

# **ROUNDTABLE: ASSESSING STUDENT LEARNING: USING INTERDISCIPLINARY SYNERGIES TO DEVELOP GOOD TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT PRACTICE**

## ***Professional Dialogue***

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## **RECORD OF GROUP'S PRESENTATION<sup>1</sup>**

### **PROFESSIONAL (EDUCATIONAL) DIALOGUE**

#### **1. Who are we trying to get buy in/involvement from:**

- Those with an interest in teaching and learning
- Sessional staff
- New staff
- Experienced colleagues
- ?? senior academics??

#### **2. What are the impediments of getting buy in/involvement?**

- Systemic ones such as probation and promotion where significant emphasis is on research.
- Knowledge/awareness of opportunities
- How academics identify themselves
- Limited resources

#### **3. What we need to do to overcome these?**

- Develop theories and support for teachers in understanding why they need buy in and why they need to change

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<sup>1</sup> Record of the notes presented in support of the group's reporting back to the larger group

- Identity issues because people don't think or see themselves as assessors
- There is a need to win over the 'hearts and minds' issue and there is a need for understanding what teaching and learning can bring to an institution.
- There needs to be recognition of teaching and learning
- What can be done is promotion of discussion in universities and encourage conversations about assessment within the university.
- Change will only occur if there is an internalization of the need for the change.
- It might be making more explicit the responsibilities of Deans and Heads in teaching and learning performance.
- There should be an interface between policy and implementation.
- Without having the opportunity to have professional dialogue it is very difficult to understand aspects/elements of assessment.
- There are spin off effects from the professional dialogue that can't be measured.
- Sharing assessment strategies/practices within and across faculties and institutions is essential. This involves making your teaching very public.

#### **4. How are we going to achieve this?**

- Three key factors:
  - Dialogue, in appropriate forums e.g. school meetings, faculty forums
  - Celebrations of successes e.g. Carrick citations, Carrick Grants, Carrick Awards, internal excellence in teaching awards
  - Reflections in course and unit reviews, peer review processes, e.g. Melbourne Uni piloting a non prescriptive scholarship of teaching assessment process

#### **5. What strategies might we employ?**

- Playing ultimately to peoples strengths
  - There are different reasons why people can't change in regard to assessment and conversely strategies to address these,
  - Cross learning is more effective in most instances than trying to develop just one individual at a time e.g. having a whole of school group 2 day PD activity
  - Assessment is about being able to explain why you are doing something and the value of doing it.
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## CONTRIBUTING ISSUES AND CONCEPTS<sup>2</sup>

- Consistency vs. creativity vs. equity vs. quality vs. outcome
- How do you account for real administration and policy issues and still design and develop challenging assessment?
- How do we reconcile the rigid bureaucratic needs with best practice.
- Integration. Buy-in. Total model.
- Grading vs. informing.
- How to persuade colleagues who resist prescription in course design?
- Need for integration across curricula
- Getting all teaching staff on side
- Constraints to imaginative assessment tasks
- Grading/quality assurance/consistency/explicitness vs. creativity/discovery/iconoclasm
- How can we move universities reliance on measurement as the basis of grading to criteria and performance standards
- How do we get academic staff at the school level to embrace and take ownership of the advancement of assessment approaches, give time commitment involved.
- Issues related to consistency or coherent vision
  - Discipline
  - School?
  - Faculty?
  - University?
- How to lead for course wide change
- Ensuring/encouraging widespread buy-in for change
- Developing assessment creativity
- Being accountable
- How do we support our academic practitioners to achieve the educational context/skills needed to develop good assessment?
- Need to promote meaningful organisational change in universities to make the Communities of practice
- Creating practical yet effective approaches
- Unequivocal evidence of inter professional learning
- How to create good collaborative teaching/learning environments in context of the Happy Family fallacy
- How to achieve consistency in whole course design (across disciplines)

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<sup>2</sup> These points are drawn from the suggestions of Roundtable participants (the points were recorded on the coloured postit notes).