HE with high expectations. You might want to go along and find out what's happening so you can get good and ready. The conference will focus on:

- school improvement: developing & articulating a vision for the role of ICT in school improvement
- technology infrastructure: the technology, resources, and policies necessary to build the technology infrastructure for effective teaching, learning and administration
- professional learning: the development of leaders, and the education and accountability of teachers, administrators and other educators.
- 21st Century teaching and learning: covering technology use in the learning environment.
- Virtual schooling/eLearning: designing, choosing, evaluating and implementing online courses and eLearning experiences for students.

The details will progressively show up here: http://acec2010.info/

NEWSLETTER NOTES

1. Emma chisit?

To the best of my recollection, Emma Chisit was Professor Afferbeck Lauder's rendering of the Australian way of asking that familiar question: how much is it? NATSEM at the University of Canberra, with AMP, have asked the question in more formal terms in their latest joint Income and Wealth Report, *What price the clever country? The costs of tertiary education in Australia*.

You'll find Japan and the US have the highest fees per student among selected OECD countries: Oz is third, NZ fourth. You'll find the average married male with kids takes 7-9 years to repay his HECS debt, while the average married female with kids takes 16-18 years to do so – thereby hang many tales about us. You'll find average weekly income from all sources of full-time VET students is $289, and for uni students $308. VET students get a higher proportion of that income from government sources. And much more, in just 36 pages: http://media.corporate-ir.net/media_files/irol/21/219073/infocus/21nov.pdf

2. Quick in the ether

Access Economics produced, at Telstra's behest, *Impacts of a national high-speed broadband network*. A macro analysis, so little specific to education, but you'll see where education fits as you read. One of the few specific mentions is this: 'The majority of benefits arising from HSBB [high speed broadband] are expected to be from those types of internet functions that are not feasible at lower speeds, for example, videoconferencing, VoIP phone services, and accessible e-learning … ' http://www.nowwearetalking.com.au/library/pdf/news/final-report_impacts-of-a-national-hsbb-network_march-2009.pdf

3. Accreditation criteria check up

The Higher Learning Commission (HLC) is the accreditation outfit for around 1000 US higher ed institutions. The HLC is asking for views about the criteria it uses when making accreditation submissions – are they clear, are they the right ones? In Oz we'll be thinking about this very thing in the next little while, so you might like to step through the survey to sharpen up your thoughts for the debates ahead: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=TcnIo_2fyzz7kme27K8_2fYy1Q_3d_3d

4. Thinking about the public health workforce

Australia and New Zealand Health Policy is one of a growing number of open access, online journals. As Prof Lauder might have said, aorta make more of them. Indeed they ought. What kind of education and training, when, for whom? My quick survey of a couple of the articles at the following address helped me ponder – there's a bit thoughtful rejigging to do:
http://www.anzhealthpolicy.com/series/workforce_in_public_health

Monash is thoughtfully rejigging right now. As part of its selection processes review, the Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences is running a community forum on 12 May. The question to be posed is, what do you want in your future doctors? Too late to RSVP – just thought you'd like to know:
http://www.med.monash.edu.au/events/upcoming/mbbs-forum-bc.html

5. Education India's entrepreneurs

In 2008, India's National Knowledge Commission produced *Entrepreneurship in India*. I've read just Chapter 5 – Education, Innovation and Entrepreneurship – but it's a bottler. Try this, for example: 'It is pertinent here to note that only 5% of India's existing workforce has received skill training as against 96% in Korea, 75% in Germany, 80% in Japan and 68% in United Kingdom. VET needs to be given high priority in India. Skill development is crucial to reap the demographic dividend in India … '

Or perhaps this: 'One in every five entrepreneurs interviewed have a liberal arts degree, which would suggest that Entrepreneurship is as much about technical skills as about acquiring a holistic understanding of the social and business environment and opportunities.' And so, to India:
http://www.knowledgecommission.gov.in/downloads/documents/NKC_Entrepreneurship.pdf

6. AUSSE speaking

Engaging students for success is ACER's 2008 report on the Australasian Survey of Student Engagement. The twist in this year's report is that we have data for the first time from the Staff Student Engagement Survey (SSES) which 'asks academics to report their expectations for the engagement of the typical first- or later-year student they had taught that year.'

The headline doing the rounds is that it seems about a third of students toy with leaving before graduation. Importantly, academics estimate only around 11% consider doing so. The AUSSE data tell us a good deal about why so many lean toward leaving, and why academics underestimate the number. For those reasons alone, explore AUSSE:
http://www.acer.edu.au/documents/AUSSE_2008-StudentEngagementReport.pdf

7. The Hofstra U approach to first year

Hofstra Uni in New York was concerned about first year student engagement so it's done some neat experimentation. Read here about first year seminars, clusters and block courses, and how much of first year is related to NY itself:
http://www.hofstra.edu/Academics/Colleges/HCLAS/FYC/index.html

8. Energy and persistence conquer all things

So said Benjamin Franklin. We are still working on defining the characteristics of, and best supports for, persistence in these our days of mass education and training. The Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation has put further energy into the quest with *Persistence in post-secondary education in Canada: the latest research*. It's a summary of what's known and what's murky, all in 17 pages. While it leaves many questions in its wake, I was drawn to this sentence: 'The difference between many of those who persist and those who drop out, therefore, is not that those who persist achieved optimal "program fit" on their first try but that they were able to make an adjustment that led them to stay enrolled.'

The chart on page 12 is enlightening – it shows the proportion of students in OECD countries who start uni but leave without a qual. NZ looks a tick above 45%; Oz about 30%. Here you are:
http://www.millenniumscholarships.ca/images/Publications/090212_Persistence_EN.pdf

9. Another way to learn

The New Media Consortium (NMC) brings together teacher and education bodies keen to scout out the possibilities for ICT in the learning endeavour. NMC has released a study titled *Challenge-based learning: an approach for our time*. It describes classroom trials of a pedagogy that goes a bit further than problem- and inquiry-based learning. Good read – almost evangelical:
http://www.nmc.org/pdf/Challenge-Based-Learning.pdf

10. Take a LEAP

The ALTC issued a couple of months ago *Leadership and assessment: strengthening the nexus – final report*. The project explored, via an action research model, how best to build leadership capacity across an institution around assessment and feedback practice. Given the centrality of assessment and feedback in generating great learning outcomes, and in maintaining the credibility of that testamur hanging on your wall, there's every good reason to work you way slowly through the report. Good outcomes worth sharing – that the authors managed to write this report in just 12 days is pretty remarkable in itself: http://www.altc.edu.au/system/files/resources/LE612%20Leadership%20and%20Assessment%20Strengthening%20the%20Nexus%20March%202009_0.pdf

11. Assessing graduate capabilities

Hot off the press: The Association of American Colleges and Universities released late last month the report of a survey of Association members titled *Trends in learning outcomes, general education, and assessment*. The survey set out to discover how generic capabilities – writing, critical thinking, quantitative reasoning, oral communication skills – are being assessed, and how those results are used by students (e-portfolios are on the rise). Interesting that more than half the institutions believed their students had no real idea about the whys or the wherefores of assessing generic capabilities. This is a wide-ranging document, touching on everything from study abroad to capstone projects and the manner in which assessment is carried out and reported: http://www.aacu.org/membership/documents/2009MemberSurvey_Part1.pdf

12. On the way down from the Summit

True to its word, the Oz government sifted through the ideas from the Australia 2020 Summit and decided to put a few of them into play. The full government response to the Summit ideas is here, as are hyperlinks to particular topics: http://www.australia2020.gov.au/response/index.cfm

You might be most interested in the government response to the ideas coming from the panel that considered 'The productivity agenda: education, skills, training, science and innovation': http://www.australia2020.gov.au/docs/government_response/2020_summit_response_1_productivity.pdf

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IT ISN'T OVER YET

She bought a map of the world and hung it against the kitchen wall. Now those great seas and spaces were a reality, as well as in her head. The wireless cited places of which she had never heard: Tobruk, Benghazi, Salonika, Rangoon. She located them on the map, and realized she knew nothing, nothing. What were those countries? Who lived there? Why must they be fought over? Geography lessons at the Academy in Kensington had been volcanoes and deserts and icebergs: history was the six wives of Henry VIII. But Matt knew about all sorts of things. She had wondered at this, in those months when they were first together, had been amazed to realize that much of what he knew came from his school days. She saw that there is another kind of education, which had passed her by.

> - Penelope Lively, *Consequences*, Viking, 2007.

13. A good read

Forgive me if I've mentioned this before. The Australian Vocational Education and Training Research Association has derived a journal ranking table – the *Official AVETRA 2007 ranking of VET and adult education journals*, no less. So if you want to work out where to publish, or what to read, this might help: http://www.avetra.org.au/Journal%20ranking%20table%20for%20web%20site.pdf

14. NSW goes for green gold!

Skills for sustainability, issued by the NSW Board of Vocational Education and Training, is the follow up to the Board's 2007 report of the same name. NSW has really been pushing the green skills agenda hard for a while now, and it seems to be coming together under the banner of the NSW Green Skills Strategy. The report offers a breakdown on green skills requirements in specific industries, like agriculture and construction: http://www.bvet.nsw.gov.au/pdf/Skills_for_Sustainability_2009.pdf

There's a summary here of NSW's Green Skills Strategy 2008-2010: https://www.det.nsw.edu.au/industryprograms/pdf_docs/indprogs/pdf/gskills_summary_0908.pdf

15. A green wiki for universities

I'm a sucker for a wiki. The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (ASHE) has launched a Climate Action Planning wiki to share knowledge about how unis can best manage greenly. The section I cruised was terrific, though mostly starter text from someone at ASHE: http://www.aashe.org/wiki/climate-planning-guide

16. E-learning in enterprise training delivery

The Australian Flexible Learning Framework is a national treasure – always doing valuable stuff. Look at its recent report, *How organisations are using e-learning to support national training initiatives*. It offers lots of examples, like the Hunter Institute trainer using chat, PhotoStory, email, and SMS in training and assessment for apprentices with Baker's Delight outlets. The report registers, yet again, that there's slow take up by RTOs of e-learning. And it promises a big future for social networking tools in training delivery: http://www.flexiblelearning.net.au/flx/webdav/site/flxsite/users/mchang/public/E-learning_and_National_Initiatives_Report.pdf

17. Teach for Australia

A few weeks ago Julia Gillard launched Teach for Australia, a program designed to attract top flight graduates from across the disciplines into teaching in disadvantaged schools. Victoria is making the first big moves. The website tells me that you 'teach 80% of a standard teacher's timetable, to allow for university coursework, additional development and mentoring time spent with your Professional Development Coach or in-school mentor, or observing other teachers.' Incentives include a fast-tracked Dip Ed, and a guaranteed corporate career after two years. I dunno yet. We'll see. But it's worth a try. Here's the website: http://www.teachforaustralia.org/

18. Teacher PD – working out what works

As you've probably guessed, I read a lot quickly. It's not often I read something twice. One reason for a second dip is if it's well written. Another is when I'm picking up something really new to me. Two strikes for Laura M. Desimone's article, 'Improving impact studies of teachers' professional development: toward better conceptualizations and measures'. I plan to read it twice: http://edr.sagepub.com/cgi/reprint/38/3/181?ijkey=hYeKyHG/tlbNA&keytype=ref&siteid=spedr

19. Comparing schools #1

Julia Gillard has secured agreement from state education ministers to make data on school performance publicly available. The worry for many is that the data will form the basis for ranking tables based on blunt measures Anyway, it's coming. In a press conference in mid-April, the Deputy PM said:

'Parents will be able to look at their local school. They'll be able to look at schools in their local area and they will be able to easily compare their school with schools that are in similar circumstances. We want parents to have information; we want the community to have information. We want that information to be meaningful. What Education Ministers have always said is there's no point in reporting on raw scores, or having simplistic league tables. What is powerful is to be able to compare similar schools and to see how they're going, and if one is going much better than the other, to share that best practice and if one needs a helping hand, to make sure that helping hand is there.'

Let's hope it works like that. Here's the transcript of the press conference: http://www.deewr.gov.au/Ministers/Gillard/Media/Transcripts/Pages/Article_090417_164237.aspx

20. Comparing schools #2

The methods of the New York State Education Department (NYSED) have had an influence on the Deputy PM's thinking. Here's the NYSED's Information and Reporting Services website – might give you an idea of what to expect in Oz: http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/irts/

21. Stats galore #1

The US National Center for Education Statistics has presented us with *Comparative indicators of education in the United States and other G-8 countries: 2009*. From student numbers to trends in teacher age – it's all here, folks, in 119 pages. Nary a mention of Australia or New Zealand, but that aside, a fascinating potpourri of stats. Where else would you find out that in Scotland 60% of principals report behaviour in 8th grade classrooms that threatens a safe and orderly environment, or that in the Russian Federation a miniscule 4% of first university degrees awarded are in the arts and humanities. Take this one to lunch: http://nces.ed.gov/pubs2009/2009039.pdf

22. Stats galore #2

Not to be outdone, the OECD has produced *Education today: the OECD perspective*. A more modest 99 pages, you can take it to afternoon tea. It covers the gamut, from early childhood to lifelong learning, equity and returns from education. Oz and NZ are mentioned dozens of times because we've paid our OECD dues. There are lots of stats, but it's more an offering of pen pictures on the host of concepts and indicators that inhabit the educational landscape, and what we should do next. It brings together data and learnings from a bevy of OECD reports:
http://browse.oecdbookshop.org/oecd/pdfs/browseit/9609021E.PDF

23. Keeping kids at school

It seems pretty clear that Oz unis will be forming closer relationships with secondary schools in years to come as we shoot for big increases in the proportion of young people with undergraduate education. VET providers have been forging close connections for a while through VET in Schools. The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development has produced a report that tackles the task ahead of schools in ensuring that kids stay on to finish Year 12, which will be critical to achieving the undergrad target. The *Effective Strategies to Increase School Completion Report* tackles the relationship between VET and schools, and to a lesser extent higher ed and schools. And much else worth reading on what works in the school improvement game. Pathways will be much on our minds; they star in this report:
http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/postcomp/effectivestrategiesreportprint.pdf

FOR THE PODDIES, VODDIES AND BLOGGIES

Mintzberg doesn't mince words

I haven't heard Henry Mintzberg speak before, so it was kind of nice to hear him after picking through his books for decades. The ABC's Background Briefing program on Radio National gave Henry a voice in it show entitled *MBA: Mostly bloody awful*. It's a pretty uncomplimentary critique of aspects of business education in light of the Global Financial Mess – maybe a bit lopsided, but it leaves you with a few things to chew over:
http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/2009/03/bbg_20090329.mp3

The sight and sound of NMIT

NMIT (Northern Melbourne Institute of TAFE) has taken to vods and pods big time. NMIT has pushed steadily into niche associate degree and degree spaces. These well-produced vods and pods introduce NMIT's degree, diploma and certificate offerings – from racing and locksmithing to engineering and applied aquaculture – through the words of teachers and learners. The pods are here:
http://www.nmit.vic.edu.au/news_events/podcasts/

The vodcasts star folks in roles as diverse as teaching, student services, HR and learning and teaching management. The vods come with an audio transcript:
http://www.nmit.vic.edu.au/news_events/videos/

What will happen when students decide?

Back to ABC Radio National. The VCs of Ballarat (David Battersby) and Macquarie (Stephen Schwartz) chat on the National Interest program about changes in prospect for Australia's higher education funding model, where students hold the purse strings in a market and where demand rather than central planning rules more of the roost:
http://mpegmedia.abc.net.au/rn/podcast/current/audioonly/nit_20090306_1814.mp3

Session recordings – Converge 08

Converge 08 was a conference looking at the use of e-learning for training purposes in VET and business contexts. Here you can pick through conference session recordings and PowerPoints:
http://www.eworks.edu.au/converge/join_session.htm

Rethinking admissions conference

In Oz, we'll be thinking a bit over coming years about uni selection processes. You might like to see/hear what folks at a conference at Wake Forest Uni in North Carolina thought about standardised testing, and why Wake Forest is shifting away:
http://www.wfu.edu/provost/rethinkingadmissions/watch.php

Assessment and Feedback Video Clips

You gotta love that student voice. Enjoy this collection of video clips of UK students sharing a few observations about what kinds of assessment and feedback works for them:
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/videoandaudio/assessment_studentviews

LATE NEWS

Journal of Institutional Research now online

AAIR's *Journal of Institutional Research* (Volume 14, Number 1, November 2008) is now online at: http://www.aair.org.au/jir/Mar09/Index.htm

For your delectation, there are nine articles in this edition, including:

- 'Improving student retention: a University of Western Sydney case study', by Geoff Scott,Mahsood Shah, Leonid Grebennikov and Harmanpreet Singh.
- 'Establishing baseline data: using institutional data to learn more about completion factors at one New Zealand university', by Austina Clark, Jacques Van Der Meer and Chikako Van Koten.
- 'A discipline-specific factor analysis approach to using student surveys for improvement', by Kate Patrick, Anthony Bedford, Stephanie Romagnano, Michelle Bedford and James Barber.

Thanks to the Journal's Academic Editor, Josie Palermo, and Technical Editor, Tina Thornton, members of the editorial executive committee, and the willing reviewers.

AAIR Committee – 2009

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