

SPECTRUM

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A New Definition of Research-Led Learning & Teaching?

Prof. Tom Angelo (Director, University Teaching Development Centre)
Dr. Christine Asmar (Research Development Coordinator)

VUW's *Strategic Plan 2005-2015* emphasises the need to focus our energies and resources on initiatives which can effectively and successfully highlight Victoria's distinctive teaching and research capabilities. A challenge facing most research universities is how to link research and teaching, and in this context VUW has been working on its own 'Research-Led Teaching' initiative. In this paper we propose bringing *learning* into that equation, by way of a new strategic initiative we call **Research-led Learning & Teaching (RLT)**. We see this initiative as critical to developing the 'productive nexus' between research, teaching and learning in order to enhance the quality and effectiveness of all three in ways which will distinguish VUW both nationally and internationally. Enhanced research productivity in PBRF terms is another anticipated outcome.

In order to recognise, evaluate and reward Research-led Learning & Teaching (RLT) – as well as to develop a national and international leadership profile in this area – Victoria University's academic staff and managers need definitions, models, and examples of RLT. To that end, we researched and developed the draft frameworks and model proposed in this paper, and have begun to gather 'case studies' of good RLT practice already occurring within VUW (see page 3).

Three distinct approaches to linking teaching and research are found in the higher education literature. We see potential synergies between these three approaches while recognising the distinctions among them:

A traditional approach, often known as Research-led Teaching (or research-informed, or research-based teaching) in which academics share their own disciplinary research with students, and

teach them disciplinary research methods. This approach can enhance student learning, including the development of graduate attributes, and lead to increased student enrolments and completions in graduate research programmes.

A related but perhaps less common approach is Inquiry-based Learning, whereby academics actively involve their undergraduate students in carrying out disciplinary research. This approach is widely practised in North America, where it is known as 'undergraduate research', and increasingly adopted elsewhere. Like Research-led Teaching, this approach can enhance student learning, including the development of graduate attributes, and lead to increased student enrolments and completions in graduate research programmes. Since presentations and publications with undergraduate students as co-authors can result, this approach can also lead to increased PBRF productivity.

A third approach, Research on Teaching and Learning, is one element of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) paradigm developed by Ernest Boyer and the Carnegie Foundation. In this approach – which is also known as 'pedagogical research' or 'action research' – academics themselves (involving students when possible) engage in applied research on teaching and learning in their disciplines. Research outputs such as articles in discipline-specific teaching journals often ensue. In addition to bringing about all the outcomes mentioned in relation to the previous two approaches, this approach contributes directly to enhanced teaching effectiveness.

We propose interweaving these three approaches – Research-led Teaching, Inquiry-based Learning, and Research on Teaching and Learning – into one distinctive, VUW model, which we call Research-led Learning & Teaching (RLT).

continued page 2

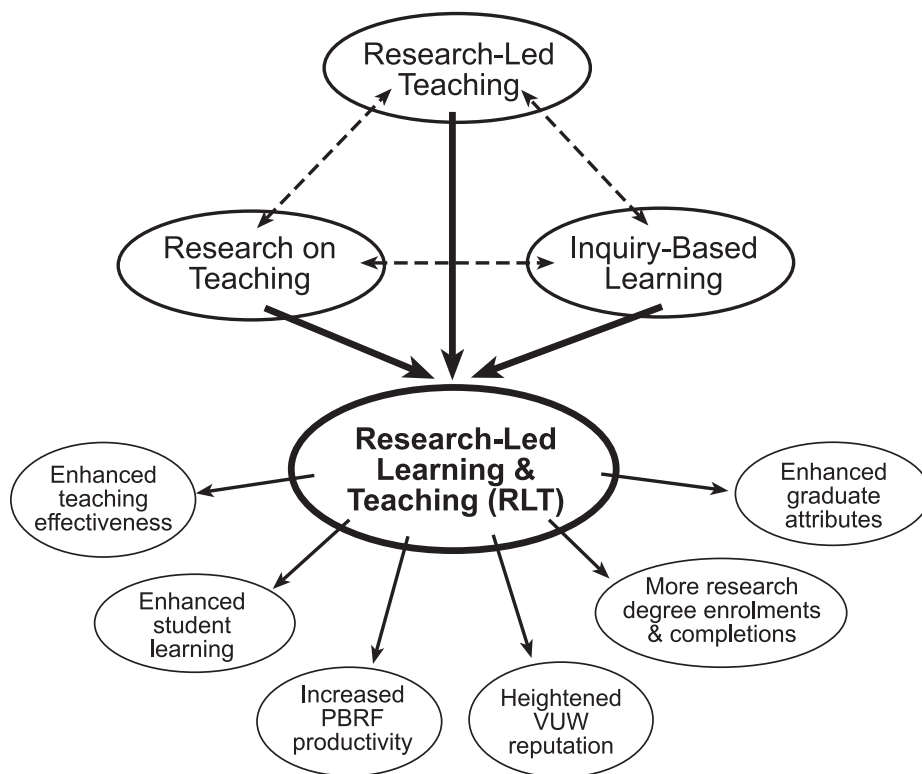
The model is represented graphically below. We feel that encouraging this three-dimensional approach will increase the number of pathways for Victoria's staff and students to engage actively and productively in research that informs and improves teaching – and in teaching that generates new directions for research. A number of individual staff at VUW are already practising RLT in creative and scholarly ways (see page 3). We hope to see an increase in that number.

With input and support from SMT and Academic Board we aim to systematically raise awareness and generate discussion

In terms of our own, related scholarly activity, we co-presented a well-received paper on international approaches to academic development for RLT at the first conference of the International Society for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (ISSoTL) at the University of Indiana-Bloomington in November 2004. More recently, we have had a paper on RLT accepted for the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA) annual conference, at the University of Sydney in July 2005.

The paper will define what might constitute meaningful evidence of effective RLT and describe what VUW is doing to enhance and

Proposed VUW Model for Research-Led Learning and Teaching



of this proposed RLT model across the University. A session on RLT has already been incorporated into VUW's Orientation programme for new academic staff. In May 2005 we ran a workshop on RLT. Already advertised as part of a broader 2005 research skills development project, the May workshop addressed practical ways in which VUW staff might engage in and document evidence of RLT. Twenty-two staff signed up to attend the May workshop, signifying a high level of interest within the VUW community.

develop RLT. Responses from peers at this large international conference will directly inform VUW's own strategies for developing and rewarding the effective practice of RLT. In the longer term, an important strategy for developing widespread staff awareness of and engagement in the practice of RLT at VUW will be UTDC's new Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education Learning and Teaching.

This discussion paper is currently being circulated to faculties and schools for discussion. We look forward to the response of our colleagues at Victoria to this paper and to the suggested model.

Selected references

Angelo, Thomas (2002). Engaging and Supporting Faculty in the Scholarship of Assessment: Guidelines from Research and Best Practice. In T.W. Banta & Associates, *Building a Scholarship of Assessment*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Association of University Staff (AUS) Bulletin (December 2004) Interview with Professor Alan Jenkins, Oxford Brookes University, UK, on *Research Assessment: its effect on teaching*.

Asmar, Christine (2002). Strategies to enhance learning and teaching in a research-extensive university. *International Journal for Academic Development* 7, 1 (May), 18-29.

Brew, Angela (2001). *The Nature of Research*. London & New York: RoutledgeFalmer.

Healey, M. Linking research and teaching: exploring disciplinary spaces and the role of inquiry-based learning. In Barnett, R. (ed.) *Reshaping the university: New relationships between research, scholarship and teaching*. McGraw-Hill/Open University Press (Forthcoming)

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Paewai, S. & Suddaby, G. (Eds) (2001) Occasional Papers from the VC's Symposium on the Research Teaching Nexus: *Towards understanding the interdependence of research and teaching*. Massey University

Willis, Deborah (1998). *Working Paper on 'Enhancing learning with research'*. Victoria University of Wellington. <http://www.utdc.vuw.ac.nz/documentation/spectrum1/Paper11.htm>

Wood, William B. (2003). Inquiry-based undergraduate teaching in the life sciences at large research universities: A perspective on the Boyer Commission report. *Cell Biology Education* <http://www.cellbioed.org/articles/vol2no2/article.cfm?articleID=57> Accessed 1 March 2005

This discussion paper may be downloaded electronically from <http://www.utdc.vuw.ac.nz/research/rlt/>

Case Studies (continued from page 2)

[At the suggestion of the AVC, three VUW academics were interviewed for the purposes of collating cases of good practice in RLT for inclusion in this paper. They have not been identified.]

As noted on page 2, our proposed model of Research-led Learning and Teaching (RLT) incorporates three distinct (but not unrelated) approaches:

- Research-led Teaching
- Inquiry-based Learning
- Research on Teaching and Learning.

The cases of good practice we have briefly investigated on our own campus provide evidence that many academics (and importantly, students) are engaged in activities which encompass more than one of these dimensions. Core elements of those activities, as reported by academics teaching at undergraduate level, are summarised below.

Case 1: Humanities (Level 3)

- Course content changes each year to incorporate the academic's own research as well as the nature of current exhibitions which students are required to critically review
- The academic is able to provide students with privileged access to the field on the basis of her own personal and professional background and expertise
- Each student carries out their own individual research project on a NZ artist. Source material is invariably limited so students 'have to become detectives'

- Students become aware that their own research is in new and contested areas, and that they themselves are contributing actively to 'knowledge in the making'

- At the end of the course students prepare for and take part in a round table discussion with professionals external to the University, to reflect on ideas underlying the course

- Many students go on into Honours or Masters and graduates have good success rates in obtaining jobs in museums, galleries etc.

Case 2: Mathematics, Statistics and Computer Science (Honours)

- Students are engaged with research from the outset because material taught every year must take account of current research, not just that of the individual academic, but that of others leading the field

- Awareness of these developments in the research in turn informs the pedagogy adopted by teaching staff: 'I keep an eye on emerging trends in the pedagogy of the sub-discipline'

- The academic has given a paper on such pedagogical issues at the Computer Science Education conference

- During the full year Honours programme, supervising staff 'introduce students to the international research community' – 'we are outwards looking'

- Students are encouraged to enter international competitions and one Honours student came second in a major international competition in competition against other students at PhD level

- Students end up publishing 'fully international quality research'

Case 3: Humanities (200 level and Masters)

- The academic's approach to teaching involves combining her own experience in research with her teaching; sharing their own experience in research methods with students; and 'giving students independence in their own research'

- In one course students carry out a research project on a NZ publisher. Since little material is available on individual publishers, and simply finding sources is a challenge, 'students feel they are breaking new ground'

- As part of this project, students write a Marsden grant proposal to train them not only in how to carry out research but also in how to present it succinctly

- Students also 'enfold their own experience into their research', for example by way of research on downtown graffiti where they log, categorise, and carry out content analysis as well as researching related issues such as censorship

- Assessment in the major develops a range of academic, professional and generic skills by way of requiring an oral presentation, a group printing project, and an essay

- Former students are readily employed in a wide range of occupations both in NZ and overseas, including libraries and museums

- Students entering at Masters level now regularly upgrade to a PhD

Recent UTDC Staff Publications

Marshall, S. (2004) E-learning standards: Open enablers of learning or compliance strait jackets? In R. Atkinson, C. McBeath, D. Jonas-Dwyer & R. Phillips (Eds), *Beyond the comfort zone: Proceedings of the 21st ASCILITE Conference* (pp. 596-605). Perth, 5-8 December. <http://www.ascilite.org.au/conferences/perth04/procs/marshall.html>

Marshall, S. (2005). *Report of the University of Canterbury E-Learning Review 2004*. Report to the AVC (Academic), The University of Canterbury. 29pp.

Marshall, S. (2005). *Report on the E-Learning Maturity Model Evaluation of the New Zealand Tertiary Sector*. Report to the New Zealand Ministry of Education. 130pp.

Marshall, S. Copyright with an international perspective for academics. In Howard, C. et al. (ed) *Encyclopedia of Distance Learning*, Idea Group, Hershey, PA, USA, (2005)

Pauleen, D.J., Marshall, S.J. and Elgort, I. ICT-Supported Team-Based Experiential Learning: Classroom Perspectives. *Education and Training (Emerald)* 46(2) (2004), pp 90-99

Peseta, T., Hicks, M., Holmes, T., Manathunga, C., Sutherland, K. & Wilcox, S. (2005). Research Note: The Challenging Academic Development (CAD) Collective. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 10 (1): 59-61.

Retna, K. S. (2005) National Culture and Senge's Learning Organisation. PhD Thesis, Victoria University of Wellington.

Sutherland, K. A. (2004). *Tutors at VUW: A report on their status, support and satisfaction*. University Teaching Development Centre, Victoria University of Wellington: Wellington.

Sutherland, K. (2004). Te Kōtuinga Matauranga: Exploring notions of in-between-ness in academic development. A paper presented as part of the Symposium, "Liminality, identity and hybridity: on the promise of new conceptual frameworks for re-theorising faculty/academic development" by Tai Peseta, Catherine Manathunga, Simon Barrie & Kathryn Sutherland at the International Consortium for Educational Development (ICED) Conference, June 2004, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada.

Wright, T., Noble, J. and Marshall, S. (2005). Using a System of Tutorials and Groups to Increase Feedback and Teach User Interface Design. In A Young and D Tolhurst, Eds. *Proceedings of the Seventh Australasian Computer Science Conference, 2005*, Newcastle, Australia. Conferences in Research and Practice in Information Technology, Vol. 42.

UTDC Academic Development Workshops - Trimester Two 2005

To enrol, or for updated information, go to <http://www.utdc.vuw.ac.nz/workshops/>

JUNE

Fine-Tuning Your T2 Course

Facilitator: Tom Angelo
Date: Tues 28 Jun 05
Time: 3:10pm – 5:00pm
Venue: tba

Starting with Success

Facilitator: Tom Angelo
Date: Wed 29 Jun 05
Time: 3:10-4:30PM
Venue: Room 201, 10 WTA rd.

Academic Time Management: Balancing teaching, research, and life

Facilitator: Tom Angelo
Date: Thurs 30 Jun 05
Time: 10am – 11:30am
Venue: Room 201 EA 001

JULY

Blackboard 1

Facilitator: Irina Elgort
Date: Thu 7 Jul 05
Time: 10am – 1pm
Venue: KK218

Blackboard 2

Facilitator: Irina Elgort
Date: Fri 8 Jul 05
Time: 10am – 1pm
Venue: KK218

Improving Your Teaching Evaluations

Facilitator: Tom Angelo
Date: Tue 12 Jul 05
Time: 12noon – 2pm
Venue: tba

Avoiding Karaoke Powerpoint

Facilitator: Stephen Marshall
Date: Tue 19 Jul 05
Time: 12noon – 2pm
Venue: tba

Teaching Large Classes Effectively

Facilitator: Tom Angelo
Date: Fri 15 Jul 05
Time: 1:10-3:00PM
Venue: tba

Getting and Giving Feedback for Learning

Facilitator: Tom Angelo
Date: Thurs 21 July
Time: 3:10pm – 4:30pm
Venue: Room 201, 10 WTA rd.

AUGUST

Blackboard 1

Facilitator: Irina Elgort
Date: Mon 15 Aug 05
Time: 10am – 1pm
Venue: KK218

Moderating Online Discussions

Facilitator: Stephen Marshall
Date: Wed 17 Aug 05
Time: 10am - 1pm
Venue: Room 201, 10 WTA rd.

Writing Effective Essay Questions

Facilitator: Kathryn Sutherland
Date: Fri 19 Aug 05
Time: 3:10pm – 5pm
Venue: Room 201, 10 WTA rd.

Blackboard 2

Facilitator: Irina Elgort
Date: Mon 22 Aug 05
Time: 10am – 1pm
Venue: KK218

Bite-Sized Strategies #1: Two Teaching Strategies for Active Learning

Facilitator: Kathryn Sutherland
Date: Tuesday 23 August
Time: 2:10pm - 3pm
Venue: Room 201, 10 WTA rd.

Bite-Sized Strategies #2: Managing piles of marking

Facilitator: Kathryn Sutherland
Date: Wed 24 Aug 05
Time: 12noon – 12.50pm
Venue: Room 201, 10 WTA rd.

Bite-Sized Strategies #3: Two Teaching Strategies for Group Work that Works

Facilitator: Kathryn Sutherland
Date: Fri 26 Aug 05
Time: 2:10pm - 3pm
Venue: Room 201, 10 WTA rd.

SEPTEMBER

Promoting Academic Integrity and Discouraging Plagiarism

Facilitator: Stephen Marshall
Date: Tue 13 Sep 05
Time: 9:30am – 12:30pm
Venue: Room 201, 10 WTA rd.

RESEARCH SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Note: All three workshops in this programme will be held at VUW's Karori Campus.

1. Writing a Successful Grant Application.

Facilitator: Christine Asmar
Date: Mon 15 Aug 05
Time: 10am – 12 pm
Venue: College of Education, Karori Campus, Room PA01

2. Getting Published

Facilitator: Christine Asmar
Date: Tue 16 Aug 05
Time: 10am – 12 pm
Venue: College of Education, Karori Campus, Room PA01

3. Turning a Critical Review or Rejection into a Successful Publication

Facilitator: Christine Asmar
Date: Tue 16 Aug 05
Time: 12.30 pm – 2.30 pm
Venue: College of Education, Karori Campus, Room PA01

Contact for all Research Workshops:

Dr Christine Asmar
Office of Research & Postgraduate Studies
Christine.Asmar@vuw.ac.nz
X 7408

See also the Research Office home page at <http://intranet.vuw.ac.nz/research-office/>

May we design and deliver a staff development programme for you?

Contact Prof. Tom Angelo,
UTDC Director with questions
or to arrange a session
x7482 or
Tom.Angelo@vuw.ac.nz.

If your school or programme can guarantee participation of at least 6 of your academic staff, UTDC will design and deliver a custom staff development session at your convenience, and at no cost. The UTDC will offer sessions specifically tailored to meet the needs and interests of faculty, school, or programme staff.

Most sessions are delivered by UTDC staff. When necessary, however, we will work with schools to identify and bring in external specialists. To arrange a custom-designed UTDC workshop for your school or programme:

1. Review the workshops we list in this issue of Spectrum.
2. Note any that might be of interest to you and several of your colleagues.
3. Contact Tom Angelo, UTDC Director, to set up an initial conversation.
4. Based on your input, UTDC will design and deliver a session at your convenience.
5. UTDC will then work with you on potential follow up and support.

With your input, the UTDC staff can quickly customise any of our workshops. This list is only a start, however. We also invite you to propose new topics for development.

Please note that session times and venues may change. Please check our website for up-to-date information.

To enrol, or for updated information, go to <http://www.utdc.vuw.ac.nz/workshops/>