The Practice of Law: Justice or Just a Job

"If we, who understand the law, cannot recognize a bad law for what it is, then who can? If we do not take a stand, who will?" Julian Burnside QC, spoke these words at the end of a powerful and provocative lecture delivered on 18 March 2004.

The Sir Ninian Stephen Lecture was established in 1993 to mark the arrival of the first group of Bachelor of Laws students at the University of Newcastle. It is an annual event delivered by an eminent lawyer at the commencement of the academic year. Professor Ted Wright, Duan and Head of the University's School of Law, said the University was thrilled to have attracted Julian Burnside, recently announced as a National Living Treasure, as this year's speaker.

Delivering his lecture, 'The Practice of Law: Justice or Just a Job', Mr Burnside left the audience in no doubt of his commitment to justice. He still remembers the words told to him when he was admitted to practice, "...in a solicitor’s office, and in a barrister’s chambers, every matter is important to someone...".

Mr Burnside has carried that edict through his career, which in recent years has seen him act in some of Australia’s most significant cases. He acted for Ok Tedi natives against BHP, for Alan Bond in fraud trials, for Rose Porteous in actions against Gina Rinehart, and for the Maritime Union of Australia in the 1998 waterfront dispute against Patrick Stevedores. He was the Senior Counsel assisting the Australian Broadcasting Authority in the 'Cash For Comment' inquiry and for Liberty Victoria in the Tampa litigation.

Most recently, Mr Burnside acted for the father of refugee children in detention in the Full Family Court, which ordered their release. This important decision has been appealed by the Government to the High Court (the High Court’s decision is pending). Forthright and unforgiving in his assessment of the Federal Government’s actions in relation to asylum seekers, Mr Burnside said, "Every responsible human rights organisation in the world has condemned Australia’s treatment of asylum seekers. ... Mr Howard has made it clear that the mandatory detention system, and the iniquitous Pacific Solution, are designed to send a message. This decodes as: we treat innocent people harshly to deter others. The punishment of innocent people to shape the behaviour of others is impossible to justify. It is the philosophy of hostage-takers.

Unfortunately, the government of John Howard has abandoned decency and justice in its treatment of asylum seekers to a degree which is virtually incredible."

Detailing his first hand knowledge of detention centres, Mr Burnside vividly illustrated the conditions which can cause people to flee their country and seek asylum elsewhere.

"I learned, through the Tampa case, something I should have recognised earlier – that asylum seekers are confronted by unjust laws being implemented by a government which has lost touch with ordinary standards of decency. It had a profound effect on me. I knew that it was not possible to stay in Australia and do nothing about these outrages. I was challenged on a social occasion by someone who should have known better – he asked, ‘Do you think it appropriate that a barrister be so public about an issue?’ I replied, ‘Do you think it appropriate to know about these things and remain silent?’"

Challenging! Thought-provoking! Yes. Yet the message was clear for those in the audience – "Plainly, strict adherence to the rule of law is necessary, but not sufficient, if we are to have a just society. ... If we are to pursue Justice, we must be prepared to question the laws we help administer." Quotes taken from the transcript of Mr Burnside’s lecture.
**Funding issues on two agendas**

**A message from the Vice-Chancellor**

Moreover, Universities undertake 86% of Australia’s research, and this area was the major focus for the meeting in Canberra. The highly valuable $3bn research package, Backing Australia’s Ability, which was introduced in 2001, is not guaranteed beyond 2005. One billion dollars of that package is provided to the sector in 2005. If that level of funding was not continued, then this would have dire consequences for all universities and the country’s research efforts overall.

The following major issues were raised:

- At a minimum, funding of $1bn should continue beyond 2005 to 2010, of which around 70% would be required by universities;
- Research infrastructure support has become a major issue for all universities, and an additional $555m is required to address this deficiency;
- There should be increased investment in research students, who are our future research leaders. We are asking for an additional 1,000 funded research student places to be phased in over three years from 2005; and
- The 1,000 Seafarers Commonwealth Research Council should be increased by an additional $150m per year, to support the growing needs of researchers, including areas which link into industry-based research needs.

While no commitments were given by the Federal Government, we were listened to sympathetically and came away with some confidence that at the very least, the key research infrastructure needs of the sector would be addressed from 2006.

In addition, of major importance to the sector were the discussions with the opposition parties, particularly the Opposition Leader, Mark Latham and the Shadow Minister for Education, Training, and Science, Jenny Macklin.

On 25 March, the University of Newcastle held its initial funding agreement discussions with representatives of the Federal Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST). You will be aware this year is of major importance to the sector because of the ‘roll out’ of the additional funding and subsidised places under the recent reforms announced last year in association with the Our Universities: Backing Australia’s Ability program.

Twenty-five thousand new Commonwealth supported places will replace marginally funded places from 2005 with the distribution being made according to Government priorities, and taking account of labour market direction for new courses or demonstrated national signifcance.

Elective Criteria for all Bids: Regional priorities, inclusive of demographic growth within a regional area; lower education participation in a region; economic development of a region; improved access for regional and remote students; and capacity to service these areas.

**Persistent unmet student demand at the field of study and discipline level.**

- National, State and/or local workforce/industry requirements and labour market shortages, based on evidence of workforce shortage, sustained employment growth by occupation, licensing, or demand for graduates, evidence of unmet demand for existing graduates, and that the course is of national significance.

**National Priorities – teaching and nursing.**

**Surf School**

The signs of danger at the beach are explained to students.

**The University of Newcastle** promoted greater surf awareness to staff and students when the Hunter Surf Life Saving Education Unit ran a Beachsmart Surf Awareness Lecture at the end of March.

Organiser, Steve Bowe from the Faculty of Health, said the Beachsmart program aimed to target all new international and Australian students who may not have beach and surf awareness.

“We decided to initiate this program because one of our postgraduate students drowned at Newcastle Beach earlier in the year,” says Steve. “Dr Hoang Anh Vu had returned to Newcastle from Ho Chi Minh City where he was the Vice-Director of the Community Studies. Centred. He had only been back in Newcastle 24 hours when the accident occurred.

“We were greatly shocked and affected by this otherworldly event. I had established new research courses, offering students the opportunity to conduct research with business. I work also being assessed as part of their degree. This creates a situation where each learns from the other. Most of the academic staff in the School have been in business themselves.”

**Profile – Professor Bob Catley**

B.Sc (Econ), London School of Economics, PhD in International Relations, Australian National University

Professor Management, Head of School of Business, Ourimbah Campus, University of Newcastle

Member of international network and applicant selection process, Global Security and Cooperation Program of the Social Science Research Council in New York

Member, Research Advisory Committee, Institute for Public Affairs

Professor Catley’s recent research interests and publications encompass globalisation; Australia and the War on Terror; appropriate policies for economic growth under globalisation, including particularly the new economy/IT and education; and the impact of globalisation on Australian business.

This March he delivered a paper, “Northern Territory; Seventh State or External Colony?” to the Samuel Griffiths Society in Perth. This brought to a close his involvement as the ‘Governing Theme’ Leader in a $20.5 million Commonwealth CRC (Cooperative Research Centre) grant – the total budget for which was $95 million – funding “Desert Knowledge.” His vision for the Central Coast School of Business includes expansion of the publication and research component of the School, engagement with the life of the School with business, and growing the postgraduate offerings within the School.

“Academics can contribute an enormous amount to the development of the Central Coast, and the Tourism and Regional Economic and Business Development,” the Pathfinder To Profit conference, which we intend to firmly establish as an annual event in collaboration with Business Central Coast, creates the opportunities to the sector because of the relevance of academic pursuits to the commercial world. It also will afford us the opportunity to deepen and expand our links with business and government, creating a conduit for the sharing of information, research and development. These will be presented together with front line contributors to regional development theory in an era of globalisation.

“The proceedings will then be published with a view to providing a roadmap for development in the region.”

“As a business school, fruitful links with business people are crucial. Both business and our students can benefit from a good association between the two.”

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**Back to School**

**Articulation between VET and university courses.**

The University of Newcastle is confident that it will fulfill all of the criteria for our bids and will be allocated a large number of new places from 2005. These will greatly assist with developments at Callaghan, Ourimbah and the Central Coast more broadly, and at Port Macquarie on the mid-north coast of NSW. Cooperation and partnership with the NSW TAFE will be an important prerequisite for a number of these developments.

Bids closed on 30 April and a decision is expected by the Minister by 31 May.

I will keep the University community informed of any outcomes.

Roger S. Holmes
Vice-Chancellor and President

**Strategic realignment of course provision,** including evidence of innovations in collaborative/rationalised course provision, and evidence of shifts in student, community or workforce demand.

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A number of major issues were raised, commencing with some important facts about the sector. Universities currently employ about 80,000 staff and we have more than 900,000 students. It is a part of an education industry which contributes more than $4.2bn to Australia’s economy – in excess of the wheat, beef and wool industries.

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**Virtuality in Class**

**Prose of Representatives Learning has been taken a step further with the development of a Virtual Classroom in the School of Education.**

When I was an Sabbatical in the United States, I studied the pedagogy of online learning and brought back with me the idea of a pilot course that would ground learning in authentic scenarios. This course was offered and run for two years.

The virtual classroom is the latest refinement which situates learning in an authentic environment and can enhance the teaching of Education Psychology,” explained Dr Carol Richards, Senior Lecturer.

I was 10 weeks to develop, and we now have a program which not only supports problem solving but also requires students to actively identify the problem initially – as they would have to do in an actual school environment.

The ‘us’ Dr Richards refers to includes Dr Neville Schofield, Senior Lecturer in the School of Education and Ms Charmian Eckersley from the Network for Innovation in Teaching and Learning Support Unit in Education Services.

The virtual classroom and online learning program is based on the hard data of research and further, the research undertaken on learning outcomes means that it can be regarded as an exemplar for teaching and learning.

Eckersley said, “Teaching and Learning Support were more than willing to assist with the creative work needed to develop the concept. It is rare to have a course researched in this way and it is also rare that the proponents are willing to share the information.”

The pedagogy will soon be on Blackboard for all instructors to view.

The University of Newcastle. Already the use of the classroom has been expanded across several courses offered at the University of Newcastle. “We’d like to develop a software program whereby ‘schools’ incorporating different demographics can be developed according to the scenarios required,” explained Dr Richards. “Our teaching graduates are often posted to rural or remote areas so that is one option which would be worthwhile – it could be used as a post-tertiary preparatory tool.”

There are many other professions where this kind of classroom would be applicable and valuable,” Dr Schofield continued. “For instance, if we were to adapt the classroom into a whole community or a hospital scene, the training of policing or health practitioners would benefit from real scenarios.”

There is no doubt that the virtual classroom will continue to evolve to become a major teaching and learning component of both online and on campus courses across many professional fields.


**Focus on...**

**Education and Arts**

**A Positive Emphasis**

“The culture of discourse regarding creative writing is very different in Australia. I’ve noticed that when commenting upon another’s work or providing feedback, Australians tend to not criticise at all but rather focus on what they can turn into a positive. I think that is very good but it’s very different to what I’m used to. In Germany we tend to be very frank and something could be improved be we say so.”

Annette Pehnt is writer in residence at the Callaghan campus for this semester with the School of Language and Media. A published novelist in Germany, Annette admits that she only knew of “the cliché of surfboards and barbecues” prior to her arrival in February. “We never see anything about Australia in the news but it works both ways because I haven’t seen anything about Germany since I’ve been here. I have enjoyed many barbecues.”

The cultural differences in every day living are what interest Annette particularly. Lamenting the fact that she will not have a great deal of time to soak in the different landscapes Australia has on offer, nonetheless, she values living amongst another culture as the best way of understanding their mores. “You cannot learn anything about another culture by being a tourist, by a fleeting pass through a town or city. During my studies, I spent time living in Ireland, Scotland and America and although I didn’t get to see a lot of each of those countries, I learnt so much about the people.”

Her novels are not autobiographical in any way but she says that sometimes she recognises something she has experienced previously. “My latest novel has a little from my experience in Ireland although I don’t think it was intentional. I don’t know whether the sense of Australia will come through in any of my future works. Everything just gets filed away and I make use of them when I’m ready, often without even realising.”

Describing her work is difficult for Annette. “The best way to describe it is that it work very hard at not having anything superfluous – it is concise, condensed – I question the need for any word. My novels have been described as surreal. My worlds are recognisable but the reader will realise there is something not quite right, I like my readers to be active in their participation, in their imagination.”

**Centralised**

In an article in the March edition of UniNews, the Ourimbah campus was referred to – inadvertently – as the Central Coast campus. Our thanks to the correspondent who drew our attention to the error. The University’s campus on the Central Coast should have been referred to as the Ourimbah campus.

**Skipping a Runge**

A group of Central Coast HSC students are taking advantage (and might say reaping the benefits) of an opportunity to skip a small rung on the ladder of university education.

The 10 students, from Grange High School, Tuggerah Lakes Senior College and Brisbane Water Senior College are busy studying in a University Delivered Board Endorsed Course (UDBEC) being conducted for the first time at the University’s Ourimbah campus.

The course, Masculinity and Femininity: Explorations in Representations of Gender, will count as an HSC course – but not towards the Universities Admissions Index (UAI). However it will give the students who are successful, 10 units towards a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree in the School of Humanities at Ourimbah.

USBEC Course Coordinator and Lecturer in the School of Humanities, Dr Wendy Michaels, said the students were selected on the basis of portfolios of work and their Principal’s recommendation.

Wendy said the high achieving students saw it as an effective head start towards their University education and also to get a little taste of what University is like.

She said because of the success of the pilot course, it is planned to expand the numbers next year.

“There are four main modules, Conceptualising Gender: From ‘Shelles and Blokes’ to ‘Guys and Chicks’ – Gender Representations in Australian Culture; The Princess, the Wicked Stepmother and Prince Charming – Gender in Myth and Fairytale; and Star Cross Lovers – representations of gender and love in literature,” said Wendy.

“It’s quite a bit different from what they would normally study at school, however they are thriving in the course and loving it,” she said.

This course will not only help the students with other subjects they are taking for the HSC, but will also assist them to understand the ways in which gender representations impact upon their lives now and into the future.

I have seen them grow in confidence since starting in the course. From habits learned from the school setting, they are becoming adventurous in their approach to the work and are presenting assignments with much more maturity: “There’s a level of independent thinking that has clicked in and that’s great.”

**How do we increase participation in paid work in Australia?**

This is the subject of an Inquiry into Employment conducted by the Standing Committee on Employment and Workplace Relations, to which the University’s Centre of Full Employment and Equity (CoFFEE) has presented evidence.

Last August, CoFFEE made a submission to the Inquiry arguing that creating jobs was the most essential step to increasing participation and retention. A period of submission proposed an innovative approach called the Community Development Job Guarantee (CD-JG), which would cultivate macroeconomic policy settings that deliver minimum-wage jobs for the most disadvantaged workers. In response, the Committee conducted a public hearing at the University of Newcastle in early March. This has been the only hearing to be held outside a capital city.

Appearing as witnesses, CoFFEE Director, Professor Bill Mitchell, and researcher, Sally Cowling, argued that debate has focused on active participation models to the detriment of the unemployed. Government policies have constructed unemployment as an individual problem when the real problem is one of deficient aggregate demand. There are now approximately 5.6 unemployed people for every job vacancy, and policies which train the unemployed can only be successful if there are jobs available for them afterwards.

CoFFEE pointed out that prior to 1975 the Australian economy was able to sustain full employment, with the public sector providing a buffer stock of low skill jobs. Jobs on the railways and goods yards, in parks and gardens, were always available for the most disadvantaged workers.

Under CoFFEE’s CD-JG, the public sector would again provide a buffer stock of jobs. Instead of forcing workers into unemployment when private demand slumped, the CD-JG would provide government access to a public sector job at the safety net wage for the young and long-term unemployed.

In their discussion with the Committee, CoFFEE explained that an explicit aim of the CD-JG is to create a new order of public sector jobs that support community development and advance environmental protection and repair. The work is worthwhile; much of it is labour intensive; and it could be combined with training.

In closing, Professor Mitchell compared the cost of implementing the CD-JG with the cost of generating jobs via tax relief. The Melbourne Institute estimates that increasing tax thresholds to cancel the effects of inflation since the GST reforms would generate an additional 34,000 jobs at a cost of $2.7 billion dollars.

The CD-JG proposal would generate 334,000 jobs at an annual cost of $3.27 billion. More importantly, the cost of the CD-JG pales in comparison with the economic and social costs of tolerating current levels of labour under-utilisation.

The Parliamentary Committee will present its findings and recommendations later this year.
Not so many years ago, universities worldwide offered limited methods of learning – internal (full time or part time) or external (usually with several on campus “residencies”). The growing demand to provide a broader range of flexible learning options for students to be recognised and today most universities have expanded their program delivery modes.

The University of Newcastle is a leader in flexible, distance and online learning program delivery. The needs and expectations of today’s students have changed substantially, where many students look to continue full time employment while they further their study. Education is fast becoming a continuous, life-long process, where the convenience and speed of flexible study is paramount.

Flexible Learning is all about being able to engage in study anywhere, anytime. Those students who benefit from the offer of flexible learning options are those who are unable or choose not to attend on campus due to:

• work or family commitments, including relocation;
• location choice for where they wish to live;
• travel barriers, either logistical and/or financial;
• the need to maintain income; and
• the preference to not take time out from their chosen career.

It must be noted that our University has made a conscious decision to offer online learning only at the postgraduate level. It is firmly believed that undergraduate students need the face to face experience in order to fully develop the skills necessary for tertiary study. Undergraduate students, of course, still access online resources.

Trimesters

The introduction of 12 week trimesters, replacing the traditional semesters, through the Newcastle Graduate School of Business and GraduateSchool.com has resulted in students being able to fast track their studies. Again this allows for greater flexibility with enrolments occurring three times a year in January, May and September. Students can enrol in a full program or just one course. The three trimester model is soon likely to be adopted across all Faculties at the postgraduate level.

This trend for fast tracking studies is set to continue according to Professor Scott Holmes, Dean of the University of Newcastle Graduate School. “I can see a time when, because of the 24 hour availability of online learning, we will move to offering program courses on a quarterly basis and in fact, in the not too distant future students will be able to enrol at any time and self pace themselves through study.”

GraduateSchool.com

Online learning is one of the most effective and flexible ways for busy people to continue studying and keep pace in their professional careers.

In 1999, the University of Newcastle launched a pilot program of online management programs, the success of which led to the establishment of GraduateSchool.com Pty Ltd in 2000.

The academic components of courses developed and delivered by GraduateSchool.com are the domain of the faculties, with GraduateSchool.com providing marketing, recruitment, administration and ongoing student support.

The delivery of online programs through GraduateSchool.com has advanced rapidly and the University has emerged as a leader in development and delivery of online learning.

“The University of Newcastle is regularly an innovator and a leader but we tend to just get on with the job rather than promote our successes,” Professor Holmes said. “GraduateSchool.com is a classic example of our University getting on with the job and now, again, achieving leadership in fully remote delivery of postgraduate studies. We should recognise this and build upon this outstanding success.”

Introduction of a full program of online learning programs have more than tripled within a three year timeframe. With over 80 postgraduate courses in 20 flexible online postgraduate programs, there are currently over 750 unit enrolments from Australia and around the world, including students from Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, India, Saudi Arabia, USA, England, Tanzania and Kenya. This gives each student an opportunity to share knowledge and ideas with people from diverse backgrounds who are working in a variety of different careers. The global classroom allows networking without the geographical constraints of the traditional, face to face learning.

The unique WebLearn delivery mode means that students, upon enrolment, receive a course materials package containing a complete set of printed course modules including tutorial material and assessment tasks. This means that students do not need to waste time downloading material from the internet such as video and PDF files and printing out test...

The online programs offered through GraduateSchool.com cover the same context covered by the corresponding on campus course. The programs are developed and taught by University of Newcastle accredited academic staff and are subject to the same stringent quality controls as an on campus degree.

Each class group has an instructor who can be emailed for information and assistance. In addition, class members can interact directly with each other to discuss issues and form a class network. Class instructors also facilitate asynchronous discussions, which extend for a defined period and allow all students to participate in the discussion.

As well as postgraduate programs, GraduateSchool.com can assist private organisations with the development and delivery of tailored in-house programs: for example, the School has developed innovative online programs for the Hunter Region of Councils and Main Roads Western Australia.

The Faculty of Business and Law has been closely associated with GradSchool.com since its inception. While GradSchool.com offers WebLearn programs from four of the University’s five faculties, a significant proportion of the enrolments have been in Faculty of Business and Law courses. Since GradSchool.com enrolled its first students in 2001, Business and Law courses have accounted for around 60% of the enrolments, signifying the popularity of business administration programs and courses.

Programs Online

Graduate Certificate

Applied Management (Architecture)

Aviation Management

Business Administration

Environmental and Business Management

Information Technology

Marketing

Multimedia

Music Technology

Graduate Diploma

Information Technology

Master

Applied Management (Architecture)

Applied Management (Health)

Applied Management (Nursing)

Aviation Management

Business Administration

Environmental and Business Management

Information Technology

Marketing

Multimedia

Music Technology

Doctor

Business Administration

The Newcastle Graduate School of Business

The University of Newcastle has been offering the Master of Business Administration program for almost 30 years. As the first MBAs to be offered in Australia, the Newcastle program is conducted from the Newcastle Graduate School of Business (NGSB) in Newcastle’s central business district. The Newcastle Graduate School of Business was established in 1997 as a result of the vision and commitment of Professor Scott Holmes, prior to his appointment as Dean of the University’s Undergraduate School.

With programs in the key areas of business administration, human resource management and industrial relations, NGSB is focussed on relevant, contemporary education. This year and a first for Australia, the Graduate School of Business appointed a Professor of Small Business to develop and introduce a Masters program in entrepreneurship.

The Newcastle Graduate School of Business has more than 600 students, including international students from some 29 countries. In addition, over 240 students are studying NGSB programs in Sydney, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia.

As another example of flexibility, students studying at Newcastle Graduate School of Business are able to continue their program of study online through GraduateSchool.com should they relocate to another area.

Exchange programs are also available with select institutions in America, Europe and Scandinavia whereby students of the NGSB may complete one trimester of study at a participating university.

Executive and Corporate Programs

Have also been created by NGSB in response to the demand for short, focused courses to provide managers and professionals with exposure to the latest research and best practice developments. The courses have been developed to provide flexible, tailored and professional training.

Executive and Corporate Programs have also been created for staff training accessible to a diverse range of organisations and allows experts from both the University and Industry to work collaboratively for the benefit of the private and public sectors. Recently, NGSB has been involved in providing Short Courses and Masters-level programs to local and international companies.
Distance Learning

Distance Learning has been an option for students for decades: for instance the School of Education at the University of Newcastle has been offering programs by Distance Learning for well over 25 years.

The format of Distance Learning has, however, markedly changed since the advent, general acceptance and adoption of the home computer. Now, the majority of our distance programs are supported by a combination of internet-based and paper-based learning, and, as with on campus students, email is also used regularly.

Open Foundation by Distance

Open Foundation by Distance is a new initiative of the English Language and Foundation Studies Centre. Based on the highly regarded Open Foundation Program, the Distance mode gives prospective students a chance to apply for entry to University without attending classes on campus. This year, there are 80 students, primarily from the mid-north coast and central west regions of NSW, enrolled in courses from Australian History; Earth Sciences; Foundation Concepts in Chemistry; and Linguistics.

Distance and online learning – the benefits

Aside from the direct benefits to students as outlined previously, flexible learning offers additional benefits:
- Flexible learning programs can be offered to one, ten or one hundred students simultaneously. Their place of residence is irrelevant – in Australia or overseas. This gives the University access to a much larger, global cohort.
- Delivery of the content of programs is consistent with everyone receiving the same information in the same manner, ensuring consistency and academic rigor.
- Infrastructure costs are reduced in direct relation to student numbers.
- Innovation in delivery and adoption of new technologies are encouraged and ensure the University and its staff maintain relevance in a rapidly changing environment.

An additional bonus of online and distance learning is that provision can be made for niche markets. For instance, the Master of Applied Management (Nursing) program currently has 40 students enrolled in Hong Kong through GraduateSchool.com.

Graduate Certificate or Masters in Social Science for students with an interest in Human Services

In 2003, the School of Social Sciences commenced a new stream of courses designed to provide ongoing education for people working in the field of human services. This combination of courses has been designed to address the increasing demand for this field of workers to engage in lifelong learning by consistently upgrading their direct service provision skills and their management skills.

Increasingly workers in this field are expected to be highly proficient in service delivery, to be critical thinkers and problem-solvers, to have emotional intelligence, to clearly name theory and research that informs their practice and to be engaged in ongoing practice based research. In some specific areas, notably the care and protection of children, juvenile justice and health, human service workers are increasingly required to have sophisticated skills in addressing complex family and community issues with effectiveness and creativity. Hence these courses encourage students to build on their experience by exploration of new knowledge and theory with application to their actual work-based issues.

These courses assist to develop workers for human service management and for practice in welfare, social policy, health, community development, family services, youth services, correctional services and similar contexts.

Using both distance education and flexible delivery mode these courses have been offered in the subject areas of current developments in human service delivery, transformative leadership, ethical issues in human services, social policy and social theory, management sociology, capacity building, policy and program development and evaluation and financial management.

Feedback from both students and employers indicates that flexible delivery aids workers to combine working and study. Further both groups appreciate the education processes that aim to develop critical thinking and the capacity to apply knowledge to the reality of the workplace.

In 2005 the School of Social Sciences will expand their course offerings to meet field requests for further courses in communication skills, working with individuals, groups and community, family strength building, developing evidence based practice in human services and social research.

Ros Giles
Lecturer in Social Work and Human Services

“It’s not the strongest of the species who survive, nor the most intelligent, but the ones most responsive to change.”
Charles Darwin
University triathletes excel

The generous support of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) was again forthcoming in 2004, enabling seventeen staff members to put their bodies to the test in the annual Sparkle Helmore/NBN Television Corporate Triathlon on Sunday 29 February 2004. The event raised money for the Hunter Medical Research Institute.

The Newcastle foreshore again provided the picturesque setting for the event, with University competitors enjoying tremendous success on the day.

Those competing in the longer course of 500m swim/20km cycle/5km run included Sarah Leitch (placed 2nd in the 25-29 years female), Carl Leonard (1st place 30-34 years male) and Adam McCluskey.

The shorter course of 500m swim/15km cycle/4km run was enjoyed by Hugues Garnier, Jenny Williams (1st place in 40-49 years corporate females) and John Boulton (1st place 60+ years corporate males).

In addition to individual competitors, there were four University teams racing over the shorter course, and all raced under the now well known and well over the shorter course, and all raced under the now well known and well over the shorter course, and all raced under the now well known and well

Hugues Garnier, Jenny Williams (1st place in 40-49 years corporate females) and John Boulton (1st place 60+ years corporate males).

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UniTunes 1 (Craig D’Arcy, Ken Bright, Steve Gaul)
2nd place Corporate Teams combined age over 120 yrs.

UniTunes 2 (Toni O’Donoghue, Veronica Pettifer, Louise Wilson)
1st place Corporate female teams combined age over 120 years

UniTunes 3 (Jane Ramplin and Paul Munro)

UniTunes 4 (Natalie Downing, Donnelly, Sue Beach)
Congratulations to everyone for a fantastic effort in support of medical research.

Media Matters

The Media Unit is part of the Strategic Support Group in the Vice-Chancellor’s Division. The team comprises Senior Journalist, Leigh Wallis, Media Relations Officer, Kate Reid and Media Relations Officer, Philippa Ladd.

The primary role of the Media Unit is to promote the University’s achievements to the media. The Media Unit is always on the look out for interesting and newsworthy stories. It may be a research breakthrough, an outstanding student achievement or an International conference hosted by the University. If the story is of interest to the public, the Media Unit can deliver it to the media.

The Media Unit gets the message out in several ways:

• By writing Media Releases and Media Briefs which are sent directly to the media via PACnew and email

• By inviting media to attend the University to cover a story or launch

• By putting the media directly in touch with academics with a story to tell or by providing an expert contact to the media on enquiry

The story can be sent locally, nationally or internationally and targeted to particular interest groups.

The Media Unit also provides media strategy and placement for stories and runs media training for staff.

The Unit runs several internal communications services, What’s On Campus Life (Monday), What’s On Academic Life (Tuesday) and Inside Information (Wednesday) and maintains the News and Events, Media Releases and University Calendar web pages.

You can visit the Media Unit’s new look web pages at www.newcastle.edu.au/news/media.html or contact the team directly on 4951 6856 or 0409 986 013 or media@newcastle.edu.au

Focussing on the future

The largest careers event to be hosted by a NSW university was organised by the University of Newcastle and held on 29 March 2004 in the Great Hall, with 90 employers attending.

Careers Advisor Melissa Moore explained, “The Careers Fair is aimed at showcasing a broad range of careers and employment opportunities that our students can obtain by completing academic programs at the University.”

“Over 1,000 students were able to speak with employers about graduate programs, career paths, effective ways of obtaining employment within organisations and industry. They were also able to develop a network of contacts for work experience and holiday work opportunities.”

Participating students benefited from the opportunity to develop a broad appreciation of the employment opportunities their tertiary qualifications create for them.

“The Fair also provides a great opportunity for the University to showcase the quality of our students and to increase our profile both locally and nationally,” said Melissa.


Next UniNews: Special Graduation Feature

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innovation is to be sustained into
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ITMAP@newcastle.edu.au
the Future” progress reports in
teaching spaces.

institution-wide IT systems and services
University’s IT infrastructure over
University’s Internet connection.

The IT MAP, or IT Management
body for managers in construction with
high calibre of students at the University
Hunter Medical Research Institute
■

Nick Stephens, a construction
management graduate from the University
of Newcastle, is the first Australian to win
the International Chartered Institute
of Building (CIOB) Undergraduate
Design Award.

“Agile software development principles
have resulted in rapid delivery of
high-utility e-learning systems. As a
result, we have been able to offer
flexible access to high-quality learning
resources to students both on-campus
and off-campus, said Dr Gorman.

The University places great
emphasis on supporting students in the
development of their careers and Nick’s
success is evidence once again of the
calibre of students at the University
of Newcastle,” said Dr Gorman.

“The boys who are targeted are often
unwilling to attend Mental Health clinics.
The DAD program takes the mental
health treatment to the school, allowing
boys a place to reflect on their difficulties
within the school environment.”

A preliminary trial of the DAD
program has found that it reduces anger,
depression and increases self-esteem.
These changes were all maintained at
six months after treatment.

“Highly Commended Award – Cathy
Kicyznski, Technical Team Leader,
Student Support Systems, Student
Services Division.”

Bankrupt. The topology of the
network includes two optical fibres on
its way to Kuala Lumpur from Sydney.
The DAD program uses innovative
techniques, in the form of Latin
American percussion, to engage young
boys in the treatment. The Latin percussion
provides a playful environment for angry
to talk about difficult problems.

“Provide effective and seamless
traff ic management solutions to
enhance the overall quality of
education. The University’s increasing
dependence on electronic
information resources and
library services, especially
remote instruments, distributed (grid)
computing, and high speed
Internet access. The economies of scale
achieved are essential to the viability of
the Ourimbah campus.

Traffic on the microwave link
grew steadily, in line with the
University’s increasing dependence
on electronic systems and resources.
During semester in 2003, data traffic
regularly reached 100% utilisation of
the available bandwidth. Also, while
the link has proven to be very reliable, the
heightened dependence on electronic
networks means the risk of relying on a
single, non-redundant communications
link is no longer acceptable.

Bandwidth expectations and options
— or aggregate terms, the University’s
Internet bandwidth requirements are
expected to reach 1 Gbps3 in the short
term and may exceed 10 Gbps within
five years. These demands are beyond
the capability of microwave radios and
will require the use of optical fibre
technology. One option is the use of
custom Internet-protocol services from
a communications carrier such as Telstra.
Another option being actively explored is
the use of private (or ‘dark’) optical fibre capacity.
AARNet recently acquired six optical fibres on
an Australia-wide network built by
Nextgen (a carrier that subsequently
went bankrupt). The topology of the
Network (AREN) shown above.

There are two Nextgen fibre routes between
Sydney and Brisbane – one of
which runs in close proximity to both
the Callaghan and Ourimbah campuses.

Planning is currently underway with
respect to the technical and financial
feasibility of this option. The fibre link
would employ some form of wavelength
multiplexing to allow multiple campuses
and institutions to share single fibres.

Implications
Regardless of the option selected,
the University will enjoy an immediate
30 times increase in bandwidth and a high
level of communications reliability
with service availability exceeding 99.99% pa.
(Note: The actual benefits seen by students and staff may
be constrained by the capacity and
reliability of the campus network in
their immediate vicinity. These campus
network limitations are being addressed through
separate projects.)

The Internet access and inter-campus
network improvements outlined above will
deliver a range of benefits to the
University:
• reduce the time taken to find and
download Internet-based information
from on-campus locations, particularly
when accessing the Library’s online
scholarly databases.

Continuing in the series of reports
on IT MAP projects for 2004, this
edition spotlights plans to upgrade the
University’s Internet connection.

The IT MAP, or IT Management
Action Plan, outlines the key activities
required to maintain and develop the
University’s IT infrastructure over
the next three years. This includes
all institution-wide IT systems and services
— from campus networks, to corporate
information systems, to computing labs
and electronic presentation equipment
teaching spaces.

Stick tuned for regular “Mapping
the Future” progress reports in
future editions of UniNews.
Please send any comments or
questions to ITMAP@newcastle.edu.au

The University’s link to the
Internet has reached full utilisation.
Additional bandwidth must be
found if the institution’s growth and
innovation is to be sustained into
the future. Recent developments in the
telecommunications industry
offer exciting new possibilities to
achieve this.

We refer to the development of
multimedia delivery of specialist
content to enhance the
curriculum. The University’s Internet
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• provide improved online performance
(via the Internet) for 14,000 students
currently enrolled in 400 courses
available via Blackboard
• enhance research support for
ultra-high bandwidth applications such as
collaborative visualisation techniques,
cooperative research environments,
remote instruments, distributed (grid)
computing, virtual reality tools and so on
• support for high quality video
conferencing sessions, for academic and
administrative purposes, and
• improve the network speed and
reliability for accessing the University’s
central online systems from the
Ourimbah campus.

The expected timeframe for delivering
the improvements in Internet access and
inter-campus communications is 4th
quarter, 2004. Further information
will be provided when available.

3 Gbps = Giga bits per second (or 1,000 million bits per second)
2 AARNet = Australian Academic Research
Network, the network linking all Australia’s
education institutions
4th quarter, 2004
What's Happening @ The University of Newcastle

Forums

May 12 (10.00am – 12 midday)
Kick-starting your Research: Session for Academic Women
The Tree House, Callaghan campus
Please RSVP by Friday 7 May to:
joy.welsh@newcastle.edu.au
May 28 (10.00 – 4.00pm)
Women @ Newcastle Consultative Forum with SEG, part two
Potter Room, Callaghan campus.

Workshops/Seminars

May 11 (10.00 – 2.00pm)
Are you what you eat?
Research Centre for Gender and Health lunchtime seminar
Association between diet and health in the Australian Lontitudinal Study on Women’s Health
Case Study Theatre, David Maddison Building (cn Wani and King St)
May 25 (1.30pm – 3.00pm)
Workshop for Academic Staff intending to apply for Promotion
Board Room, Director’s Unit, Ourimbah campus
Please register online:
www.newcastle.edu.au/avc/staff/apply/register-h.htm
May 30 (10.00am – 12.00pm)
You are what you eat?
Research Centre for Gender and Health lunchtime seminar
Association between diet and health in the Australian Longitudinal Study on Women’s Health
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Workshop for Academic Staff intending to apply for Promotion
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Please register online:
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Celebrations

May 12 (11.15pm – 1.30pm)
Diversity Week Celebration
The Tree House, Callaghan campus
Bring your own lunch, Drinks, fruit and cookies provided
Speakers: Dr Aparna Hebbani and Ms Kerrie Jackson
Please RSVP by Monday 10 May to:
joy.welsh@newcastle.edu.au

Art and Theatre

May 12 – 30
Watt Space Gallery
Loading Dock
The Hoist

May 17 – 22
The Pit
Paintings – Michelle Boulle

Loading Zone
Mi Scheberach – Therese Schubert

Music

May 1 (9.00)
Musica Viva – Jerusalem Quartet
“Close to perfection: one of the truly great quartets of the future” – BBC Radio 3.
Works by Shostakovich, Beethoven and Rachmaninoff

June 19 (7.30pm)
Winter Winds
Concert Band, Conductor – Michael Bell
Crotches and Quavers, Conductor – Julia Hogy
Special Guests: Eleftheria Primary School Band
A program of light wind music presented by the Intermediate and Junior Ensembles
Adult $12, Conc $8, Family (2 Adults + 2 Children) $25
June 22 (7.30pm)
The Hunter Strings
The String Ensembles in concert
Program details will be announced at a later date
Adult $12, Conc $8, Family (2 Adults + 2 Children) $25

JANUARY 19, 2004

Japan Japan

Works by 18 students and lecturers curated by Sandy Gray
12–30 May 2004
in the Loading Dock, Locker Room and the Hoist
Also showing
Enigma Variations – Angela Armstrong, in the Long Room
Paintings – Michelle Bourke, in the Pit
Mi Scheberach – Therese Schubert, in the Loading Zone

A Healthy Attitude

A programme of works by American and English composers which may well be described as “heavenly”. Music by Bernstein – The Chichester Psalms, Ferry “Vivace Allegro”, Taverner “Song for Athene” and others will leave you wanting more. Young guest conductor Reyer Elli will make his first appearance with the Choir
Adult $17, Conc $10

in the Faculty of Education and Arts are the most relaxed, with the lowest average blood pressure reading whilst those in the Faculty of Science and IT scored the highest average blood pressure among males. The highest blood pressure reading was actually from a male in the Faculty of Engineering and Built Environment.

All participants in the Health Fair can be proud of their achievements and their health. Of course we can all draw wonderful conclusions from these results but we please remember that they are not indicative of faculty health – only a small proportion of staff from any one faculty participated in the challenges.

Perhaps next year’s results will be markedly different.

Shelisa Liu, Faculty of Business and Law, relaxes while being massaged by Joe Young.