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## Editorial Issue 8.1

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### Abstract

Welcome to Volume 8, Issue 1 of the Journal of University Teaching and Learning. JUTLP continues to grow and submissions have increased dramatically since journal rankings were implemented in Australia. We would like to thank our editorial board and reviewers for their consistent effort and valuable feedback to potential authors. Two production changes underpin this issue. Firstly, use of new publication guidelines which can be found here: <http://ro.uow.edu.au/jutlp/styleguide.html>. Secondly, we welcome support for journal desktop publishing from the Centre for Academic Systems & Resources, University of Wollongong.

From now on there will be three editions per year, comprising two general editions and a further edition focused on a special issue. We would like to invite proposals for special editions for 2012 or 2013 that should include: - A possible title for the special edition, its aim, scope and areas of focus; - A brief curriculum vitae, including publications, of the chief editor and any co-editors; and - A timeline leading to publication by October of either 2012 or 2013.

Responsibilities of the guest editor(s) include reviewing the special issue papers, and provision of the final versions for publication by the end of September for the identified year. Please contact the Senior Editor if you are interested. Submissions for the 2012 special edition are required by June 30th 2011.

### Keywords

editorial, 2011, 8.1, JUTLP

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This issue strengthens the journal's international focus, with papers providing perspectives from a range of countries and a variety of disciplines. Our first paper by Bambacas and Sanderson considers student preferences for instructional methods in a transnational setting with post graduate business students in Hong Kong, Singapore and Taiwan. Some courses are in English and others are in Chinese. They use Biggs' (1996) Presage-Process-Product Model of Teaching and Learning to discuss their research findings and to propose implications for practice in transnational teaching. Abeysekera, in the next paper, compares three instructional methods to determine undergraduate accounting students' preferences in a large university in Sri Lanka. The mixed methods study identifies reasons for the identified preferences and makes recommendations for further research. Ribeiro also examines instructional methods, but this time from the perspective of the instructor. He considers the impact of problem based learning in engineering on the professional development of a faculty member in collaboration with an educational researcher. The case study identifies some of the challenges faced by those implementing such teaching strategies including workload implications.

The next two papers look at assessment initiatives to improve student learning. Thomas, Martin and Pleasants consider the process of self and peer assessment in a faculty of education through three initiatives that aim to encourage a future learning orientation to assessment. They contend that by engaging students beyond the submission of their assignments to reflect on their learning they will be better prepared for professional lives. In New Zealand, Gunn, Hearne and Sibthorpe focus on the business discipline, where they consider approaches to embedding academic literacy in a first year subject. They reflect on methods for improving information literacy skills following their investigation of an online approach to engaging both international and local students in developing a critical area of generic skills, and make recommendations for further expansion of skill development in this area.

Student engagement is at the centre of the sixth paper. Russell and Slater conduct an empirical study of student engagement in one institution as part of a larger national study. They collect quantitative and qualitative data on perceptions of students and staff and examine it through a conceptual framework that includes motivational agency, transactional engagement, institutional support and active citizenship. They conclude with baseline evidence for effective practice within their institution, in addition to suggestions for further research in the area of active citizenship. Esposito and Weaver also address student engagement but this time at the subject level. The problem of poor engagement by students in an undergraduate business degree is exemplified by low attendance at tutorials. Through the introduction of a new strategy for continuous assessment that involves a team based approach, which they implement over three years, not only does attendance double but student marks improve by a full grade. They provide evidence of the need to take a scholarly approach to changing assessment practices to improve student learning outcomes.

The three areas of instructional methods, improved assessment practice and student engagement provide interesting insight to many practice changes that are occurring internationally in teaching and learning practice in higher education.

Finally I would like once again to acknowledge those who have contributed to improving our processes in the last twelve months: the Associate Editor, Dr Meg O'Reilly for her tireless work in allocation of reviewers, and for her timely suggestions for improvements to the journal; Michael Organ and many people involved in the

background who keep the journal running; the editorial board; the reviewers; and all the team at the Centre for Academic Systems & Resources at the University of Wollongong.

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