



Faculty of Education

Research News

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER, 2006 – ISSUE 3

CONGRATULATIONS ON SUCCESSFUL GRANT OUTCOMES

URC RESEARCH PARTNERSHIPS GRANT

Jan Herrington, Gwyn Brickell, Barry Harper together with staff from the Powerhouse Museum of Australia and the National Museum of Australian have been successful in receiving a grant of \$10,000 for their project **“The role of web-based learning environments in facilitating and enhancing museum and school students”**.

UIC INTERNATIONAL LINKS GRANT

Jan Wright has been awarded \$9,344 for the project **“Bio-pedagogies: schooling, youth, the body and the ‘obesity epidemic’**” received to support the development of an international consortium, the Bio-Pedagogies Group, which will initiate, coordinate and disseminate social and cultural research focusing on the new health imperatives generated by the concerns around the ‘obesity epidemic’. As a first step Professor Jan Wright and Dr Valerie Harwood, will bring together a core group of international and national researchers working in this area at a Conference to be held at Wollongong in February 2007. Specifically, this will consolidate current and provide a platform for future collaborations with researchers from Loughborough University, Professor John Evans and Dr Emma Rich; from Ottawa University, Professor Geneviève Rail and the University of Toronto, Professor Margaret MacNeill; and from the University of Otago, Dr Lisette Burrows.

Garry Hoban was awarded a UIC Linkage grant with University of British Columbia in Canada for \$6,500 for his project entitled **“Using Animation for Teaching and Researching Science Concepts in Teacher Education”**. Over the last two years he has developed a form of animation called “Slow Motion Animation ” (Slowmation) for teaching science concepts in teacher education classes at UoW. Science educators at The University of British Columbia are interested in using this new teaching approach in their own teacher education courses and then collaborating with UoW to conduct research to ascertain its value for the learning of preservice teachers. Benefits to UoW will be the advancing of

UoW's reputation in teaching as well as the submission of an ARC-Discovery Application with UBC and Monash University to also promote research.

CARRICK INSTITUTE GRANTS

Assoc Professors **Jan and Tony Herrington** and Assoc Professor **Brian Ferry** (along with a 15 person collaborative team) have also had success with the **Carrick Institute** agreeing to fund their project '**New technologies, new pedagogies: Using mobile technologies to develop new ways of teaching and learning**'. The project has been funded \$115,157 with the University also contributing funds for equipment and project coordination.

Earlier this year, the Faculty was also successful in a number of first-round Carrick grants, including:

Dr **Sue Bennett** and Dr **Karl Maton**, Faculty of Education, are collaborating on a grant won by Gregor Kennedy of The University of Melbourne, in conjunction with Charles Sturt University, titled '**Educating the Net Generation: Implications for Learning and Teaching in Australian Universities**'. Recent commentaries propose that universities are ill-equipped to educate a new generation of learners whose sophisticated use of emerging technologies is incompatible with current teaching practice. This project will investigate this proposed gap between learners' and teachers' use of technologies and identify the implications for higher education. The primary goal of this project is to identify how the technology-based tools of a new generation of students can be successfully used by higher education practitioners in local educational contexts to facilitate and enhance students' learning. This goal will be achieved by:

- investigating how commencing first year students and their teachers use traditional and emerging technology-based tools in their everyday lives and to support student learning.
- drawing on the expertise of teachers and using the results of the investigation to develop and implement pedagogically sound, technology-based tools to enhance student learning in local learning environments.

Dr Gerry Lefoe (project leader) Assoc Professor Rebecca Albury (Arts), Professor **Steve Dinham**, Assoc Professor **Tony Herrington** (Education) and Professor Sandra Wills (CEDIR) received \$180,000 for the project '**Distributive leadership for learning and teaching: Developing the faculty scholar model**'. UOW is the lead institution for the project in collaboration with the University of Tasmania and Flinders University. This builds on the faculty scholars project that began in 2005 and gives national recognition to another UOW initiative. This project will develop a distributive leadership framework for teaching and learning through a faculty-based scholars' network. It will support strategic change through leadership activities embedded in authentic learning tasks. These new leaders will provide a critical mass for extending the network by adopting a cascade model for distributive leadership through mentoring of future implementations within and across institutions.

TELSTRA FOUNDATION GRANT

Drs **Rachel Jones**, **Tony Okely**, and **Lori Lockyer** have been awarded \$50,000 for their project entitled "**Development of an online facilitated program for overweight or obese children**". This grant will provide funding to conduct the follow-up study to their current Faculty Grant. One reason for the success was that the funding that had already been provided by the Faculty Grant and investigators acknowledge the contribution of the Faculty to this application and its subsequent success.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GRANT – This is the second year the Community Engagement Grants Scheme (CEGS) have been supported which link the University’s academic, research and outreach activities with community partners for mutual benefit.

Dr **Ken Cruickshank**, Faculty of Education has been awarded \$8,300 with Partners: Association of Illawarra Community Schools, various Community Schools, Illawarra Ethnic Communities Council for the project “**Developing community language resources**”. This project will involve the development and sharing of skills, resources and expertise between Community Language Schools and Faculty of Education staff and students. Community Language Schools are non-profit groups run by parents and community members which aim to develop young children’s knowledge and fluency in their heritage language and culture. Locally there are 24 such schools catering for over 600 children in more than 17 languages. The project will include workshops and development of reading resources, including the translation of a set of books into the various community languages for publication and distribution. Third year education students will help out in the school classes and learn about the running of the schools and the teaching of the children as part of a project-based subject.

Dr Alison Wicks, Director, AOSC, Honorary Fellow, Centre for Health Services and Dr **Brian Cambourne** have been awarded \$9750 for the project “**Development for the project Learning and teaching creatively**” with Partners: Arthur & Yvonne Boyd Education Centre, Shoalhaven Campus, Faculty of Education and Australasian Occupational Science Centre (AOSC). This project will provide Graduate Diploma of Education (Primary) students at Shoalhaven Campus with the opportunity to experience the creative process in campus-based master classes led by local artists and in studio-based master classes provided by artists-in-residence at the Boyd Education Centre at Bundanon. By ‘living it as a learner’, students will not only understand the transformative potential of creativity, but also experience the ‘spirit’ that pervades Bundanon. During school-based practicums, students will become conduits between Bundanon and the Shoalhaven community, applying their practical understanding of the creative process and sharing their knowledge and experiences with school students and teachers.

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

Jan Herrington will give the following keynote address entitled *Authentic e-learning designs in higher education for E-Learn 2006--World Conference on E-Learning in Corporate, Government, Healthcare, & Higher Education* to be held October 13-17, 2006 in Waikiki Beach, Honolulu, Hawaii.

Jan Herrington will also give the keynote address entitled *Contextualizing authentic e-learning tasks and assessment* for the *Universitas 21 Research Conference: E-learning & Pedagogy: The future of e-learning has arrived!* to be held 28-30 November 2006 in Tec de Monterrey, Mexico (Guadalajara campus).

Jan Herrington has been invited to give the address entitled *10 ways to use technology to create authentic learning activities* for the *International Conference on Educational Technology 2006: Reflections on IT Integration in Education: Moving Forward & Beyond* to be held in Singapore, 7-8 September 2006.

PROJECT UPDATE - *Giving youth a voice*

The Interdisciplinary Youth Research team in Education, with their community partner, Wollongong Youth Services, have conducted a series of workshops with young people from the Wollongong area documenting their experience of the city. Approximately 40 young people from diverse communities have been involved in the project so far, with six of these 40 trained as leaders of their research group. Using their own images of the city, a group of young people participated in two workshops on photography led by well-known photographic journalist Peter Solness. From this workshop an exhibition was created which documents the young people's experience of growing up on the South Coast. This exhibition was on display at UOW in April and then moved to the Wollongong Youth Centre.

NEW PUBLICATIONS

Wright, J. and Burrows, L. 'Re-conceiving ability in physical education: a social analysis', *Sport, Education and Society*, 11(3):275-291

Blackmore, J., **Wright, J** and **Harwood, V.** (Eds). (2006) *Counterpoints on Quality and Impact in Educational Research*, 6th Review of research in Education, publ as Special Issue of *Australian Educational Researcher*, Melbourne: AARE

Blackmore, J. & **Wright, J.** (2006) The quality agenda and some issues for educational research and researchers: An introductory essay, in Blackmore, J., Wright, J and Harwood, V. (Eds) *Counterpoints on Quality and Impact in Educational Research*, 6th Review of Research in Education, publ as Special Issue of *Australian Educational Researcher*, Melbourne: AARE

'**Research for Educators**' was written by **Lisa Kervin, Wilma Vialle, Jan Herrington** and **Tony Okely** and published by Thomson in early 2006. This book was written with the purpose of demystifying the research process and help teachers appreciate the important role research plays to their professional practice. Throughout the book emphasis is given to the need for teachers to be researchers of their own classroom practice. Further focus is given to teachers as consumers of research and the imperative need for them to understand how research works in order to support them in making informed decisions.

HERDC PUBLICATION COLLECTION 2000-2005

FACULTY OF EDUCATION PUBLICATION COLLECTION STATISTICS

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
A1(Books)			1			1
B1(Book Chapters)	2	7	4	16	13	19
C1(Journal Articles)	11	11	15	17	24	32
E1 (Conference Papers)	8	26	29	33	45	40
Other	7	2	2	10	7	
TOTAL	28	46	51	76	89	92

UPCOMING CONFERENCES

Australian and New Zealand Comparative and International Education Society (ANZCIES) Conference 2006. Theme "Global Governance, Educational Change, and Cultural Ecology" to be held 1-3 December 2006 at ANU, Canberra. Call for Papers now open. Deadlines for Abstracts: Refereed papers - 4 August 2006 ; Non-refereed papers - 1 September 2006. More information available on the website <http://www.anzcies.org/conference.php>

2007 HONOURS SCHOLARSHIPS

Up to 40 scholarships of \$2,000 each will be made available for eligible students enrolling full time in 2007 in an Honours degree at the University of Wollongong. Each scholarship is for one year of study (on campus study only). Applications close on Friday, 17 November 2006

An information flyer is available at <http://www.uow.edu.au/research/rsc/files/scholarships/RSCHonsScholarshipFlyer.pdf>

The application form can be download from <http://www.uow.edu.au/research/rsc/files/scholarships/2006ScholarshipHonoursApplication.pdf>

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

Rose Dixon presented two papers I presented at the 4th International Biennial SELF Research Conference, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

The Affective Characteristics of Underachieving Intellectually Gifted Children

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Underachievement has long been recognised as a problem for some gifted children. In such cases, the potential of these children may be a loss to society. Indeed it has been argued that these individuals not only turn out to be relatively non-productive members of adult society but also they have potential personal problems (McCoach and Siegle, 2003). In spite of its importance there has been little research into underachieving gifted children since the seminal studies of Whitmore (1980).

The aim of this research was to investigate the affective characteristics of achieving and underachieving intellectually gifted children. In particular, the three affective characteristics were academic self-concept, self-expectations for future achievement and academic locus of control

Forty-one participants were chosen who had a Full WISC-R test over 125 from a large sample of middle school-aged children. Of these 41 intellectually gifted participants, 7 were classified into an

underachieving group as a result of their scores on a Performance Achievement Test. The remaining 34 were classified into an achieving gifted group. A third group, classified as average achievers, was composed of students who had average WISC-R FS IQs and whose achievement test scores were also average.

Three constructs, academic self-concept, self-expectations of future academic achievement and academic locus of control, were measured on two occasions for the three groups, to assess if there were changes after the students had entered the middle school setting.

The results indicated that the most discriminating construct between the groups was self-expectations for future achievement. The discussion will focus on how newer areas of motivation, self-regulation and goal orientations (Martin, 2002) may be more appropriate constructs to discriminate this group of learners.

The Self Descriptive Questionnaire for Preschoolers (SDQP): Does It Apply To Preschoolers With Mild Cognitive Delays? A Pilot To Unravel Measurement Issues

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Young children with mild cognitive disabilities are at particular risk of developing poor self-concept and other social-emotional problems (Dixon, 1999). There are estimates that at least 50% of young children with mild cognitive disabilities have poor social skills or other associated social-psychological conditions such as low self-concept (Dixon, 2002). In spite of its importance, self-concept development in young children with mild cognitive disabilities has received very little empirical attention to date, because of the difficulty in measuring self-report constructs in this population.

There is a crucial debate in this field about the validity of self-report as a research tool for very young children (Fantuzzo et al., 1996) This debate also includes the validity of self-report as a valid research tool for young children with disabilities (Dixon, 2000). These measurement issues are yet to be resolved.

The aim of this pilot study was to evaluate the validity and reliability of the Self Description Questionnaire for Preschoolers (SDQP) for use with preschool children with mild cognitive disabilities using an interview format.

The participants were 4-5 year old children drawn from Early Intervention Service, who were diagnosed as having a mild cognitive delay. The SDQP interview format developed by Marsh, Ellis and Craven, (2002) was individually administered. The results of the pilot will be discussed particularly in relation to the presentation of pictorial material for this group of children.

Rose Dixon presented another paper in Darwin in July at the Dog People Conference

Healthy dogs, healthy communities – culturally relevant educational interventions to improve the health and welfare of dogs

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Education is important for dog health and welfare for people in any society. However, the effectiveness of education is dictated by understanding which can be driven primarily by its cultural relevance. The educational paradigms of the dominant western culture are often presumed to be satisfactory in providing education for other cultures. This is often not the case for Indigenous Australians especially in remote communities. Many health related education programs have faltered when long-term assessments of their impact have been measured.

The Healthy Dogs, Healthy Communities project proposes to join extra-community experts with community members in order to explore solutions that produce locally relevant, culturally appropriate ways for dog health and welfare education.

However, programs devised outside of communities may not be relevant to the situations present in the communities, or appropriate to the ways of knowing and learning in those communities.

This paper will outline the findings from the pilot of this culturally relevant program in one Indigenous Community and discuss the challenges already encountered, innovations that will need to be made, the educational implications and the future directions for this program.