Linking internationalisation to the new Graduate Qualities:
A case study from the Faculty of Arts at the University of Wollongong

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23 NOVEMBER 2009

The Context at UOW

Internationalisation:
- very high % of international students
- increasing no. of transnational and study abroad
- UOW vision statements, strategic plans, & framework focus on strengths as an ‘international university’

Graduate Qualities (GQs):
- key outcomes that describe distinctive qualities that equip UOW graduates for roles in society and the workplace
- 2008-2009 implementation of discipline specific GQs
## Graduate Qualities

### UOW Qualities
- [ ] Graduate quality
- [ ] Faculty/Discipline quality

### Faculty/Discipline Qualities
- [ ] Independent learners
  - Carry out effective critical reading and referencing
  - Show awareness of a broad range of information sources/databases, and use these in research
  - Synthesise and integrate new ideas
  - Reflect on professional experience

*Example derived from work of Faculty of Engineering*

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### Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this subject, students will be able to:

1. Appreciate how wider societal issues impact an area of law, and be able to evaluate the effectiveness of the legislative and procedural framework and identify opportunities for improvement.
2. Evaluate the effectiveness of the legislative and procedural framework and identify possible reforms.
3. Identify and explain the links between family law and other areas of substantive law.
4. Identify and explain the links between family law and other areas of substantive law.
5. Recognise the role and duties of family lawyers.
6. Recognise differences and similarities between our family law system and that of other countries.

### Teaching Strategies & Resources

The following teaching strategies, learning resources, and subject design features may be used to enable achievement of the identified learning outcomes:

1. **Grouping and discussion** in this subject will be supported by the following strategies and resources:
   - **Weekly readings**
     - Students will be required to undertake readings prior to class and are outlined in the guide. This reading and weekly discussion questions in the subject guide will form the basis of weekly discussion.
   - **2. Class discussion**
     - Participation in class is required, and discussion will be based around reading assignments and discussion questions set out in the subject guide.
   - **3. Weekly seminars**
     - This subject will be supported by 15 x 2 hour sessions.

### Assessment Methods

The following methods may be used to assess achievement of the identified learning outcomes:

1. **1. Class participation**
   - Class participation will be assessed for attendance and class performance, as well as any other factors identified in the module guide.
   - Assessment will be based on attendance and class performance, as well as any other factors identified in the module guide.
   - Class participation will be assessed for attendance and class performance, as well as any other factors identified in the module guide.

### Faculty & Discipline Qualities

The identified combination of learning outcomes, teaching strategies, and resources will lead to achievement of the following Faculty and Discipline Qualities:

1. **Informed**
   - All learning activities and assessment tasks will contribute to the development of the Graduate Qualities (GQ). Students will explore and discuss the current and future policy issues in Australia, including recent changes and current trends. They will identify current and potential future issues and evaluate the effectiveness of the current legal framework.
   - Students will identify and explain the links between family law and other areas of substantive law.
   - Students will be able to reflect on professional experience.

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2. **Independent learners**

Students in this subject will be expected to extend their research to understand the context of the role of a family lawyer in Australia and to critically evaluate the role of a family lawyer in Australia.
Faculty of Arts Graduate Qualities

Informed - Have a sound knowledge of an area of a disciplinary study or interdisciplinary area of study offered by the Faculty of Arts through its majors with an understanding of its current issues, their contexts and developments over time.

Independent Learners - Engage with new ideas and ways of thinking, enquiry and critical analysis of issues and research through a sequence of subjects that culminates in the ability to reflect broadly on their field of study. Acknowledge the work and ideas of others.

Problem Solvers - Take on challenges and apply the relevant skills required to respond effectively to the central issues raised. Be flexible, thorough and innovative and aim for high standards.

Effective Communicators - Articulate ideas and convey them effectively using a variety of modes. Engage collaboratively with people in different settings. Recognise how culture can shape communication.

Responsible - Understand how decisions can affect others, and make ethically informed choices. Appreciate and respect diversity. Act with integrity as part of local, national, regional, global and professional communities.

The SSMAC Case Study

We focused our investigations to the School of Social Sciences, Media & Communication in the Faculty of Arts

Respondents:
- students taking 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year subjects
- academics teaching 1st, 2nd, and 3rd year subjects

Data collection methods:
- questionnaires to students
- focus groups with students
- interviews with teachers
- collection of subject outlines (for review and analysis)
Our Preliminary Questions

- How important is it to make internationalisation initiatives explicit?
- How do teachers and students understand and value ‘internationalisation’?
- If internationalisation is already happening implicitly within subjects or across curricula, why is it important for students to be aware of it?
- Are the graduate qualities appropriate places to engage with ‘internationalisation’ as a desirable attribute?

Student Perceptions

Overall, the students reported:

- term ‘internationalisation’ confusing
- value in learning about other cultures as part of uni education
- most students don’t seek out subjects on international topics but international perspectives are important in coursework
- aware of Graduate Qualities, but unfamiliar with how they relate to assessments or employable skills
- intercultural communication skills very important in a globalizing world
Student Perceptions: Questionnaire

Q1: Internationalisation is most closely related to:

- Subjects on other regions
- Subjects with non-AU perspectives
- Subjects with foreign languages
- Development of intercultural skills
- Activities with int'l & local students
- Incorporating own int'l perspective
- Opportunities to study overseas
- Trend in globalisation of education

Student Perceptions: Sample Comments

Q5. Are international perspectives an important learning goal to your studies in SSMAC?

"Yes. They are important. Due to advancing technologies (i.e. the internet) our world is becoming borderless. **It is necessary to think more globally than locally.** Understanding international issues/ethics/etc is of increasing importance."

"No. I feel I have developed perspectives with regard to various minorities, ideas on queer theory etc. However any discussion about foreign cultures has been rudimentary and we have **focused mostly on American culture as the prevailing western perspective.**"
Student Perceptions: The Global Workforce

“I think if you are in contact with international students, it’s like internationalisation looking at...more cultural things, like ...for me it’s being surrounded by Asian mates or even US or European, it makes it more effective in understanding the culture which means that I’m going to be a better employee for an international media firm because I understand what they like, what they don’t like, just general things like that.”

Student Perceptions: Focus Groups

- vague but positive experiences with internationalisation

- specific, memorable negative experiences:
  - actually interacting with international students difficult
  - barriers between international and local students

- connection here to GQs, as students believe "Effective Communicators" GQ must be better developed for international students
Student Perceptions

Students reported that they would welcome more:

- interaction with international students
- opportunities to study other languages themselves
- flexible and affordable study abroad programs
- short term summer exchange opportunities
- opportunities to communicate with lecturers/students from other international institutions contexts inside their subjects

Teacher Perceptions

Overall, the teachers reported:

- a meeting of local and global at the curriculum design level
- a meeting of local and global at the student interaction level
- internationalisation ‘embedded’ by default
- ‘unconscious’ process and nearly impossible to avoid
- need for internal/institution wide support
Teacher Perceptions: Sample Comments

“They do look at internationalisation, but it’s not a deliberate effort but it’s almost as if it’s embedded in a lot of the topic areas I think, and that’s part of my perspective when I teach anyway. I teach from a globalising, internationalising perspective I don’t think you can consider your society now in isolation with the global financial crisis, global cultures, global mass media, it’s how we’re all influenced now.”

“In the context of course curriculum, I think it’s just great to have international students there; it’s important for Australian students to have a sense of how things work in other countries, but I don’t feel that it’s absolutely essential for every subject to have...regardless of the nature of the subject...to have to include consideration of this issue in another country because it may not be appropriate.”

“Even if people aren’t consciously aware that they’re implementing the policy [i.e. GQs], I can still see signs that people are trying to get more global in their orientation in what they’re teaching, who they’re teaching, and how they’re doing it.”

Teacher Perceptions: Road Blocks

Major question: How to deal with university bureaucracy and get over the ‘garden wall’ to allow access to students/others at other universities?

“It seemed to me that there was a really strong social pull towards connecting with people in other countries, and so that’s where I got the idea from; that we could do this in a teaching sense, that the student community could be other than the people just sitting in this room.”

“...We haven’t quite figured out how to build international partnerships where online classes are handled roughly the same way as exchange programs. So building the underlying infrastructure for exchange students and (cross-institutional credit?), formal recognition of the credit and the work, is the next step, but until that happens, what I do involves hiding groups of students somewhere in the curriculum and secretly giving them an international experience, while appearing to do something else.”
Teacher Perceptions: Making It Work

Online tools facilitate informed and effective communicators:

- “...literally reaching outside of the Uni and having a dialogue with people from different countries can be a central internationalisation strategy. I don’t think simply introducing a case study of Japan to Australian students is enough, that’s only the beginning, we need to put a face to the case, and Skype enables us to do that.”

Institutional support required:

- “...that’s time intensive to set up and it requires a lot of support too. So the university has to be serious about it and recognise that this is a worthwhile thing and it shouldn’t be something that you just do because you’re committed to it, it should be recognised as part of the activities that form your workload.”

Where to from here?

1. Re-embed ‘internationalisation’ perspectives into Arts GQs
2. Ensure subject guides explicitly reflect where and how international perspectives are addressed: either in content, delivery, planned class activities or assessment tasks
3. Upskilling students and staff
   - Collaborative learning and teaching
4. Share good practice activities
   - Document or map divergent (and convergent) practices
   - Share with each other, and other Faculties
   - Explore new opportunities to engage the students
   - Anticipate responding to diversity