

2013

Editorial 10.2

Geraldine E. Lefoe
University of Wollongong, glefoe@uow.edu.au

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Abstract

Welcome to the second edition of the Journal of University Learning and Teaching Practice for 2013. It is also the final edition involving my co-editor Dr Meg O'Reilly from Southern Cross University, Australia. It is always hard to say goodbye to a colleague who has made a substantial contribution to the ongoing success of our journal and this is no exception. Meg has taken a significant workload with allocating papers for review and coaxing reviewers to submit on time. She has an amazing ability to provide insightful comments to authors, and her contributions to keeping the journal on track and on time have involved sheer hard work. She has moved to take a leadership role in the Research in Learning Technology journal where I know she will again improve processes and communication for all involved. We wish her well and really appreciate the contributions she has made to JUTLP.

Keywords

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Once again we have a variety of interesting papers crossing both qualitative and quantitative research areas and providing a variety of disciplinary perspectives on teaching in higher education.

In the first paper, Korkofingas and Macri indicate that technology affords more opportunity to examine student engagement with assessment tasks in the online environment. This Australian business school study focussed on a third year subject to examine the relationship between time on task and student success. They move beyond earlier studies which focussed on single measures to look at relationships between multiple online activities, supported by face-to-face activity and offer strategies for improving subject design in this area.

The next paper Xamani also examines assessment practices but this time focuses on the development of oral competence in English for students of Tourism and Hospitality in Spain. Through an action research model students opinions are analysed about their progress in language learning through the use of a portfolio tool for self and peer assessment.

Improved communication for students is the focus of the third paper by Khurani and Huang who focus on the necessity for foreign-trained medical staff to improve communication capabilities during their retraining programs in the US. Their focus is on English language proficiency in particular how to "pronounce words distinctly, stress words or syllables more accurately and use body language/facial expressions appropriately" (Khurani and Huang 2013). Their results indicate the efficacy of the intervention.

Williamson and Goldsmith highlight another area for supporting student learning in the fourth paper and turn the focus to academic literacies, particularly writing. They report on the early stages of implementation of the highly successful Peer-assisted Study Sessions (PASS) in an outer suburban university in Australia.

A longitudinal study of the impact of a two-week international study tour program is the focus of the next paper by Tucker and Weaver. Whilst initial interviews a few months after the trip indicated a mixed response from students, when they were interviewed two to six years later they were able to provide more sophisticated response about the impact of the study tour.

In the final papers the importance of preparing students to engage in research with appropriate scaffolding is highlighted in both undergraduate and postgraduate subjects. McLay explores the role of coursework components in a Master of Engineering Management sequencing student development over three semesters. This process is reviewed against the Boyer classification of scholarship and discusses the characteristics of the supervisor and how they can ensure the program addresses the broader needs of students when engaging in a minor thesis.

Coady takes quite a different perspective to this kind of research training and discusses an extracurricular workshop to engage undergraduate music students in supporting students to

“develop papers they have written for class assignments into original research projects” ready for publication in an undergraduate journal. A methodology which could be adapted by many disciplines is described.

As always I like to acknowledge all who are involved in making this journal the success that it is. I thank particularly the reviewers and the editorial panel for their consistent high standard and detailed feedback to our authors; and the many people involved in the background who keep the journal running through their roles in managing the website, the editing and layout of the journal.

Associate Professor Geraldine Lefoe
Senior Editor
Journal of University Learning and Teaching Practice

glefoe@uow.edu.au