

1997

NATIONAL TEACHING DEVELOPMENT
GRANTS
(ORGANISATIONAL)

PROJECTS

NEW SOUTH WALES

1. Enhancing Students' Problem-directed Learning Using Intranets

The project has been designed to enhance students' problem-centred learning exploiting computer networks as both a means of communication and resource delivery. The principal aims of this project are (1) to develop a system which encourages the construction of students' knowledge and to improve their problem-solving skills in the interpretation of radiological and other medical images, and (2) to identify and apply excellent examples of computer code. In both cases, the material will be made available on established local educational networks (intranets). Initially the teacher will organise patterns of access and inquiry of the databases (providing "training wheels"), but as the students become more sophisticated in knowledge and skills, the strategies they develop will enhance their independent learning and self-evaluation. Thus the specific outcomes will be the construction of knowledge and enhanced skills in identifying, interpreting, appraising and applying that knowledge.

The broader aim is to develop a system that will meet similar learning needs in a variety of disciplines that extensively use images (eg. fine arts, engineering and architecture) and coded information (eg. chemistry, molecular biology and mathematics). Faced with the increasing availability of paper-based and electronic information, students increasingly need to access resources, evaluate their quality, relevance and usefulness, and link them to other data to solve discipline-based problems. The two specific learning situations in Medicine and Computer Science are diverse but have substantial elements in common. The simultaneous solution of both these problems will provide a generic software system that can be applied to expressed learning needs in other disciplines.

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2. Developing and Implementing a Flexible Web-based Teaching/Learning Environment across an Entire Academic Organisational Unit

The project aims to bring about improved learning outcomes for graduate students by exploiting the potential of the Internet for facilitating interaction between students and lecturers, amongst students, and between institutions.

The implementation of the University's flexible delivery program has resulted in the need to develop communication strategies with students who are studying at satellite campuses and by distance education nationally and internationally. At present the free exchange of information and views between course participants, regarded as integral to the academic enterprise, is hampered by the lack of computer-mediated communication systems which are perceived by both lecturers and students to be non-threatening and easy to use. It is proposed that this delivery mechanism be implemented in such a way that both staff and students who are technological novices will be able to work comfortably within the program, thereby ensuring a high rate of acceptance and sustainability.

The significance of the project lies in the implementation of a large-scale systemic change process engaging an entire academic organisational unit, which can then serve as a model for other faculties and other universities.

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VICTORIA

3. Electronic Warehouse Extension

The educational challenge faced by First Year Psychology is to introduce students to the discipline's foundation knowledge base while inducting them into the scientific research methodology that underlies that knowledge. Teaching should draw the two together, showing the rich set of linkages between them. However, traditional modes of delivery limit the possibility of their integration, resulting in a less coherent understanding. The problem is made worse by a large, highly diverse, and dispersed student body.

The Electronic Warehouse (EW) addresses the challenge by introducing students to theoretical issues through a problem solving approach, which is built upon a model of scientific research methodology. Students experience theoretical issues, not as "facts", but as knowledge constructed through a process of scientific research in which they actively engage. The EW also offers a way through some of the administrative problems of first year psychology.

The EW actively assists learning by guiding students through the entire cycle of scientific research from curiosity to communication. A suite of computer-mediated communication tools and database technologies using the Internet allows for the collection and analysis of research data to be on a group basis. Those same tools offer a powerful administrative facility that addresses the difficulties of First Year Psychology's large student body.

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4. The Development of an Integrated Self-Instructional Program to Teach Research Concepts and Skills to Health Science Students

A self-instructional program to develop research knowledge and skills for undergraduate health science students which is also suitable as a review program for postgraduate students will be developed integrating existing curriculum material taught by the School of Public Health. This program will be taught to more than 1000 students per year.

The project will develop print-based demonstration materials, practice examples, instructional guidelines and supporting readings in five modules: (1) The research process and the formulation of research questions; (2) Research designs; (3) Sampling and data collection; (4) Data presentation and analysis; and (5) Interpretation and utilisation of results.

The modules will adopt a problem centred approach to learning, emphasising the use of health science examples to teach research concepts and skills. The project will produce three 20-minute videos for each module to support the print materials. The project will produce the materials in an interactive format suitable for CD-ROM and the Internet.

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5. From CD-ROM to the World Wide Web: A Model for the Cross-Institutional Design, Implementation and Distribution of Multimedia-Based Instruction

The immediate goal of the project is to create a set of sociolinguistic offerings in French, Italian and Spanish, to be made available as autonomous subjects in distance education mode via the World Wide Web. In so doing, the project also seeks more broadly to develop a model for the cross-institutional design, implementation and networked distribution of multimedia-based instruction. The project will be undertaken by an inter-university team (Monash, Melbourne, Queensland) combining expertise in Romance languages, multimedia instructional design, and networked course delivery. The accessibility of a network-based delivery system will improve teaching by making the subjects available to students across campuses and universities in Australia (and potentially worldwide). The design of distance education offerings, moreover, requires careful planning and thorough preparation, and will thereby foster best pedagogical practices. The most innovative and significant aspect of the project is the way it transcends traditional institutional and classroom boundaries in the provision of advanced level tertiary instruction.

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6. First Year Engineering Education: Developing a Culture of Teaching and Learning

The project seeks to develop a model for change in the culture of teaching and learning in engineering education at tertiary level. The model involves the creation and support of staff Teaching Communities and the encouragement and support of student Learning Communities. A cycle of self-sustaining action research within the teaching staff, and active engagement of students, will lead to change in teaching practices and learning outcomes that address the needs of the engineering profession. Successful implementation of the model will result in improved retention and progression rates at first year, and address many of the concerns raised by the Institution of Engineers, Australia report on the national review of engineering education. The Teaching Communities will encourage students to become more active, independent learners within a collaborative framework, skilled in communication at many levels. This will provide more opportunity for a diverse range of students to achieve broader understanding of the engineering profession and its technical requirements. This project to develop a model for change in educational culture is centred in first year engineering at Swinburne University of Technology. Once refined and validated, the model can be extended in its application to later year levels, other faculties, and other universities.

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7. Co-operative Development of Innovative Teaching Practices for Successful Implementation of Integrated Engineering Programs

The recent national Review of Engineering Education has identified many recommended changes in education culture that are relevant to contemporary Professional Engineering courses. The development and delivery of engineering coursework via team teaching and team learning is one such aspect of change, which this project aims to realise. Based on established principles of teaming, the team paradigm will be employed both in construction of the teaching approach by staff and in undertaking the learning activities by students. The project will first implement several tasks at the host institution and will then replicate the implementation of tasks selected from these at the other institutions. This will broaden the evaluation and experiential aspects of the project and will provide a direct, useful benefit by establishing a successful model and process for the widespread introduction of teaming in Engineering Education. The project will provide a “toolkit” and “tutorial” product for use by other Engineering educators who wish to expedite their entry to teaming and make use of a streamlined, documented process for so doing.

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QUEENSLAND

8. Enhancing Student Learning During Professional Field Experience: An Innovative Approach to Supervision Using Communication Technology

Field experience is widely recognised as an essential component of pre-service professional teaching education. Currently, there is a need to establish stronger communication links between the university and field placement sites, thus enhancing the effective supervision of student teachers and improving student learning. This project addresses this need by developing a computer-based communication infrastructure to facilitate and support student learning through increased interaction between and among academic supervisors, students and supervising teachers in the field. Through improving the field experience communication infrastructure, this project will encourage students to make greater connections between theory and practice, promote peer learning and facilitate closer coordination and increased interaction between students and teacher/academic supervisors.

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA

9. Integration of Computer-based Programs in the Curriculum in the Faculties of Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences and Science at the University of Adelaide

The Faculties of Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences and Science at The University of Adelaide have in place strategic plans to ensure a high degree of computer literacy in their graduates and have committed substantial resources to achieve these goals. One implication of these strategies is that students are expected to work with sophisticated computer-based simulation and modelling programs now available to scientists as professional tools.

Both Faculties have conducted pilot studies to integrate computer-based programs into their undergraduate curriculum. This project will allow these two large science-based faculties to work collaboratively and strategically to integrate computer-based programs into their undergraduate and postgraduate teaching in a range of disciplines. The project has as its focus the development of a strategic and managed curriculum which integrates Computer-Aided Learning and Interactive MultiMedia for teaching and learning, simulations and modelling for skills development and learning and Computer-Aided Assessment for monitoring student progress.

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NORTHERN TERRITORY

10. Skills Development in the Area of Communications Technology to Support Distance Education Delivery

This project of professional development and materials development activities aims to enable the implementation of a complementary set of communications technologies designed to significantly increase the College's ability to deliver courses to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in remote communities of rural and remote north Australia. The project would support teaching/learning activities in core subject areas of the new Course in General Education through the combined use of the existing telephone networks and computer-based applications, including electronic mail, telematics (combined voice and visual communication between remote sites in a two-way interactive manner) and on-line communication through the Internet.

The project has four main elements: a skills development component in which staff and students will develop skills required to take part in teaching/learning activities using the above communication technologies; a materials development component in which teaching/learning materials suitable for these technologies will be developed for core teaching areas of the College; a teaching/learning component during which the technologies will be used to support students and deliver materials; and a technical component in which a communications technician will install, support and maintain the technological hardware and software.

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1998

NATIONAL TEACHING DEVELOPMENT
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PROJECTS

NEW SOUTH WALES

1. Development and Adoption of the GrassGro Decision Support Program to Facilitate Integrative Teaching Across Years in Applied Science and Management degrees

The object of this project is to develop teaching/learning specific applications using a decision support application, GrassGro, to assist students to learn about complex ecosystems. The GrassGro software will be adapted to allow lecturers to disable specified model inputs, so that students will focus on a selected aspect of the ecosystem, or of a model. Because the GrassGro model is comprehensive and includes interactions between climate, soil, plants, grazing animals and economics, it is ideally suited to the teaching of aspects of both natural and managed ecosystems such as those studied by natural Resources and Rural Science students respectively. In this way, students will become familiar with single components of this comprehensive model in relevant subjects in first and second year.

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2. Development of interactive Unilearning Online Resources

The aim of this project is to bring about improved student learning outcomes through the development, evaluation and implementation of interactive student-centred online resources that will enable students to access, identify and address their generic learning needs 24 hours a day. At present, online learning support is available via the unilearning page that is maintained by the Learning Centre at The University of Western Sydney, Macarthur. However, most of the resources available online are simply print-based materials and are not pedagogically designed to support student learning through interactive instruction.

This project seeks to extend the scope of the unilearning page in a collaborative venture with University of Wollongong, the University of Western Sydney (Macarthur) and The University of Melbourne to develop a comprehensive range of interactive learning resources on such skills as critical analysis, essay writing, structuring an argument, critical reading, note-making, note-taking, oral presentations, research reports and thesis writing.

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VICTORIA

3. The 'Social and Organisational Life Data Archive' (SOLDA)

The purpose of this project is to improve the capacity and confidence of undergraduate and postgraduate students of management and marketing in using empirical data. Recent decades have witnessed rapid growth in the volume of data generated through the collection of official statistics and through social surveys relevant to management. However, students are generally exposed only to summary results. These datasets offer an untapped resource in fostering inquiry and independent learning, if adequate support, guidance and access are developed. The project proposes to establish an online collection of survey and other statistical data relevant to research in the fields of management, organisational studies, industrial relations, marketing and other related social science fields. SOLDA will use CD-ROM technology and the web to deliver: a resource which second and third year undergraduates can tap to support learning by use of real world data; data for teaching research methods courses; and support material for undergraduate classes in management (and related fields) in the form of Powerpoint slides, Excel tables and graphs, suitable for lectures, tutorials and assignments. A secondary benefit of the project is that it will provide a collection of publicly available national and international survey data appropriate to the needs of researchers and postgraduate students.

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4. Generic Tools for Web Courseware

This project involves the preparation of a number of generic tools designed to both enhance and simplify the preparation of courseware delivered via the Internet, (and/or CD-ROM and floppy disk) where the material is designed using HTML code or intended for downloading from the Internet. The tools will not only allow for faster preparation of courseware but will allow academic staff with limited programming ability to prepare and alter their courseware without reference to web technicians. For example, model answers to open-answered questions could be modified or enlarged "on the fly". This project will enhance the learning of students as it will improve student interaction with teaching materials, allow the students to obtain immediate feedback on exercises undertaken and reduce or demystify student uncertainty in assignment preparation. It will also establish protocols for use of Computer Mediate Communication (CMC) within the academic learning environment.

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QUEENSLAND

5. BioED: Biodiversity and Education in an Interactive, Multimedia Environment

A computer-based software package called LucID has been developed at The University of Queensland. LucID transforms the identification exercise into something dynamic, information-rich and entertaining. The LucID keys to be developed will be combined into a CD-ROM package called BioED. BioED consists of 14 projects and will include taxonomic information on major groups of organisms (bacteria, protozoa, arthropods, plants and frogs). BioED will be developed for specified taxa by specialists in the participating institutions and will demonstrate Australian leadership in reform of teaching methodology in an important area of the biological sciences.

The project has three goals: (1) to develop new identification tools (LucID keys) for CD-ROM and the Internet to enable us to teach organismal biology subjects more effectively and provide information which relies upon the accurate identification of organisms; (2) to restructure and alter the way subjects are taught which rely heavily upon the identification and classification of organisms; and (3) to stimulate a chain-reaction in other tertiary institutions within Australia with new and additional taxonomic keys which are easier to use.

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA

6. Creating Integrated and Collaborative Online Learning Environments for Off-campus and On-campus Students

The project proposes to design, develop, apply and evaluate several integrated and collaborative online learning environments which will be characterised by the blurring, if not the removal, of the existing distinctions between the experiences of off-campus and on-campus students who are enrolled in the same unit of study.

The project recognises that various combinations of approaches/technologies may work better with some units of study than others. It is the intention that each single unit of study be able to be conducted, as far as is practicable, as if there was one community of learners (a single "class") comprising both off-campus and on-campus students.

This will be achieved through judicious use of available and emerging Internet technologies and applied to the University's Graduate Diploma of Arts (Interactive Multimedia Technologies) which is a cross-faculty initiative between the Faculty of Education and the Faculty of Science, Technology and Engineering, and involves staff from these two faculties as well as staff from the Division of University Learning Systems (DULS). The aim of the project is to provide both the discipline areas, and ultimately the Australian tertiary sector at large, with an approach which can cohesively combine this community of learners and add value for off-campus students while offering flexibility to on-campus students.

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TASMANIA

7. The Teaching of Research Practice: The Pursuit of Collaborative, Cross-disciplinary and Cross-sectoral Capacities in Social Science Research

This project targets the teaching of the skills, understandings and attitudes associated with research practice. It will develop, trial and evaluate teaching resources designed for use in undergraduate, graduate and staff-development contexts, with a particular focus on the social sciences and related fields. The focus of these resources would not be on traditional elements of research practice such as research design, data-gathering and data-analysis. Rather, it is proposed that these resources be used to augment those traditional curricula elements in such a way that quite different learning outcomes emerge - outcomes that revolve around capacities to engage in research practice in collaborative and/or cross-disciplinary and/or cross-sectoral contexts.

The project will build on an extensive and rapidly growing literature on collaboration, a narrower but exciting set of curricular materials being used in cross-disciplinary research training in other countries, and the valuable experiences of those researchers from the University of Tasmania and other sectors who have participated in cross-sectoral research partnerships. The primary vehicle for the development, however, will be the teaching of staff directly involved in the provision of research training within targeted faculties.

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NORTHERN TERRITORY

8. Media as a Teaching and Learning Tool in Indigenous Education

The project has two key elements: (1) looking at the way that media, particularly radio and Broadcasting for Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS) units, can be used as a powerful tool in Aboriginal education; and (2) developing cross-cultural evaluation tools which provide easy-to-use ways for indigenous students to give critical feedback on the workshops, units, courses and course delivery.

Students will work on content from a range of higher education courses taught at Batchelor College, using radio as the medium of expression. The aim is to encourage vigorous engagement with and discussion of ideas, accessing the oral skills and knowledge of Aboriginal students who are often restricted when confined to working in written and spoken English.

The project aims to help staff make better use of living resources through the medium of radio; achieve better outcomes for students from the empowering and expressive medium of radio; and strengthen all teaching programs through the development of an evaluation tool which is not print-dependant and can thus be more effectively used in a context in which there is often limited overlap in the languages spoken by staff and by students.

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9. Facilitating Flexible Online Teaching Using Structured Frameworks

The project is designed to address important access and equity issues in north Australia, as well as enhancing effective educational practices at the Northern Territory University. This approach will combine professional development and materials development activities to create a series of guidelines, or templates, to be used when developing units of study that use online educational approaches. These guidelines/templates will initially be formulated through collaboration between the Faculty of Education and the Open Learning Branch and within twelve months become available to all sections of the University as a basis for rapid, responsive, cost-effective development of additional online units.

The project will have a number of aspects including: an evaluation of the learning environments of students in urban, rural and remote north Australia, in order to ascertain appropriate modes of electronic delivery of educational activities; the implementation of a professional development program for Faculty of Education staff in the area of online communications and materials development, focusing on the technologies and pedagogy identified as appropriate during the earlier evaluation; the involvement of Faculty of Education and Open Learning Branch staff working in collaborative teams to develop the pedagogic and technical frameworks for four units of study, each unit exemplifying one of the four nominated pedagogic strategies; and pilot delivery and evaluation of the four units of study.

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1997

STAFF DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

PROJECTS

NEW SOUTH WALES

1. Developing Capacity to Integrate Information Technology into Higher Education Teaching and Learning

This program builds upon current initiatives within the university to address the wide range of development needs associated with the integration of Information Technology (IT) into the University's educational programs. It extends current opportunities available to staff through the University's Teaching Development Grants, Flagship, WebEd, and Teaching and Learning workshop programs, and addresses a key strategic issue for the University. Specifically the program raises the awareness of staff at all levels to the potential of current and developing information technologies to enhance and deliver educational programs across the disciplinary spectrum. It assists staff to development the knowledge and skills necessary to design and develop IT based teaching and learning programs, as well as manage the development and integration of Information Technologies into the curriculum. The program is multidimensional and designed to build in a coherent, integrated and cost effective way, institutional capacity to integrate IT into the University's educational programs. The program targets members of the University Executive, Heads of Schools/Discipline/Offices, Centres, and academic and general staff from all disciplines and offices across the University. It comprises one-off mini-conferences and workshops, short-term activities (eg focus groups) and longer term peer development activities designed to facilitate ongoing debate and development.

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2. An Institutional Staff Development Initiative to Achieve Better Student Assessment Practices

Because of its importance in the teaching and learning process student assessment is an area which needs to be subject to regular review and improvement. A major means of achieving this is through increasing attention to academic staff development in student assessment.

The program aims, over the next two years, to maintain momentum and to develop further the understanding and expertise of academic staff in student assessment. The program will address three specific obstacles to better assessment practices, namely overassessment; lack of clarity in the language and structure of assessment tasks; insufficient justification and clarification of criteria for judging student performance; and discipline specific assessment problems and issues. The submission identifies positive outcomes for both staff and students.

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3. A Flexible Web-based Staff Development Program for Information Skills Librarians to Enhance Teaching Skills in the New Technological Environment

Professional librarians in the tertiary sector world-wide are having to meet the challenge of delivering information skills/information literacy programs to students and staff incorporating information technology in the design and delivery of those courses as well as in the content. In 1996 The University of New South Wales (UNSW) Library Staff Development, funded by a UNSW Development Grant, commissioned the Faculty of Professional Studies to develop and deliver a five day equivalent Train the Trainers course adapted specifically to the needs of information skills librarians. As a result of the evaluations of this course it has been proposed that course content be redesigned in order to be delivered in mixed mode, combining web-based materials and face-to-face contact.

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4. Exploring Flexible Teaching and Learning

Despite the rapid expansion in the availability of information technology and the use of flexible learning opportunities, there has been little testing of its effectiveness across a wide range of disciplines, pedagogies, or cross functional units. How will student learning be enhanced? How can collaborative student learning approaches be maintained? How will course design, materials development, student assessment be affected? Staff need opportunities to explore these issues. For these reasons, the aim of this development activity emphasises the need for staff to explore the possibilities around flexible delivery and open learning so that, in the long term, staff will be more able to make informed choices about which options are feasible and most effective for their teaching situations. These choices and decisions need to be based on understanding the context, constraints, strengths and options and determining how any technology or flexible approach can actually improve this context.

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5. Management and Leadership Development for Flexible Delivery: An Action Learning Program

The overall focus of the action learning program will be academic and general staff development to support flexible delivery. However, it will specifically target management and leadership for implementing flexible delivery. Titled Project LEAD (Leading and Evaluating Advancements in Delivery), it will involve formation of five action learning project teams. LEAD teams will be led by a Dean or Head. Teams will be supported by the Project LEAD Coordinator, a Joint Steering Committee, and a series of staff development activities including two Lunch Time Forums, a residential Workshop, and adhoc Workshops arising from project teams' needs. Outcomes for academic and general managers include: an enhanced understanding of the nature of flexible delivery; increased ability to lead teams in implementing aspects of flexible delivery, and revised curricula and resources to provide a flexible learning environment for students.

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VICTORIA

6. Developing Scholarship in Teaching

This project focuses on developing the scholarship of teaching. Underlying it is the assumption that teaching will never be properly valued in higher education until it becomes a more scholarly pursuit. This implies improving university teaching in a way that takes account of the interplay between disciplinary research and the education of undergraduates; of rigorous investigation into teaching and learning; and of the need to consider university teaching as a process of critical reflection on practice, open to the same kind of collegial scrutiny as research. The work will initially be carried out as a joint project involving four universities. The materials produced and experiences generated will be available for subsequent dissemination across the Unified National System. The project will develop resource materials, which introduce academic staff to the processes and skills of scholarship in teaching, including classroom research, reflective practice, the presentation of evidence and the publication of results. The materials will be piloted through an extension of existing strategic initiatives in each of the universities involving innovations related to peer review, flexible learning, large class teaching, and work-based learning.

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7. Internationalising the Student Learning Experience

This program is for a centrally coordinated and steered program of department-based staff development projects to support the University's strategic priorities for internationalisation of the student experience. The program will stimulate, support and educate staff who will engage in innovations to promote new directions in curriculum design, teaching and learning. Priority will be given to projects that: significantly internationalise curriculum content and the student experience; integrate cross-cultural awareness activities into teaching, learning and the curriculum; and encourage collaborative arrangements and the use of existing expertise across the University. The program and projects will be informed as far as possible by local research and participants will be engaged in cycles of collaborative action and reflection. The aim is whole-institutional improvement by targeting strategic departments and inviting staff to play a leadership role. The development activities will comprise four key processes: establishing the standing and credibility for the program with key stakeholders; providing a focal point to connect academic and existing specialist resources and expertise within the University; supporting designated department-based project teams to design and implement innovative projects; and making evaluation integral to all aspects of the program.

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QUEENSLAND

8. Promoting Team Work in Course Co-ordination for Quality Improvement

The aim of this program is to enhance the quality of student learning outcomes through the development of a quality improvement process for course units. This program takes a cross-functional teams-oriented approach to staff development, focussing on improved unit and course delivery. When course coordinators and their associate teams are assigned responsibility for first year units with large enrolments, each member – whether academic, administrative, or technical – faces challenging demands associated with their role in the team and their interdependence with other team members. The program defines quality in course units at university-wide level, through consultation on expectations and practice with staff and students.

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA

9. Ways of Working: Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training for Academic Staff

Reconciliation (Federal legislation, August 1991) is about establishing a more equitable society for all Australians. As a movement occurring across Australia, it involves initiatives at all levels of society to create harmonious relationships and understanding between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. As a response to the national reconciliation process, this staff development project implements a major objective articulated in Curtin University's Strategic Plan and expanded more fully in the University's Aboriginal Education Strategy.

Over a period of one year, this project will organise a series of up to 20 Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training sessions for 200-300 academic staff from all Divisions in the University. The sessions are designed for practical application with particular academic disciplines and work situations, and will update existing cultural awareness training resource materials, including workbooks and a training video. The strength of this staff development project is its focus on both developing cultural awareness of academic staff and then, applying this knowledge to effective teaching of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students.

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10. Technology in Teaching and Learning Program

The program is intended to improve the capability of the University to provide alternative delivery of courses based on sound pedagogical principles and to facilitate the development of flexible learning packages. In short, the ultimate aim is to enhance the prospects of the institution to function, at least in part, as a Virtual University. The program directly addresses the twin goals of providing an effective faculty and school-based consultancy service for applying technology to university teaching and learning, and providing academic staff with a background of pedagogically effective strategies for applying technology to teaching and learning.

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11. Local and Collaborative Initiatives for Professional Self Development in University Teaching and Learning

This cross-institutional project aims to enable groups of locally situated academics to initiate collaborative work practices and develop projects focused on improving or enhancing aspects of student learning pertinent to their discipline or program areas. The groups will be supported in each university by an inter-disciplinary collaborative communication network accessible to all participants within and between the two universities. Each of these ‘Roundtables’ will be coordinated by a part-time academic. While the project focuses on professional self-development processes and ‘action inquiry’ based methodologies at a local level, the wider collaborative network will provide an essential supportive and interactive scaffold for all participants.

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12. Sharing Quality Teaching for More Effective Learning

Following the successful Commonwealth Staff Development Fund funded career and research development mentoring programs established jointly by Murdoch and Curtin Universities, this project aims to develop a peer and pair “mentoring for quality teaching” program at each university. This project will build upon a “peer mentoring for teaching” pilot program currently being implemented at Curtin University with institutional quality funds and a “pair mentoring for teaching” pilot program currently being implemented at Murdoch University with institutional staff development funds. The project will allow both peer and mentoring for teaching to be developed at each institution, with the goal of enhancing the learning environment for students by (1) increasing for staff the professional recognition, reward and satisfaction associated with teaching; (2) disseminating examples of best teaching practice; and (3) facilitating communication about teaching between junior and senior staff, leading to the reduction of structural obstacles to good teaching and learning faced by junior staff. As the first formal mentoring for teaching program in an Australian university, the project may also provide a model for the development of similar programs in other institutions.

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13. Supporting Student Learning Through Improved Student Services: A Team Approach in the Faculty of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences

This project is an initiative of the administrative staff of the Faculty of Engineering and Mathematical Sciences. It is unique in this University and once developed and implemented may be of interest as a model to other Faculties and Universities. It goes beyond the normal expectations of administrative staff in the Faculty since they do not usually work together as a team and they are located in separate offices on campus. As a result of isolation and lack of close collaboration, at certain times of the year misunderstandings occur regarding procedures. The impact on students is often not known until major problems arise. The program which encourages collaboration between the Faculty and Departments will assist in putting into place structures which ensure students have easy access to up-to-date and consistent information. The project has been designed as a staff development program aimed at improving that part of the learning environment where the administrative processes affect students. Students will be involved in the evaluative process throughout the program.

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14. Achieving Diversity and Inclusivity in Teaching and Learning

Increasing diversity in the student population, a commitment to excellence in teaching and learning, and the report of a recent Working Party on Inclusive Curricula at The University of Western Australia have all prompted the need for a staff development project which aims to enhance staff members capacity for achieving diversity and inclusivity in the curriculum. More specifically, the project aims to increase awareness of diversity issues, to provide information on best practice, to foster both inter- and intra-disciplinary networks, and to support the development of projects aimed at furthering inclusivity and diversity in teaching and learning. The project will achieve these aims by using two development strategies – one targeted at individual staff members and the other at departments. Development activities will include action learning groups for individuals and project teams for departments, diversity awareness workshops, an on-going program of seminars and workshops designed to meet both individual and departmental participant's emerging needs, and a final Forum, open to all staff, for the presentation of project outcomes and the discussion of issues. An edited collection of case studies and discussion papers will be published at the end of the project.

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA

15. Practicum Development Program

Work-based, experiential learning is a significant part of many academic programs and is highly valued by students and employers. It is also fraught with difficulties, especially in management of teaching, learning and assessment. The aim of this practicum development program is to improve the preparation of staff for teaching, learning and assessment in practicum programs and to enhance the management skills of those staff who are responsible for its day to day administration. The program also aims to sensitise staff to the legal and ethical complexities associated with students' placements for practical learning in workplaces and to enable staff to work with diverse student groups in non-discriminatory ways. These aims will be accomplished by developing and conducting a series of workshops that address six key areas: management; program planning and development; legal and ethical dimensions; teaching and learning; assessment of students and evaluation of the practicum; and working with diverse student groups in non-discriminatory ways.

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16. A Program to Promote the University's Goals of an Institutional Culture of International and Cross-cultural Understanding and Empathy

This project aims to develop a program to contribute to an evolutionary process of changing the institutional culture of the University of South Australia, to realise the University's goals of fostering 'international and cross-cultural understanding and empathy'. The project will provide a series of professional development seminars for mixed groups of administration, library, teaching, research and support staff of the University of South Australia to promote an institutional culture of cross-cultural empathy and a positive orientation towards internationalisation. The intention is to support development, piloting and evaluation of programs to fulfil this requirement. The significance of the project relates to the national and institutional priority of internationalism.

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1998

STAFF DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

PROJECTS

NEW SOUTH WALES

1. Staff Development for Flexible Learning and the Use of Resource-based Learning Materials: A National Initiative

The project capitalises on the investment already made by the National Council for Open and Distance Learning (NCODE) in the development of a national web site for staff development about Resource Based Learning (RBL). A multi-institutional team working on behalf of their institutions and NCODE has designed the web site, drawing together existing links and commissioning new content. Stage 2 and Stage 3 proposed by this project practises what the site preaches about RBL: the resources in themselves do not constitute learning; it is the learning activities based on the resources that are important. NCODE will work with universities' flexible learning and staff development units to organise a series of national face-to-face and web delivered workshops which will integrate the national web site into institutional staff development. Stage 3 moves the resources at the web site past static one-way delivery of information and towards a forum for dynamic debate and construction of meaning by academics about the nature of their teaching. The workshops will consequently facilitate the resolution of institutional implementation issues and set the agenda for future web site and workshop development.

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2. Staff Development of Sessional Markers in Distance Education: Improving Assessment Practices

The outsourcing of marking in universities to individuals who are not part of the designated faculty staff brings with it a set of challenges for assessment relating to: the consistency of expectations that staff hold for sessional markers; markers' responsibilities in terms of consultation with students; the availability of on-campus staff members to consult/liaise with and offer support for sessional markers; clarification of assessment requirements for both markers and students; ensuring consistency across markers; and establishing appropriate mechanisms for the recruitment of sessional markers. This staff development project seeks to address these concerns through the development of four folios, the conduct of staff development workshops and the implementation of strategies for lecturers, sessional markers and line managers. These folios will be used in staff development workshops. Their use will be evaluated both formatively and summatively.

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3. NGURRA - Internet Campsite for Learning and Sharing: Using the Web for Professional Development in Indigenous Higher Education

The project proposes the establishment of a co-operative national interactive web site, focussed on the professional development of academic and administrative staff working in indigenous higher education. The web site, titled NGURRA, is to be managed by a consortium (in the first instance) of three universities. The project consists of a phased implementation strategy where key pilot studies and research activities are used to test and refine web-based applications, while at the same time promote the project to both institutions and potential participants. Once established NGURRA has been designed to be both self-managed and self-sufficient, with the expectation that it will continue after all external funding has ceased. It is intended that online communication, resources and activities will provide a range of professional development experiences that are culturally appropriate and closely aligned with the unique needs, demands and opportunities in indigenous higher education.

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4. Beginning Women Researchers' Program

This is a program to improve the research effectiveness, confidence and productivity of beginning women academic researchers at The University of New South Wales. This will be achieved through a coherent plan of staff development, based on an assessment of the identified needs of staff at this University, an analysis of the literature, and a review of similar programs undertaken at other universities. The program will run for two groups of staff over two years. It has four main elements: an opening forum to canvass the issues and outline the program; a seminar series to inform and support participants; individual research projects to develop research skills and strategies, and a closing forum to evaluate the program and disseminate outcomes.

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5. Assessment of Learning: Accommodating Students with a Disability

The project will address what has been a significant issue for universities in the 1990s. Students with a disability are seeking and gaining access to university courses in increasing numbers. Access and equity, mass entry to higher education, changes in approaches to teaching and learning and increasingly limited funding have placed pressure on academic staff to maintain efficiency and effectiveness in all their work. The project offers a comprehensive, cohesive and practical staff development program which will provide structured, experiential opportunities for staff to explore the needs and problems of students with disabilities; challenge their values and beliefs about students with disabilities and the necessity for making suitable assessment accommodations; learning about their obligations and responsibilities in relation to the Act and particularly issues relating to assessment accommodations; expand their knowledge and understanding of alternate, inclusive, authentic assessment based on best practice; and participate in supported development teams to modify, trial and evaluate a number of assessment tasks in classes which have students with a disability.

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VICTORIA

6. Improving Judgements About University Teaching

A range of staff development modules will be produced to assist university personnel in making informed judgements about teaching quality. There are many contexts (eg committees concerned with promotion, tenure, teaching grants, teaching awards, course development and review) in which such judgements of teaching quality play a critical role. Furthermore, recent enterprise bargaining agreements will require all academic supervisors to make judgements about teaching performance. To date there has been so systematic professional development support to prepare committee members or supervisors for their responsibility to judge teaching performance, more specifically to judge teaching performance in terms of the quality of student learning. This project will develop more explicit criteria for the application of indicators of good teaching in the contexts outlined. The outcomes will be increased skill and confidence by those judging teaching quality, a better fit between those judgements and what is known about the relation between teaching and learning and thereby an increased confidence in the university community in the mechanisms by which good teaching is recognised and rewarded.

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7. Unleashing the Potential of Work-integrated-learning Through Professionally Trained Academic and Industry Supervisors

Work-Integrated-Learning is a powerful method of learning which integrates the rigour of an accredited academic program with periods of supervised and relevant experience in the workplace. This project will develop a professional staff development program for academic and industry mentors. The program will cover a range of skills to assist supervisors in understanding and managing the mentoring process during Work-Integrated-Learning including an understanding of student learning in the workplace, understanding workplace relationships and the impact of issues such as cultures, employment policies and practices, and performance appraisal and evaluations. It will be delivered face-to-face using a comprehensive set of resources (including case studies and video scenarios) developed specifically for the Work-Integrated-Learning context.

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8. Teaching Development Through Peer-supported Assessment for Learning Teams (ALTs)

The project seeks the establishment of nine Assessment for Learning Teams (ALTs) comprised of up to ten university staff responsible for undertaking point-of-entry assessment of students' learning needs as part of implementation of the University's Personalised Access and Study (PAS) Program. In addition, ALTs will offer associate membership to course-coordinators to allow them to participate in ALT-generated developmental activities over the life of the project. The ALT scheme will thus involve approximately 200 (or 20%) of University staff. The ALT scheme is the latest iteration of a Professional Development (PD) model used at Victoria University of Technology over the past five years. This involves the formation and support of ALTs who engage in reflective professional development activities in the area of student assessment, with an emphasis on recognition of prior learning. Centrally-delivered programs support these group-generated activities. In this iteration, participants will be offered opportunities to gain accreditation for activities through advanced credit arrangements into the University's Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Education program.

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QUEENSLAND

9. Building for the Future - Redesigning Teaching and Learning Activities for More Effective Videoconferencing

The project intends to introduce a comprehensive staff development process, driven by curriculum redesign, to develop more interactive, student centred teaching and learning environments using videoconferencing. Currently over 100 hours of video-conferenced teaching and learning activities are conducted each week at Central Queensland University (CQU). In the main, most uses of videoconferencing at CQU tend towards a didactic, teacher centred model of delivery. This project intends to involve staff in a series of activities that will assist in curriculum redesign and enable staff to practise using student centred teaching and learning strategies in a supportive environment, prior to using them in a videoconference class. These activities will include curriculum re-design workshops, two-day intensive workshops, a series of two-hour follow-up sessions for the duration of the semester and a comprehensive formative evaluation process.

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10. Changing History Teaching

It is easier to develop new teaching practices than to get staff to adopt them. The project addresses the conservatism of Australian university teachers of history in this respect. It does so by generating staff development resources to promote the implementation of new teaching practices such as the use of conceptual acceleration techniques, constructivist techniques, and interactive visual materials, where these are central to internationalising history teaching. The innovative concept of the project is to provide experiential learning for staff of such teaching practices as a way of promoting change. The context of the project is the resistance many Australian university teachers of history are showing to implementing innovative teaching practices at a time when the need for internationalisation, changes in student literacies, and new electronic technologies make change vital. The outcomes of the project will include inter alia (1) new teaching practices integrated into existing courses taught by participating staff; (2) a highly effective professional development immersion course; and (3) innovative staff development materials, available in printed form and on an interactive web site.

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WESTERN AUSTRALIA

11. Achieving Diversity and Inclusivity in the Wider Educational Context: Enhancing General Staff's Capacity to Provide Services to a Diverse Student Body

The project will aim to raise staff members' awareness and knowledge of diversity and inclusivity issues within the wider educational context of service provision; increase staff members' competence in inclusive communication practices, including cross-cultural communication; and increase staff groups' competence in designing and implementing more inclusive administrative and organisational practices. Development strategies will include diversity awareness workshops; diversity audits; cross-cultural communication workshops; work-based groups engaged in action learning projects aimed at enhancing the inclusive nature of existing practices and communication; and facilitated networking events.

This project will contribute to practical advances in staff development through the linking of diversity audits to action learning group projects, and through the combination of workshop-based development, action learning processes and networking for general staff in a range of service delivery roles across a range of levels and departments.

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SOUTH AUSTRALIA

12. *Kokotinna* - Cultural Awareness Through Action

The program is designed to raise the awareness of indigenous health issues and perspectives. It will enable staff to take more appropriate account of these perspectives as an everyday part of their administrative, clinical, course development, research and teaching responsibilities and equip them better to implement important University and Faculty initiatives involving indigenous people.

The program consists of a series of six workshops and a small, practice-applicable research project negotiated with, undertaken through and supported by, indigenous people. There are systematic formative and summative provisions to ascertain appropriateness and effectiveness and to establish bases for sustaining, replicating and extending the program. The program will lead to significant, practical advances in staff development. It will provide a staff development model and mechanisms that will enable the Faculty to sustain, replicate and extend the changes sought by the program and allow the production of modules for further staff development in the areas of indigenous health perspectives. It will better equip staff to implement important University and Faculty initiatives involving indigenous health and indigenous people. It will also increase the number of staff appropriately acknowledging and representing indigenous health and other perspectives as an everyday part of their work and advocating and modelling this amongst colleagues and students.

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