

Excellence

SUPPORTING EXCELLENCE IN TERTIARY EDUCATION



AKO AOTEAROA
NATIONAL CENTRE FOR
TERTIARY TEACHING
EXCELLENCE

Tertiary Teaching
Excellence
Awards
2008



ISBN 978-0-473-14265-0 (Print)

ISBN 978-0-473-14266-7 (Online)

Contact details

Ako Aotearoa National Office
c/- Massey University Wellington Campus
Private Box 756
Wellington
New Zealand

Phone: +64 4 801 0808

Fax: +64 4 801 2682

Email: akoaooteaora@massey.ac.nz

Web: www.akoaooteaora.ac.nz

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I N T R O D U C T I O N

Recognising the outstanding achievements of excellent tertiary teachers is now an established part of the tertiary education sector's calendar. Wisely, the Government has continued to promote excellence in teaching; to inspire, improve practice and acknowledge that the quality of the learners experience really matters in our society.

The Honourable Pete Hodgson presented the Awards for 2008 at a ceremony in the Grand Hall of Parliament on the 16th of July. He commended the exacting work of the Tertiary Teaching Awards Committee which is charged with deciding which applications best meet the criteria of sustained excellence.

The 2008 Committee members were
Emeritus Professor Graeme Fraser, Chair.
Dr Peter Coolbear, National Director,
Ako Aotearoa.
Greg Durkin, Industry Training Federation.
Liz Hawes, New Zealand Union of Students'
Associations.
Dr Mary Hill, Teacher Education Forum of
Aotearoa New Zealand

Dr Sally Hunter, Association of University Staff.
Dr Marjorie Manthei, Institutes of Technology
and Polytechnics of New Zealand.
Dr Michael Roberts, New Zealand Association
of Private Education Providers.
Mereana Selby, Te Tauihi O Ngā Wānanga
Alieta Uelese, Association of Maori Providers
of Training Education and Employment.

This publication contains a foreword from the Minister of Tertiary Education, comments from the Committee Chair and the National Director of Ako Aotearoa. The remaining content profiles aspects of the teaching practices and philosophies of the Prime Minister's Supreme Award recipient and the nine teachers awarded Sustained Excellence.

Any organisation teaching tertiary students is eligible to nominate up to three teachers for these awards. A nomination form and full details of the criteria and process for applying for the 2009 awards are available in the "Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards" section of the Ako Aotearoa website www.ako.aotearoa.ac.nz

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MINISTER'S FOREWORD

HONOURABLE

Pete Hodgson

MINISTER FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION

It is a great privilege to be part of celebrating the achievements of this year's top tertiary teachers. Between them, the ten people profiled here will have a positive influence on the learning of thousands of students.

No single discipline has dominated the Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards since their inception in 2002. Again, this year, outstanding teachers represent excellence in teaching across a variety of disciplines, from environment and earth sciences to hairdressing and finance.

No matter what their field, these teachers are committed, knowledgeable and enthusiastic. All are focused on keeping students at the centre of their teaching, a focus mirrored by government's recent changes to how we invest in tertiary education.

Our vision is a system that meets the needs of the people, groups and organisations tertiary education serves: students, employers, iwi and communities. The new approach to tertiary education ensures the sector is more responsive to labour market needs and shifts in the economy, while at the same time ensuring taxpayer money is well spent.

Of course, all the wise investment in the world won't make a lot of difference without high quality interaction between students and their teachers.

Research tells us the quality of engagement between student and teacher is one of the most important components of successful learning, a concept well understood by this year's recipients.

I am delighted that Ako Aotearoa, our National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence, is now relishing its new role of running the awards. It is fitting that Ako Aotearoa take this role. I congratulate its Tertiary Teaching Awards Committee for selecting such high calibre winners.

Ako Aotearoa has recently established the Academy for Tertiary Teaching Excellence, of past recipients of the Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards. Bringing these talented and committed people together creates a powerful momentum to build teaching excellence.

I am heartened by the many initiatives underway at Ako Aotearoa that will expand our knowledge of excellent teaching. It is exciting this knowledge will be passed to the rest of the tertiary education sector and be used to support our teachers to give their best for students.



CHAIR'S COMMENT

Graeme Fraser

CHAIR TERTIARY TEACHING AWARDS COMMITTEE

What are the qualities of outstanding teachers, the people who have the most profound effect on our learning? I believe it is their enthusiasm that stands out. Indeed, more than enthusiasm, it is their passion and commitment to their subject, an ability to stimulate their students' thinking and interests, and to do so irrespective of the varying abilities of those students. They are ever alert to the teachable moment and have a profound commitment to enhancing the achievement of their students - not as objects to be stuffed with information, but as creative learners who are exploring their horizons. These are the attributes epitomised by the awardees.

The portfolios submitted in support of the nominations are remarkable documents: demanding to read, but richly rewarding. Each is clearly the product of hard work and creative thinking, the distillate of years spent striving to develop a student-centred design for active learning. It is a process of learning from failure and building on success. Each demonstrates the multi-faceted nature of the teaching-learning process and what is required to achieve and sustain excellence.

My warm congratulations to all the recipients of the 2008 Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards, especially to Dr Lisa Emerson from Massey University for her supreme award, the Prime Minister's Award.

As always it is an honour to be a member of a committee which chooses the people who appear in this publication. And, as always, the depth and breadth of the commitment, experience and creativity of the nominees meant that the task of deciding who were to be the recipients of the

Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards for 2008 was, once again, a difficult one.

As in previous years, we have looked for unequivocal evidence of the response of students to their teachers. Student testimonials and systematic student evaluations of teaching performance, the 'voices' of the students, are critical factors in the decision-making of the Awards Committee. They revealed a consistent pattern of students being tested to their limits and achieving things they never thought possible, of students recounting life-changing experiences because a teacher cared about them, often not just as students, but also as people. It is the dedication to striving to ensure that people of diverse abilities, ages and backgrounds are able to participate inclusively in tertiary education that sets the teachers in this publication apart: the distinctive honour of excellence. Their students' responses to the culture of learning created by these outstanding teachers are unequivocal and very positive.



In commending these outstanding teachers to you, we need to remember that excellence in teaching is not just about one event. It is a complex and demanding process that goes far beyond performing in front of a class. It is about integrity, passion, resilience and continuing reflection on the nature and scope of the teaching-learning process. It is honourable and fulfilling. The awardees in this publication are testimony to that. Many of the teachers nominated for this award draw attention to the changing nature of the tertiary educating landscape in New Zealand and the real challenge in meeting the learning needs of a student population that is more diverse and discerning than in the past. To achieve this, teachers must be approachable and accessible, both on campus and online, for significant periods of time. They must also strive to maintain academic rigour and credibility through scholarship, by keeping up-to-date in their subject and carrying out their own research.

2008 was the seventh year these awards have been made. It is also the last time I will write comments as the Chair of the Tertiary Teaching Awards Committee. This being the case, I will reflect on what has been achieved thus far.

The Honourable Steve Maharey had the vision to create these awards. He was determined to provide a showcase for excellence in tertiary teaching. As Associate Minister of Tertiary Education he wanted to have an annual event held in Parliament to demonstrate the value he believed should be placed on teaching in our tertiary education system and to underscore its centrality in the advancement of learning and understanding.

Since 2002 there have been 96 teachers deemed worthy of receiving awards and these awards have had an impact beyond their perceived significance for the recipients. They are fostering good practice and enhancing career development. It is also pleasing to see that a growing number of tertiary education organisations now offer their own awards for teaching excellence. That is an encouraging sign. I hope that the growing number of providers who make such awards will continue along with the quality of teaching. Present and future students have a right to expect that. To the extent they succeed, both they and Aotearoa/New Zealand will benefit.

In that regard, I am sure that Ako Aotearoa, the National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence, which is now responsible for administering the awards, will play a vital role. Fostering the development of teaching of the highest quality is the singular priority of that organisation. It is possible that before too long tertiary education providers will proudly claim they are teaching intensive institutions, known for the quality of their teaching as much as for their research. Wouldn't that be a fine thing!

Finally, in many respects this publication is, thus far, the most visible and valuable part of the Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards, because it is a guide to those aspiring to excellence in tertiary teaching. I trust that the developments I have alluded to will hasten that process because doing so will contribute significantly to that valuable resource, the human capital of Aotearoa/New Zealand.



DIRECTOR'S COMMENT

Dr Peter Coolbear

DIRECTOR, AKO AOTEAROA

When I think about the memorable teachers I have had the good fortune to encounter in the past (either when I was a student or later as colleagues), two things strike me. First is the contrasting ways in which they approached their calling (and it is a calling). Secondly, that while creating an enjoyable learning environment was an essential pre-requisite of good teaching, it wasn't sufficient: they were also engaged with their subject and anxious to share that engagement. There's quite a difference between a memorable learning experience and the learning itself - they may or may not be related.

Both these notions were reinforced by the privilege of taking part in this year's Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards process. The ten awardees of 2008 are a diverse group of people doing a very diverse range of brilliant things. All are excited about what they do and are keen to share that excitement in ways that are meaningful to their learners. They are 'in the moment', but are also looking to have a much longer term impact on their students, and this is as much about the way they encourage students to think about their discipline as it is about passing on the skills and knowledge that comprise it.

Although the awardees may describe it in different ways, what is also clear is that as exemplar teachers they are also continuing to learn

themselves. This is implicit in the Māori word 'Ako' that means both teaching and learning: a word that was very deliberately chosen as the title for our organisation. As we read through the stories of these ten awardees there is much to learn from them and much to inspire us.

Finally, I must note that this is, sadly, Professor Graeme Fraser's last year as Chair of the Tertiary Teaching Awards Committee. He has presided over the awards selection process since their inception and has done much to ensure their prestige and validity. His utter commitment to teaching excellence has been exemplary and on behalf of the committee, I would like to thank him for his enormous contribution. It has been a great pleasure to work and learn from him.

AWARD *Recipients* 2008



Dr Lisa Emerson



Dr Hamish Anderson



Julia Bruce



Dr Dawn Garbett



Dr John Hosking



Dr Ian McAndrew



Dr John Reynolds



Dr Sean Weaver



Dr Marc Wilson



Adrian Woodhouse



PRIME MINISTER'S SUPREME AWARD

Dr Lisa Emerson

SCHOOL OF ENGLISH & MEDIA STUDIES ■ MASSEY UNIVERSITY

Lisa has been engaged in tertiary education for 19 years and has an exceptional track record of teaching both within her own discipline and in communications to science and technology students. She opens her portfolio by stating, "It is my great privilege and joy to be a teacher of writers". Lisa focuses her teaching philosophy on each student as an individual, developing learning communities for all classes, whether face-to-face or extramural, "where each student can share their work in a safe, dynamic environment". The variety and breadth of teaching and assessment Lisa uses are impressive, with her commitment evident in all she does. Many people have benefited from Lisa's "Interactive Grammar!" e-learning tool and the open website for creative writers called "The Writery" which won the "People's Choice" web award in 2004: just one of the many prestigious awards and grants Lisa has received during her career. Colleagues and peers comment on Lisa's sustained leadership and professionalism, "Her efforts and successes are outstanding". Students recognise a teacher of excellence, "This paper was perfect ... Lisa Emerson deserves accolades!"

Some things you never forget. One of those moments in my life was, as a first year student, receiving the mark for my first essay: a C. The marker had written "You need to work on your writing skills. Your writing is poor – too descriptive, more analysis needed". I was totally bewildered: *my writing was poor? – but hadn't I received prizes for English at school?* For a year, I tried to find an answer. No-one could tell me what was wrong with my writing (except in terms I didn't understand)

or how to put it right. Academic writing, it seemed, was a mystery, a sort of holy of holies – something that couldn't be revealed but only discovered. That year of bewilderment set the path for my career as a teacher of writing.

Over my 19 years as a writing teacher, I have recognised that same look of bewilderment on the faces of many students, ranging from struggling first years to ambitious PhD students. For me, teaching writing means understanding that sense

of confusion, unravelling the mystery for my students, sitting alongside them as a cipher, a code-breaker, and a guide.

Paying attention

The first step is paying attention. I have this firm belief that we can all fly higher than we think we can – and all it takes is one teacher to pay enough attention and to support us on the journey. Paying attention means that when an uncomfortable third year student sits in my office mumbling “I’ve never been able to write”, I know how to ask the right questions that will unlock his anxieties. Paying attention means that I notice the tears in the eyes of the PhD student who says “I’ve always been a good writer – why can’t I do this?” and I spend time telling horror-PhD-writing stories to make her laugh before we get down to work.

Availability

Closely linked with paying attention is being available. You can put in the best learning systems in the world, but if your students don’t think you care about them, or aren’t interested in their achievements, then they will not achieve to their full potential, and their confidence and capability will be limited. By being available – by email, by phone, in an office, by being a constant presence on a website – and being *interested*, I say to my students “in this big university, *you matter*”.

Asking questions

Another aspect of paying attention is that I research my own practice. I am very fortunate that my

research field and teaching overlap exactly, but even if they didn’t, I would want to research my students’ understanding. For example, when a problem with using secondary sources emerged in a class, I conducted an informal research project to investigate whether my students had an accurate understanding of how to balance their own voice with that of others in their writing. The data showed me that they didn’t: so I included a module on using secondary sources effectively in my class. I also looked critically at my assignments and rewrote the assessment to include this skills set. The result was that we had no further problems with using secondary sources – and my students gained understanding and skills that would be relevant to all their work in the University.

Student autonomy

Student autonomy is a core value in my classroom. Because my students are individuals, each one learns in different ways and with different learning preferences. Part of my role as a teacher is to present material in a variety of ways to meet the needs of each student – and to allow students choice in how they access the learning material. So, for example, when I am teaching punctuation and grammar, I provide a range of opportunities for students to access learning:

- small group workshops (online and/or face-to-face)
- study guide material including quiz questions
- sample sheets, with diagnostic marking and discussion with a tutor
- self-directed online tutorials



Students are free to choose which learning opportunities will best suit their needs and learning styles.

Students before technology

I use web-based teaching tools in all my classrooms because I believe they have the capability to give students control over the learning experience. But I start with my students. What do they need? How can I best meet those needs? Then I look at the technology. If the tool I need does not exist in a form that satisfies the needs of my students, I find a way to design it. The e-learning strategies I design give students learning opportunities they couldn't achieve in any other way: more access to me as their teacher, the opportunity to be part of a community of learners, and custom-designed tools which allow them to develop mastery of specific skills through an individualised learning path.

Developing communities of writers

Writers grow in a writing community: so I design my course websites to develop a fun, nurturing community. Features of the websites which develop the social side of the community include:

- a Writer's Café, where students can discuss anything from the joys and trials of study to the best use of punctuation in a particular line of poetry.
- a private messaging system, so students can develop friendships.
- "just for fun" competitions, where students write 50-word stories or humorous villanelles and rate each other's work

I am an active part of this community. I contribute to the sites every day by answering queries, posing problems, writing reviews, and encouraging my fellow writers.

Evaluation

I engage in multiple ways of assessing my teaching. I use formal and informal forms of student feedback, and communicate regularly with stakeholders (e.g. employers, degree management committees). My tutoring team meet with me once a week during semester to assess our teaching strategies, and

I write a learning journal as a form of self-review. When I design a new learning tool, I invite both peer and student review, and engage in research-driven empirical assessment.

I value positive formal and informal evaluations since they confirm the value and effectiveness of my teaching from a student perspective. But I value negative feedback even more because it shows me a way towards revision and excellence. Engaging in ongoing, thoughtful evaluation of my teaching, using multiple methods based on sound research strategies, is an integral part both of honouring my students as individuals and of my commitment to teaching excellence.

Adding something extra

My writing courses are designed to have an impact on students' lives: their careers, their confidence, their development as writers. But I also want to support them beyond the classroom. To this end, I have written five handbooks for students, *The Writing Guidelines* series, and I run an open online community of writers. I have edited two books of students' work, *Hot Ink 1 and 2*, published by Steele Roberts. Adding something extra makes such a difference to students; it helps to support them as life long learners, and to integrate the new skills they've learned into their lives. I will always continue to look for new ways to add this extra ingredient to the student experience because – as a bottom line – I want to make a difference.

Being a pioneer

I'm passionate about teaching students to write at advanced levels, but I'm just as passionate about promoting the teaching of writing in New Zealand tertiary institutions. I was one of the initiators of the Tertiary Writing Network, an organisation of tertiary writing teachers in New Zealand, and I give workshops at various tertiary institutions on writing and related topics, for both students and staff. At the same time, I represent a New Zealand perspective on teaching writing in an international arena, and have won recognition for my work in this area.



Where to now?

It is my great joy and privilege to be a teacher of writers. I know I will never tire of this work, because the role of the university writing teacher is so varied. Students I work with have ambitions to be (amongst other things) surgeons, poets, agricultural consultant, sports therapists, research physicists, teachers and financial advisors. They want to write farm reports, lyrics, medical reports, academic papers, short stories, business plans, PhD theses, and life stories for their grandchildren. Some have had a burning ambition to be a writer since childhood; some simply see that they need to learn a professional skill; others fear writing, are sure it

is a skill they cannot learn. How could I be anything but fascinated in a role so rich and varied?

As I look back on my career I could tell so many stories of student change and growth. I have guided an elderly war veteran writing the stories of being a bomber pilot during the Second World War. I have sat with a young science student who was convinced his struggles with ADHD meant he could not write anything as sophisticated as a scientific article, and heard his astonished whisper "I am a writer!" My students write to me about the changes in their lives, about books and poems published, about professional successes.

There is no better job than this.



PEER AND STUDENT COMMENTS

I hope that one day I will be able to empower a student, just as you have empowered me, to take risks within a subject that I was uncomfortable and unfamiliar with....In the future, I hope that I will teach with the same passion, compassion, patience [and] flexibility.
Student letter, 2007

Lisa Emerson has been an inspiration to many lecturers. Her work is widely known and widely quoted and her textbooks on teaching writing are the cornerstones for many writing courses, nationwide.

Susan O'Rourke, AUT

Dr Emerson gave me the confidence and tools not only to be a good tutor but a good writer. She combined [being] a good teacher with the compassion of a friend.

Student evaluation, 2007

Lisa quietly demonstrated how both novice and experienced teachers could take initiatives to integrate writing in subject-intensive courses... her tact, capacity to listen, and enthusiasm for composition studies was infectious and made us all better teachers.

Martha Vicinus, Director, Sweetland Writing Center

Dr Emerson's tenure as a staff member at Massey has been continually characterised by her commitment to improving both her own teaching and the teaching processes of others within the institution. In this endeavour, her efforts and successes are outstanding.

Dr Warwick Slinn, Massey University

Of this enormous class of disparate people, she managed to create a family.

Fiona Dalzell, Student.



S U S T A I N E D E X C E L L E N C E

Dr Hamish Anderson

SENIOR LECTURER, DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMICS & FINANCE ■ MASSEY UNIVERSITY

Hamish has taught finance at Massey University for 13 years and has been an Executive MBA teaching fellow for the past 10. His teaching involves a variety of delivery modes from distance and traditional face-to-face methods, to block courses throughout New Zealand and in China, all supported by extensive on-line resources. As an early adopter of on-line learning environments, Hamish has developed considerable expertise in the area of on-line formative and summative assessment practices. Of all his teaching, Hamish has found Executive Education to be the most challenging but also the most rewarding teaching environment. "It's like a lions den; they'll eat you alive if you are not prepared!"

Discovering my Career

I never intended being a teacher. In fact, I originally thought the one-year lecturing contract would be a great way to fund my 'OE' before getting back onto the corporate ladder and making my imagined fortune! Due to my teaching inexperience I thought I'd be assisting someone for that first year, so I was shocked to discover I was in charge of more than 400 students. It is fair to say I learnt more that first year than my students. Most importantly, I learnt that the adrenalin rush and immense pleasure you get from helping someone achieve beyond their own expectations is addictive. Like anything addictive, I have found that teaching has been impossible to give up and it is now well and truly my chosen career. In a research-led teaching environment, job satisfaction is incredibly high when you research in an area you are passionate about and then have the opportunity to pass on that passion through teaching.

When I started teaching I faced a common problem of many fledgling academics - I was

strong in content knowledge but lacked formal training in how to effectively deliver that knowledge. Therefore my initial teaching methods were shaped by my experiences as a student, effective teachers I had the privilege of learning under, as well as peer and student feedback. Through reflection on these sources my teaching philosophy evolved into one of engaging students with finance. To do this I deliver an inclusive learning experience that is relevant and accessible. Further, I use my passion for finance, enthusiasm and patience in conjunction with a variety of teaching strategies to create such a learning experience.

My goal is to deliver a **relevant** and **accessible** learning experience that extends all students.

Demonstrating Relevance

Business students want to see how a theory works in the 'real world' outside an ivory tower and textbook. Therefore to demonstrate the relevance of finance I continually connect finance theories to practice with real world examples and seek to

demonstrate how students can apply the tools and concepts in their own organisations. Before every lecture I research current issues that help explain the concepts we're covering. Small video clips, company announcements, share price and volume graphs around corporate events and business interviews are valuable teaching resources. I also seek to relate theories to adult students' prior working experiences to provide a concrete link between theory and practice for these students.

Creating an active learning environment is essential for any teaching, but particularly so when conducting two to six consecutive full days of teaching. To maintain student interest and engagement throughout these block courses I use debates, case studies, Excel based problem-solving exercises, negotiation role-plays and board presentations along with the traditional "chalk and talk". All activities are based around current events or real companies, to provide students with tangible links between theory and practice. This enables students to grasp the relevance of a topic to their business and personal lives.

Making it Accessible

Creating an accessible learning experience for all students is critical in transferring financial knowledge. I find many students are unable to

initially grasp the relevance of my subject, as they perceive finance (often rightly!) as an overly complex, jargon ridden subject, filled with complicated formulas. In other words, they perceive finance as inaccessible. In fact many of my students arrive with giant barriers to learning finance! Common barriers to learning finance include fear of:

- being wrong or asking "dumb" questions
- numbers, and
- how others may perceive them.

Therefore, it is important to make the subject accessible by breaking down the barriers to learning and reducing the complex into easily digestible bites. First, I establish a student's learning barriers by reading their body language and from one-on-one discussion moments with each student throughout the course. The one-on-one moments also allow me to extend the experts in a class, while ensuring novices attain a minimum comprehension level to enable self-learning post-class. I then create an active and open learning environment which helps to break these learning barriers down. For instance, a learning environment that encourages students to ask questions is critical.

Formative Assessment: Building Confidence and Capability

The learning outcomes of business finance are





very sequential in nature and students need to master one topic before moving onto the next. Also, repetition of problems and exercises is an important learning method for financial mathematics. As such, formative assessment is a critical learning strategy which enables students to attain a comprehension level that allows them to successfully negotiate the higher learning outcomes of analysis, synthesis and evaluation.

Since 1999 I have explored the use of on-line student support including the delivery of formative assessment. The quizzes provide students with a flexible learning tool which they can attempt multiple times, on demand, at any time prior to the final examination. Every quiz contains a randomly selected question set covering the same learning outcomes and has the same overall difficulty level. Calculation questions covering both elementary and complex problems use randomly generated variables so students must recalculate a new answer for each quiz attempt. In total I have developed close to 1,500 questions and I add to these each year.

The value for students of the on-line quizzes and large questions database is the ability for students to complete them multiple times and receive instant feedback. I encourage students to use the quiz learning tool to target their learning by identifying which areas they are yet to master.

Analysis of student performance clearly demonstrates that summative assessment grades improve when students attempt and master the formative quiz assessment. The mastery quizzes also provide me with a wealth of summary statistics which highlight areas and questions students find difficult. This allows me to target my teaching to where it's most beneficial. Students are often surprised at my ability to target my teaching – as though I can mind read!

Relevance in Summative Assessment

In addition to the typical examination type assessments, I design summative assessment to directly fit the business context of my discipline and include:

- written business and consultancy reports
 - spreadsheet modelling to solve business problems
 - preparing notes for business meetings
 - role plays of presentations to boards of directors
- I believe that if structured correctly, all of these assessment forms can assess the higher learning outcomes mentioned earlier.

I write case studies based on real public and private businesses. The students complete consultancy reports that place the academic learning outcomes in a business context. In addition, they learn real world applications such as, spreadsheet modelling, importing and exporting goods, and using real data to determine project returns. Students engage with my subject when they can see real business applications of the subject.

Final Comments

I was stunned and honoured to receive a Sustained Excellence in Teaching Award. To be recognised at the National level for the simple commitment of seeking to extend all students is humbling and reinforces for me personally my decision to make teaching my career of choice all those years ago. I would like to thank all those who have contributed to my teaching over the years and Ako Aotearoa for making these awards possible. And above all, thanks to the students – for without them I wouldn't have the career I'm passionate about!



PEER AND STUDENT COMMENTS

Hamish has a well developed philosophy of teaching which has been honed over many years. He listens to his students and has sought expert feedback in an effort to continually improve his teaching ability and performance. This approach, effective at both the undergraduate and post graduate levels and in various modes, is student oriented, innovative, interactive and charismatic. Hamish also has a strong intuition which allows him to quickly adapt to changing situations and student abilities. This allows him to make sure no student is left behind by what many consider complex material, the study of finance.

**Professor Lawrence Rose,
Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Business,
Massey University**

I can say that no teacher gained higher satisfaction ratings than Hamish. Finance is an extremely difficult subject to teach well. The subject fills MBA students with fear and yet students would regularly report that Hamish's approach gave them the confidence to achieve grades of which they did not think themselves capable. His ratings were always "Excellent". Students on our China MBA programmes considered him a great teacher making even the most difficult concepts understandable.

**Robyn Leeming,
Retired Professor and Head of School,
Graduate School of Business, Massey
University**

Hamish demonstrates a well integrated academic and professional practical

understanding of his discipline, along with a strong flair and empathy for working and stimulating student thinking and learning. He is highly respected by students and accounting educationalists.

**Philip Keeling, General Manager,
Advanced Business Education Limited**

Hamish has the three prerequisite attributes that make a great lecturer: an ability to engage students through relevance, a passion for the subject he teaches; and excellent organisational and management skills so necessary in effective teaching. His pursuit of being a better lecturer is evidenced in the continued improvement in his evaluations, which since 2001 have maintained an exceptionally high standard – about as good as they get!

**Professor Chris Moore,
Associate Pro Vice-Chancellor,
College of Business, Massey University**

Hamish stood out from other lecturers I encountered due to his ability to relate complex principles to the real world. This focus, together with his clear explanations of difficult concepts, was instrumental in me choosing Finance as a major. During the completion of my Masters degree I worked as a Graduate Assistant under the supervision of Hamish. This gave me an insight into his attention to detail and his pursuit of excellence in all aspects of the student learning experience.

**Dr Ben Marshall, Former student and
current Colleague, Department of
Economics and Finance, Massey
University**



S U S T A I N E D E X C E L L E N C E

Julia Bruce

HAIRDRESSING TUTOR, CENTRE FOR HAIRDRESSING AND BEAUTY THERAPY
■ WAIKATO INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Julia “encourages students to have big dreams”. Throughout her 13 year teaching career she has continued to engage in study to develop her own knowledge and skills, thus modelling life-long learning to her students and peers. Julia seeks to provide authentic learning opportunities for her students as evidenced by them taking part in the 2007 Hospice Waikato Fundraiser. Her teaching philosophy of collaborative practice, authentic learning and flexible delivery arises from her own experiences as a hairdressing trainee. She has a warm, friendly teaching style and well organised lessons that demonstrate to the students that she cares about achievement and is committed to helping them in their learning. Julia maintains her skills and links with the industry by visiting and working in salons, taking part in seminars, conferences and hairdressing competitions. This is extended by her industry leadership role as Vice President of the Waikato Association of Hairdressers.

Introduction

During my 13-year teaching career I have been fortunate to work with many talented teachers in a variety of settings. These experiences have led to the emergence of teaching philosophies that have three underlying principles upon which my practice is based:

MY TEACHING PRACTICE

- flexible delivery
- authentic learning experiences
- collaborative teams

Using these principles to develop innovative teaching and learning methods is beyond rewarding when they inspire confidence and passion for subject matter in a student. This interest often turns into successful careers that enrich the lives of students and their families.

My teaching depends on feedback from students, industry and peers and it changes rapidly

as a result; I see programmes of learning as structures that need to constantly evolve to meet the altering needs of students, industry and new technology.

Career outline

1989 - 1994

I found the guidance and support of teachers and trainers crucial to developing my practical skills in hairdressing. Those experiences led directly to my career in tertiary teaching, about which I am so passionate. I always aim to convey this enthusiasm for learning when teaching.

1995 - 2003

Over this period I worked at three Private Training Providers based in three different regions – with the exception of one year when I worked as a hairstylist on cruise ships. All of these experiences added value to my industry and education

practices. I was constantly engaged in formal professional development, gaining a Graduate Diploma in Tertiary Teaching through the Auckland University of Technology and industry training in London.

2003 - Present

I was fortunate to gain a teaching position at the Waikato Institute of Technology (Wintec). This organisation has a strong commitment to student-centred learning, professional development and providing a work/life balance for staff and students.

I immediately enrolled in Wintec's Bachelor of Applied Social Sciences (BASS) with an Adult Education endorsement. Elements of every course that I completed as part of BASS were able to be directly applied to my practice. I used the knowledge gained to further develop my student-centred teaching and learning strategies and share new concepts with colleagues.

I completed BASS in 2006, three months before giving birth to my first child. In February 2007 I returned to work four days per week, sharing the

parenting with my self-employed partner. Having a child has given me a better understanding of the family commitments of students and encouraged me to consider more flexible alternatives to the traditional course structure.

Flexible Delivery

I was able to apply these alternatives to the programme that I designed during my second year at Wintec, a Certificate in Hairdressing Level 4. This was an opportunity to create a student-centred learning environment that catered for industry needs. The programme has been constantly redeveloped to further encourage employment opportunities for students during and after course completion.

Key areas that enable the Certificate in Hairdressing Level 4 to be flexible for students are: the on-line learning components, fresh approach to timetabling course hours, and, opportunities to learn in industry throughout the programme.

On-line Learning

These modules include:

- case studies
- discussions
- personal journals where students reflect on theory and practical sessions
- links to web sites that feature successful national and international stylists
- self test quizzes
- course materials such as timetables, lesson outlines and notes

The case studies are solved in groups then each student is encouraged to discuss the results individually. Engaging students in this process combines two key aspects of my teaching philosophy – collaborative teams and flexible delivery. Students working together, away from the course tutor encourages autonomy, further assisting school leavers in their transition to the adult learning environment.

I am currently working on setting up a 'Feature Artist' block where successful international and local stylists can have galleries and career outlines set up. Students will be given a number of weeks to view the information and post questions. The stylist will then log on and answer the students'



questions. The purpose of this feature is to develop student awareness of the possibilities for their hairdressing careers. Students will have the opportunity to interact with people who started from humble beginnings to rise to great heights. Many trainees do not get opportunities to hear these stories and such a high level of success seems out of reach. I hope to encourage learners to have big dreams, which should have a flow-on effect that expands the possibilities for their careers.

Timetabling

I worked closely with colleagues to ensure this programme was structured to allow students to fit their training around family, religious, cultural and work commitments. Students attend class for the equivalent of three days per week. During the first semester, one three-hour session is in the evening and two sessions a week are repeated so that students can choose to attend in the morning or afternoon. The remaining course hours are spent completing the required industry-based work experience and on-line learning components.

Industry Opportunities

The students can use any time they are not attending their set classes to complete their on-line learning and 80 hours required work experience for the year. Students can complete their work experience in blocks over the semester breaks if they prefer.

In the second and third semester the timetable becomes three set days. Many of the students have completed their theory components and work experience by this time and have secured part-time jobs in salons. They are able to collect the required evidence in salons in place of attending some classes. This ensures that the timetable is still flexible where necessary, and enables students to earn and gain authentic industry experience while completing their course requirements.

Authentic Learning Experiences

The class is now run like a commercial salon, booking in clients and completing services to industry standards. This concept maximises the students' authentic learning experience and employment opportunities. As the initial delivery

of each subject is concluded, students can offer this learning as a new service on client days in the Wintec salon. By the beginning of semester three, each student is working like an industry professional, managing their own column in the appointment book and developing a clientele. Students are responsible for helping manage the salon, often meeting to design and review salon policy.

To ensure I can facilitate a true replica of a contemporary commercial hairdressing environment, I maintain industry links and current practice. This is achieved through my role as Vice-president of the Waikato Association of Hairdressers, helping to organise industry events, attending national and international industry seminars, and visiting and working in commercial salon environments.

Collaborative Teams

From my first year at Wintec I have encouraged and supported all hairdressing students entering the local Waikato Regional Hairdressing competitions. This event provides an opportunity for students to build confidence and capability while showcasing their skills to potential employers. Each event is judged on the students' hairdressing skills and ability to build a total look for their models.

This can involve working with other creative professionals such as make-up artists. Students from Wintec's Beauty Therapy programmes were offered the opportunity to work with hairdressing students on this project. The results were outstanding and are reflected in the outcomes of the annual hairdressing awards where our students always receive top places.

This learning opportunity, which provides collaborative and authentic experiences, evolved further in 2004. Photography students who were studying towards Wintec's Bachelor of Media Arts were also involved in the project. The photographers were invited to run a photo shoot using the Wintec studios. Now each year a long day is spent with hairdressing and beauty therapy students preparing models at the Wintec salon. The models are taken to the Media Arts studios where photography and hairdressing students collaborate to achieve the finished look. Once again the results have been



exceptional as placings in the competition reflect. Students' work has been published in trade magazines and each year some of the images are used in promotional material for our centre. This project builds student confidence across departments and gives all those involved exposure to industry and the public.

Another collaborative and genuine learning opportunity for students was introduced in 2007. Students who were studying at different levels worked together to provide services for the public. All proceeds went to the Hospice Waikato Building Fund. Students commented that the event provided a great opportunity to work on clients in a fast paced environment, with students from other classes and that it gave them a sense of purpose to be helping those in need. This project united students across classes in reaching a common goal.



Conclusion

Completing my application for the Ako Aotearoa Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards has helped me to further reflect on my teaching practice and industry involvement. I was encouraged by the realisation that every professional development learning experience has enriched my practice. I am looking forward to continuing my academic journey; I have just enrolled in a Masters of Educational Leadership programme.

PEER AND STUDENT COMMENTS

"I have learnt a lot from Julia this year, she teaches everything thoroughly. Julia has a real passion for teaching her students the first steps to becoming great hairdressers."

Jemma Fitswater, Certificate in Hairdressing Level 4, 2007

"Julia has shown excellence in flexible delivery and will share passionately any new ideas or initiatives she may have with anyone interested be it student, client, or colleague."

Donna Nicholson, Programme Manager, Beauty Therapy, Wintec (2007)

"Passion, excitement and enthusiasm are always forefront in Julia's approach to the teaching and learning environment where she is always willing to develop and apply flexibility to afford learners with stimulating learning opportunities as a means to succeeding in their programme of study."

Sara Refoy, Head of School, Retail and Service Industries, Wintec 2007

"Great organisation. Always trying to find different ways of teaching us new things to keep us all interested. She's overall awesome as a teacher and person and it was fun being in her class"

"The way the tutor teaches is they way I like to learn. She gives help when needed and helps you understand hard things. One of the best teachers I've ever had."

"I think the tutor is a really good tutor. I learn a lot from her and enjoy it at the same time. I think she does really amazing lessons, not boring or dull. I like going to her classes."

Student evaluations, Wintec 2003

"Julia's excitement and professionalism for providing flexible delivery is shared with the team at the School of Retail and Service Industries. From formally presenting the exciting opportunities e-learning can provide to brainstorming discussions with small groups of tutorial staff, it is difficult not to be affected by Julia's enthusiasm for offering flexible delivery. Julia is always willing to share her experiences and to look at what flexibility can mean for each of us as professional educational practitioners."

Sara Refoy, Head of School Retail and Service Industries, Wintec, 2007



S U S T A I N E D E X C E L L E N C E

Dr Dawn Garbett

ASSOCIATE DEAN, TEACHING & LEARNING, FACULTY OF EDUCATION ■ UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

Dawn is a “highly popular, lively and compassionate teacher who cares deeply about her work to create confident, able teachers of science”. Although she has been teaching for 15 years, Dawn believes that she will always have more to learn about teaching, an inspiring prospect for her. Dawn bases her teaching on the belief that learning is highly individual, with her goal being to challenge “student teachers to construct their own understanding of what it is to be effective professionals in a complex environment without losing sight of their vision”. She considers the strength of her teaching to be her “commitment to look honestly and critically at all aspects of my practice”. Student and peer evaluations and comments demonstrate Dawn’s commitment to teacher education, from early childhood to secondary, her leadership qualities and her critical reflection. Dawn’s sustained excellence is demonstrated in her “teaching practice, research on teaching and learning, and leadership”.

I am a teacher educator, privileged to be teaching teachers in a tertiary institution. My teaching has benefitted immeasurably from being able to build a research platform based on my practice.

Every student teacher who enters my classroom has already experienced thousands of hours of teaching in different educational settings. Each wants to become the teacher rather than the taught. They suspect that this is a relatively straightforward transformation but this belies the complexity of teaching. As a way of starting to understand the process I sometimes ask the students to sketch themselves in the act of teaching. Often, their responses include the teacher as travel guide – pointing out landmarks of note and driving their tour party from one sight to the next. Others see themselves as gardeners - nurturing, hoeing, weeding and cultivating the new generation. Others are sailors navigating uncharted

waters or sales-reps selling knowledge - these images speak volumes.

My own representation is of the teacher as wizard. A teacher’s magic is in the threads that bind learners and teachers together through their interactions and relationships. I hesitate to share this representation because trying to draw those gossamer threads with a pencil (let alone a whiteboard marker!) results in a tangled and disappointingly messy picture. And as a teacher educator, teaching and learning about teaching and learning? ... my artistic talents could never do that justice.

But I do trust that my students will come to see that I care passionately about teaching and learning. My particular curriculum strength is science education but my forte is teacher education. I aim to ensure that every student teacher graduates confident in their ability to teach,

through science, in a wide range of settings, to all of the students in their classes. Teaching science education across early childhood, primary and secondary level graduate diploma and degree courses draws on all of the experiences I have had throughout my teaching career, all of the professional knowledge I have gained as a practitioner about how students learn and all of the research capabilities I have developed as an academic. I want my graduating students to enter the teaching profession with a clear understanding of, and commitment to, the critical role that they will play in enacting that link between teaching and learning.

Learning about teaching is highly individual. While in essence the learning process may be the same, differences in background, prior knowledge, motivation and interests will impact on the sense that each individual makes of any new experience. A learner reconstructs their own knowledge by connecting new experiences to their existing understanding. What this means for my teaching practice is that I need to respond to each student individually and design learning experiences that cater for diverse needs.

For those students who come into the teaching profession ambivalent about science, with a limited educational background in science, or with an aversion to science, my aim is to help them to see that the possibilities to teach through science are endless. Children are fascinated by science and by the time my courses end, I hope that my students will share their fascination. Without this willingness to share, science becomes invisible in the curriculum for young children. I incorporate stimulating, hands-on activities that arouse my students' curiosity and excite them to explore their ideas further.

Student teachers enrolled in the primary science education paper often believe that they already have sufficient knowledge to teach children in this age group. 'How hard can it be to teach a 10 year old?' is a typical response. Of course, often their own subject knowledge is limited and they are unaware of what they do not know. I challenge my students to examine some of their own misconceptions in science through carefully planned activities and tasks, to deepen their knowledge of the subject matter. Without the confidence to do this, teachers who are insecure in their knowledge





of science find it safer to revert to more traditional teacher-directed methods. They lack the rich subject-matter knowledge required to be responsive to students' thinking and to foster learning with understanding.

The student teachers who enrol with a high level of science knowledge, focused on teaching in secondary schools, need the opportunity and impetus to develop their pedagogical content knowledge. My goal for them is that they learn how to engage students of different ethnicities, interests and abilities and fuel a lifelong love of learning about science. They need to experience what it is like to be involved in student-centered activities, such as a cooperative jigsaw activity or a fishbowl debate, to appreciate the learning that these strategies afford. Insisting that they engage in new teaching strategies as learners is a way for me to break down their preconceived ideas that teaching is about transmitting information.

When I am teaching I am constantly looking for signs that the students are engaged and making sense of new information. I often draw their attention to the cues that I am reading as I do this, but it is difficult to pinpoint the subtle nuances in body language and tone of voice that I tune into as an experienced teacher. It is important that teacher educators acknowledge that what we make look easy and take so much for granted is, in fact, incredibly difficult and challenging to accomplish.

I have only recently come to realise this. My students had returned from an initial two week practicum experience and claimed that they could teach and that it wasn't as difficult as they had thought, or as complicated as we had made it out to be. I wanted to challenge these perceptions. I

said to them 'If teaching is so easy – perhaps I could learn to ride a horse?' What was intended to start a conversation actually sparked a series of riding lessons! It wasn't until after my first horse riding lesson I realised that what an experienced rider can make look easy and effortless was, in fact, very demanding and complex. Riding a horse, rather than sitting on a horse for a ride, necessitates a complex interplay of incoming and outgoing information. Sending messages to the horse through hands, legs and seat while simultaneously monitoring and fine tuning body position and adjusting to both horse and surroundings is not something that anyone should expect to master quickly. I more fully appreciate the extent of an expert's knowledge, and the foolhardiness of simplistic assumptions about teaching that novices may harbour. My heightened awareness of how easy it is to feel overwhelmed with information and just be taken for a ride has reinforced my belief that student teachers need to practise intermediate steps if they are to do more than adopt a superficial teaching role.

I know that I have a great deal to learn about learning to teach. That prospect inspires me every day and underpins my research endeavours. Deepening my understanding of what it is to be an excellent teacher is richly rewarding and the result of looking honestly and critically at all aspects of my practice. I hope that my students feel motivated to study their own practice in their classrooms as carefully, because the link between teaching and learning can be so tenuous and fragile. In the hands of an excellent teacher, though, it has the resilience to engage learners in a life-long journey of unlimited potential.



PEER AND STUDENT COMMENTS

In response to the open question: "What was most helpful for your learning?" students from various courses have written anonymously: Your honest assessment of my teaching – what I do well, what is missing. Very approachable and a joy to be in the classroom with.

I really appreciated the friendly atmosphere of this class and the communication between lecturer and student.

Dawn was an awesome teacher – very clear, open, helpful and supportive. The course was well structured and I found the assessment requirements realistic.

The friendly classroom environment. You looked like you really wanted to be here with us, which is so important. Great job, thank you.

Dawn's focus was always to teach us how to teach. She never just lectured to us. She taught us to think critically about teaching and learning. She did that by modeling supportive classroom practice and encouraging us to try a wide array of teaching strategies. This was highly effective for a number of reasons: Although we were often familiar with the science content, Dawn put us in the position of our future students and made us experience the strategies from this viewpoint in order to appreciate which strategies to use, and when, in our own classrooms.

Dr Antje Lisken-Kleinmans, Class of 2007, Teacher

My classes with Dawn helped me to prepare for students who might know very little, or might know quite a lot, and showed me that there is frequently the need for several paths to the same outcome.

Nick Major, Class of 2006, Teacher

We were immediately put at ease with her relaxed teaching manner and the comfortable atmosphere which Dawn has obviously fostered (and mastered) over the years. This in itself is a benchmark by which I have judged myself as a teacher. The idea of students being able to freely laugh in a class with their teacher whilst learning is something else that I have learned from Dawn and try to encourage in my classroom. Not only does it personalize one's teacher but it also eases some of the stress and burdens that all students carry at one time or another.

Jodie Delany, Class of 2003, Assistant Head of Science

Dawn has taken a critical friend role and shared her visions of 'best practice' with course co-ordinators. She is reflective about her practice and is willing to share the successes as well as failures, complexities and challenges with colleagues.

Jeanne Sheehan, Faculty of Education

When I began teaching at this institution, Dawn's advice was invaluable in making the transition from classroom teacher to teacher educator. Dawn's teaching always promotes student engagement and effective learning.

Rena Heap, Faculty of Education



S U S T A I N E D E X C E L L E N C E

Dr John Hosking

PROFESSOR OF APPLIED COMPUTER SCIENCE, DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE
■ UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND

John has been a university educator for 27 years. A strong belief in action-based learning has led John to develop “multi-disciplinary programmes that provide a holistic integration and contextualisation of more formal curriculum-based learning in real world situations”. His aim to “turn students into colleagues” guides all his teaching approaches whether formal or informal. John has undertaken numerous professional leadership roles within the university, such as the integral part he played in the establishment and development of the University of Auckland’s “HeadsUp” programme for new and aspiring Heads of Department and his strong advocacy for the Women in Leadership Programme. His extensive involvement with business includes the development of the CSI Academy for structured student internships and the new “Extenda” programme designed to support the development of research cultures in ICT companies. “Extenda” involves both company senior managers and in-company consultancy by Honours level students. Peers, members of the business world, former and current students speak highly of John as a great mentor, an exceptional research supervisor and someone who is always there when needed.

Beginnings

I have been a University educator for 27 years, something that constantly surprises me. I started as a Junior Lecturer in 1981, seeing the position as an opportunity to improve my public speaking ability and little more. I was unprepared for the intense personal satisfaction that results from assisting others to achieve their life goals, and quickly changed my career aspirations. The privilege and responsibility of being part of my students’ life process has encouraged and sustained me in my teaching roles since then.

That I became an educator is, however, unsurprising as I come from a family of teachers.

My sister Beth teaches new entrants, my brother Bruce is an adult educator. We each deal with major life transition points where formal “chalk and talk” teaching is insufficient and where education must include significant experiential learning to allow students to contextualise and operationalize more formal teachings. As a result I have become less reliant on the classroom, instead emphasising asynchronous, informal, often action-based learning approaches which are particularly relevant for digital natives. I have been led to focus on learning outside, yet adjacent to, the formal curriculum. The resulting multi-disciplinary programmes holistically integrate and contextualise more formal

curriculum-based learning in real world situations. They deliberately blur the line between institutional and in-situ professional education while providing a “duty of care” safety net via efficient and effective mentoring.

Aim

My aim is to turn students into colleagues.

This aim guides all of my approaches to teaching. I want the students I teach to be effective professionals, whether as academics or working in industry. I want them to become the sorts of professionals that I would want to work with. They need a thorough grounding in the processes and methodologies of their discipline but must also understand the context of their work, the need to act responsibly and ethically and be able to collaborate effectively with other professionals and the public. This implies a responsibility to teach beyond the normal curriculum to facilitate learning outcomes more professional than knowledge-based in nature. This aim and my resulting approaches derive from the applied nature of the disciplines I work in, but are equally recognisable in other practice-based disciplines.

Application to formal teaching

Traditional pre-mass education involved one-on-one mentoring, via apprenticeships or Oxbridge tutoring. Achieving similar efficacy in large classes is challenging. My approach is to make early and deep connections to my research and professional

consultancy, making material as professionally relevant as practicable. I base my teaching on practical assignment work, using it to motivate introduction of course content, with assignment tasks derived from research my group has undertaken or industrial problems I have encountered. I regularly use anecdotes from my professional activity (research or industrial) in lectures to reinforce the “real life” relevance of material covered and the sometimes quirky nature of its practical application. My assignments typically have an open-ended component to challenge brighter students, and reinforce the lesson that real problems are hard, considered and that documented compromises must be made and multiple design alternatives considered. I team teach all of my courses and share my teaching resources with my colleagues for comment, use and refinement (as they do with theirs). This shared refinement process is an extremely important quality control and improvement mechanism. I learnt many years ago that it was important to remove the ego of “ownership” in favour of collaboratively enhancing quality across the “college” via peer mentorship.

Industry engagement programmes

I have helped develop several industry oriented programmes aimed at “colleague development”. Each incorporates an innovative mentorship approach.

NZ ICT companies have had a poor record in providing internships, yet complain graduates are



insufficiently work-ready. This is compounded by the many Small to Medium Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the sector that lack understanding of how to run internships. To address this, my colleague John Grundy and I developed the CSI Academy, a structured summer internship programme. The Academy aims to make senior undergraduate students more work-ready and companies more receptive to graduate recruitment and internships. The focus is experiential learning via summer internships, but with academic and industry mentor support and professional project management. This provides “real world” professional experience for the students within a supportive mentoring framework that assists students in negotiating and delivering on clear milestones and deliverables. Students’ personal development is enormous; the lessons of adaptation, compromise, teamwork, and communication prove invaluable to them and form an important step in their transformation into colleagues. Their change in confidence is often breathtaking. The change in attitude by companies to the value of internships, recruitment of graduates, and engagement with the University is equally dramatic.

The newer Extenda programme was motivated by a lack of a research culture in local IT companies, stemming from low numbers of research qualified staff. Many SMEs in the sector are one product companies lacking an appreciation of how research can leverage them to more complete product lines. These factors form a barrier to academic-industry research engagement and mean much of the sector’s business research and development spend is “low grade”. Extenda aims to address this by establishing a transformational research-led culture in businesses. It uses a combination of workshops with company senior managers and in-company “consultancy” by Honours level student teams focusing on “business practical” areas such as technology roadmapping. This is an interesting mix of students being mentored by academic mentors and students themselves mentoring senior managers. The teams are deliberately a mix of IT and Business students encouraging cross-fertilisation of ideas and experience in dealing constructively with professionals in other disciplines. The experiential learning obtained is enormously valuable; access by Honours students to senior



management teams is rare, let alone an opportunity to change the culture of an entire company.

In both programmes we have sought and achieved multiple wins:

- student capability, industry understanding, and industry “readiness” are enriched
- company capability and hence profitability is enhanced
- company understanding of and willingness to engage with academia is increased
- academia’s understanding of and willingness to engage with companies is increased

The complex and multi-directional nature of the learnings involved has been both fascinating to observe and very rewarding to participate in.

Research supervision

I clearly state to my research students that my role is to develop them into colleagues. My methods involve a series of reinforcing and interwoven contextual and action learning approaches. These derive from a high level set of goals articulated as a set of “C” words:

- **context:** a clear understanding of the context in which research is undertaken; the literature, professional practice, existing work within our group, and the benefits of ongoing research programmes rather than individual projects
- **confidence:** in the students’ research abilities; that their research “counts” and is of international significance
- **collaboration:** recognition that drawing on the strengths of others and contributing to their development is mutually beneficial
- **collegiality:** that collaboration is not only beneficial but the responsibility of an academic
- **communication:** as an essential component of research



- **celebration:** recognising and celebrating achievement
- **career:** looking beyond the thesis to career establishment (in academia or industry)

These goals are continuously reinforced in learning situations throughout my students' research programmes. I co-supervise almost all of my students and group interaction is both regular and regularly encouraged to provide peer mentoring and mutual support across the group.

On-going commitment

Education is the key to career success. Being entrusted to provide that key to my students is a privilege I cherish. It brings a responsibility to deliver to them the best educational experiences I can provide. I continually seek to improve those experiences by reflective experimentation, being increasingly drawn to approaches that integrate and extend the formal curriculum in a holistic experiential manner within a safety net of careful mentoring.

I am currently building on the successes of

Extenda and Academy, working with Accelerating Auckland and Otago University to replicate aspects of these programmes on both a regional and national basis. I am also interested in exploring their boundaries, for example, replication in other disciplines, extending the Academy concept to a postgraduate level and providing an Extenda like programme focussed on product and process enhancement (complementing a research project I am involved in). I am also fascinated by the nature of the role I have found myself in, that of "technology translator" or "pracademic", somebody comfortable in both academia and business. I plan to reflect on how this role has developed and how it can be sustainably replicated.

I was initially an accidental educator, but I have become firmly committed to this sometimes challenging, but always fascinating career. Seeing the achievements my students reach with their educational key is the ultimate in career satisfaction.

"We make a living by what we get, we make a life by what we give." Winston Churchill

PEER AND STUDENT COMMENTS

"John has a very 'students-oriented' personality. He never hesitates to give students' requests the highest priority, offering help and mentoring in a timely and friendly way. He wins trust and respect from the students as he offers the same to the students. He makes us friends, taking every opportunity to take part in our social activities to communicate and celebrate with us. I have been very impressed by John's dedication to all his students including me. During the many years of collaboration, I have learned from him a positive way to think, a diligent way to do, an innovative way to invent, and a generous way to give. I believe these are the factors that will drive me to success in the near future."

Dr Karen Na-Liu Li, Senior Tutor, Student Learning Centre, University of Auckland and former PhD student

"John is probably the most experienced post-graduate supervisor in Computer Science – nearly two dozen PhD and around 40 Masters students that he has or is supervising plus a number more that he has co-supervised. The benefit to the University of his excellence in supervision and mentoring is demonstrated by the number now working or have recently worked for us – PhDs including 1 Professor (myself); 2 Associate-Professors; 1 Senior Lecturer; 1 Senior Tutor, a Research Manager (for UniServices); and at least two Masters graduates (that I know of). His reputation and popularity as a supervisor means he and I have one of the largest groups of post-graduate students in the Department."

Professor John Grundy, HOD Electrical and Computer Engineering Dept, University of Auckland, former PhD student.



S U S T A I N E D E X C E L L E N C E

Dr Ian McAndrew

SENIOR LECTURER IN EMPLOYMENT RELATIONS, DEPARTMENT OF MANAGEMENT,
SCHOOL OF BUSINESS ■ UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

Ian came to New Zealand in 1987 with extensive scholarship and practice in labour and employment relationships gained in the United States. He draws on these experiences to develop successful undergraduate and honours courses. Ian's philosophy is to ensure his students understand that theory and modelling and academic studies are a basis for being successful in work and life. Ian has an innate respect for and interest in his students. "I have never had any doubts about who I teach for. I teach for students. I have always respected their evaluations and have always sought them, read them, reflected on them, and learned from them". Remaining active as a professional in labour relations himself, allows Ian to ensure his graduates have the best possible preparation for practice. His "Ponderosa County" negotiation exercise is well-known throughout the country. Ian's portfolio is peppered with student endorsements of his enthusiasm and knowledge, summed up by the student who says, "Ian doesn't just 'teach' a course, he lives and breathes it and inspires those who do it to live and breathe it as well".

The negotiation course

I would guess that a thousand people or more have passed through *Ponderosa County* in my negotiation course over the past 20 years. It is an intensive, demanding but ultimately, for most, exhilarating experience in negotiation, problem solving, human relationships, self discovery, confidence building, and the enjoyment of learning. In its undergraduate format, the exercise runs over a month. Students typically spend about 35 or 40 hours in negotiations, and a like amount in preparation and team meetings. They negotiate over nights and weekends, often until 2.00 or 3.00 in the morning. They curse, and cry, and laugh, and order lots of pizza. And eventually they get a settlement they thought they'd never get, and they leave together, triumphant, happy, relieved, and

usually ready for either a bed or a beer.

The sophistication of the course has developed over time. In the beginning, there was only *Ponderosa County*. These days, along with instruction in theory and practice, students experience a sequence of progressively more complex negotiation exercises, designed to build skills and confidence, before taking the daunting journey to *Ponderosa County*.

Opportunities for reflection are a critical part of experiential learning, and we routinely use student journals and team debriefing sessions to accomplish this. In addition I have invested quite a lot of experimentation in organising innovative ways of debriefing negotiation experiences, and have shared those innovations through conference presentations and academic publication.

The employment rights course

My other undergraduate course covers employment rights and responsibilities. It too has origins in my work as a practitioner. From 1993 to 2002, I was a mediator and adjudicator of employment disputes as a part-time member of the New Zealand Employment Tribunal. With the decline of union representation over that period, the rights of individuals to protect their employment entitlements became of paramount interest, and the employment rights course emerged as a natural offering in the management curriculum.

The philosophy behind this course is the same as that behind the negotiation course – strong theoretical foundations, informed by research and practice, helping students acquire practical skills and knowledge they appreciate, but also an understanding of how research and theory inform and support practice. It is very much a case-based course.

I teach three courses at the Honours level; two modules of advanced study in industrial and employment relations, which remains my core substantive field of interest, and a course in

mediation. I also teach executive education, and facilitate learning through the supervision of research theses, dissertations and projects for students at Honours, Masters, and PhD levels.

I enjoy teaching overseas as well. I now make annual visits to universities in Vienna to teach courses in mediation and negotiation. Students there enthusiastically embrace the interactive style of presentation coming to them from New Zealand.

My teaching philosophy

One of my strengths as a teacher is that I have been for many years an active practitioner in my fields – substantively labour and employment relations in terms of process, negotiation and mediation. I teach students a lot of skills in those fields, and they enjoy learning skills that they can relate to and use. However, I am also a scholar. Grounding ‘understanding’ in theory is, to my mind, what separates truly effective practitioners from the rest, in any field of business endeavour.

I want students to learn useable skills, and to really enjoy doing so. However, I also want students to understand that theory and modelling and



academic studies generally are not things to be 'endured' at university before moving on to a career and 'real life', but rather are things to be absorbed as a basis for being successful in 'real life'.

Students study a lot of cases at university. Most of these seem to be short and to make just one or two points. I prefer to challenge students with more detailed, complex cases averaging 20 or 30 pages. Details can bring a case to life and give it credibility. That the cases I use are real gives them an authenticity that pulls the students right into the story.

I also try to use cases that are interesting in the sense that they involve interesting people doing interesting things. Our major mediation case, for example, revolves around the dismissal from employment of a rugby coach in controversial circumstances. It is just as easy and legitimate to learn from an interesting story as it is from one involving more mundane situations. Department of Labour mediators generously conduct the mediations to further authenticate the experience for students.

The employment rights course also lends itself to case-aided instruction, so I commonly use what I call "60 seconds" cases during lectures, displaying the key facts on PowerPoint, expanding on them orally, and inviting students to discuss them for a minute or two before venturing an opinion. This technique gives students an opportunity to think and talk through the subject matter, which in my experience leads to more learning than thinking alone. That they have discussed it with somebody else also gives students more confidence in publicly offering an opinion, having 'road tested' their views on their neighbour.

Teaching strategies that engage students

In the early days of teaching at Otago, I used to wonder why students were willing to spend 30 or 40 hours in negotiations, and a like amount in preparation, often times negotiating overnight, and over weekends, pushing things to the deadline, holding out for that last dollar to negotiate a collective employment agreement for a group of deputy sheriffs in an imaginary county in a faraway place. Don't they know it's just a game, I wondered?

Why don't they just quietly cut a deal somewhere in the middle and go home? Or just give up, roll over, and take the consequences?

I don't really think about that anymore. They just won't do it. Never have. Only one group of two teams has ever, in 20 years, taken the easy way out of *Ponderosa County*. The other exercises in my courses are perhaps more finite, and so require less time and effort. But they generate no less commitment to achieving good outcomes. Students put in the time and effort necessary to get results they can be proud of.

What are the reasons for this level of engagement? Fundamentally, I think that people take pride in their performance, and many are competitive by nature; nobody likes to lie down and be taken advantage of. But I believe that I play a part as well in generating the enthusiasm that students have for my courses. I teach them how to settle things, to make deals. But more than that, they learn to make only good deals, deals that give you a buzz when you finally get them. And to conduct themselves with amiability, humour and good manners, but purposively, strategically, and with resolve. Between their efforts and commitment, and my guidance, they discover how to do all that, and gain the confidence that they can. And that's a wonderful thing to behold.

One of the true rewards I realise is to see students who began the course without the confidence to speak in public – let alone to debate, advocate or negotiate – become, in the space of a semester, someone who you absolutely could not shut up if you wanted to. That is, I readily accept, not a scientific measure of teaching or learning achievement; but it is one that matters a great deal to me.





PEER AND STUDENT COMMENTS

Ian's approach to teaching is practitioner-focused, and as such is reality-based. You learn by doing. Right from the start of the course he 'gets in character', and this is a persona he maintains until the course's conclusion. It is this level of enthusiasm that I believe ensures student engagement in the negotiation exercise. As a teacher I can only admire and envy his ability.

Dr Fiona Edgar, BCom (Hons) 2000, PhD (2003) Senior Lecturer, Department of Management

It was not only one of the most time consuming but also one of the most interesting, challenging, practical and funniest seminars in my whole student career. The fact that Ian was passionate and dedicated to teach us everything about negotiation strategies in combination with personal anecdotes from his many years of practical experience made the time in the classroom very enjoyable and never boring.

In 2007 Ian taught at my university (Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration) and my fellow students were as excited about his course, his charisma and the way he communicates the content of teaching as I was during my time in New Zealand.

Alex Ebhart, student at the Vienna University of Economics & Business Administration, exchange student at Otago 2006

I would challenge anyone to find a particular aspect of employment relations where Ian does not have a list a mile long of entertaining and informative stories based on his years of practical experience and grounded by watertight academic theory. To sum it up, when Ian talks you listen because whatever is about to be said is dead set worth hearing.

**Todd Gregory, BSc, BCom 2007
Commercial Analyst, Fonterra**

I really enjoy Ian's dry sense of humour and wit, and I believe that he balances the use of such humour perfectly so as to make lectures fun and interesting, without losing focus on the key points. I cannot think of any other teachers or lecturers who have such a fine balance.

**Jason Tibble, BCom (2006)
Key Accounts Executive, Lion Nathan**

He did not simply give a student the answer he was looking for. In fact I can't remember a time when he gave me an answer without working for it. He always questioned my thoughts, even if I was on the right track. His testing questions solidified my perspective on issues as they encouraged me to continuously research until I was satisfied myself.

**Philip Boyd-Clark, BCom 2004,
PGDipCom 2004
Human Resources Advisor, MAF**



SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE

Dr John Reynolds

SENIOR LECTURER, DEPARTMENT OF ANATOMY AND STRUCTURAL BIOLOGY
■ UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO

John has been teaching for 11 years. As a student he “frequently felt out of his depth”. Reflecting on his experiences as a student and his own teaching performance, John aims to “be a teacher who would have helped and inspired the ‘me’ of a few years ago”. As a neurobiologist, John’s research interests in positive reinforcement mechanisms impact directly on his own approaches to teaching. Leading by “enthusiastic example”, John actively seeks student and colleague evaluation and feedback. He uses these to shape his practice, with resulting comments such as “Dr Reynolds has been one of the best lecturers I’ve had. He has made me want to pursue a degree in Anatomy”. John has recently led the development and launch of a new first-year Human Body Systems paper with enrolments in excess of 1870 students. His Head of Department described this achievement as “inspirational” and “his commitment was total.”

I was a lousy medical student. By this, I don’t mean that I failed papers, or that I couldn’t cope with patients. Rather, regarding learning I frequently felt out of my depth, struggling to integrate what seemed a constant barrage of new knowledge across many disciplines. However, these situations were punctuated with positive learning experiences driven by a few teachers who stood out for their enthusiasm and ability to inspire. These experiences have helped shape my philosophies on learning and have guided my own practice as a teacher over the last 11 years. Reflecting on my own performance, I aim to be a teacher who would have helped and inspired the ‘me’ of a few years ago.

Developing a philosophy

When I returned to the University of Otago as a postgraduate my first teaching experience was to

give physiology tutorials to Medical students. These sessions were intended to be run by the students themselves, however, having absolutely no group teaching experience, I found myself instead trying to fill the silences by delivering a mini-lecture (to their delight - possibly). I learnt very quickly: that students will modify their learning approach to suit the situation. By empowering them to be self-directed, students will become active in their approach to obtain new knowledge. More importantly, the teacher’s approach needs to be dynamic, to achieve the correct mix of information transmission and student self-directedness that is appropriate for the situation.

It is important it was to get students to understand where the material they are being asked to learn fits into the ‘big picture’. For a teacher in the Sciences and Health Sciences this means continually integrating new knowledge with

other disciplines in the course (eg. anatomy with physiology; structure with function), and, frequently positioning the material within the context of clinical practice.

These two observations formed, in hindsight, an embryonic teaching philosophy that influenced my early teaching style and formed an initial yardstick for self-evaluation.

The research-teaching link

Whilst developing my skills as a teacher I was also, in parallel, developing skills and knowledge as a researcher in neuroscience. This led to a number of opportunities for cross-fertilisation between my research and teaching, forming the beginnings of a broadly-based research-teaching link that has become central to my subsequent practice.

For me, the research-teaching link operates on a number of levels. First, I am privileged to be involved in a research area which is rapidly progressing and newsworthy, and endeavour to incorporate up-to-date information to shape my lectures, labs and tutorials. I strive to get the students to think beyond the findings. For instance, I run a formative exercise during one of my Neurobiology lectures, based around an original research paper and a follow-up article. The students

are given guidance on how to critique the paper and actively encouraged to

contribute to the subsequent discussion on its strengths and weaknesses. This exercise does more than increase the students' scientific knowledge, because in the follow-up article, the scientific paper was in fact retracted by the authors because of mistakes in the methodological approach. I use this as a springboard to get the students to consider the Philosophy and Ethics of science, and ask them to discuss how they view the unnecessary use of experimental animals in this situation and what they would have done had they been the principal investigator.

Second, and more fundamentally, I am fortunate to be able to apply my own research area to guide my approach to students and to facilitate learning. In my own work on positive reinforcement mechanisms, I have shown how rewards strengthen active synaptic connections in the brain, thereby making us more likely to emit the same behaviour that led to the reward. In the years that followed, I have employed the philosophy that rewarding students for their learning efforts strengthens neural links between actions and outcomes, thereby reinforcing those efforts. Actions can be as broad as showing up to lectures, contributing to classroom discussions and undertaking self-directed learning activities and revision; outcomes include becoming a self-motivated learner and, ultimately, achieving good grades. It is likely that rewards also reinforce the neural association between the situation and the behaviour, hence I use rewards (usually chocolate 'Freddos'!) to encourage student participation in class question time, not just for supplying the correct answer. This involves even the largest class of students in active listening and learning and is frequently identified in the students' written evaluation comments as a highlight for engaging them in lectures.

Large class teaching - overcoming the stereotypes

Taking a lead role in 2006 as coordinator in the development and launch of the new Human Body Systems (HUBS191) paper at the University of Otago was a particular personal challenge. This paper is compulsory for entry into all second-year professional courses and Health Sciences degrees, attracting large numbers of exceptionally driven



students. With enrolments in excess of 1870 students in its inaugural year (2007), HUBS191 is likely to be the biggest first-year Health Sciences paper in the world. I have embraced and enjoyed the challenge of overcoming popular beliefs about the limitations on teaching and assessment imposed by these larger classes.

An underlying philosophy which pervaded all aspects of the design of this mammoth course was to engender a 'deep learning' approach by the students, ie. to encourage the seeking of meaning and understanding rather than the superficial learning of facts. Lectures of up to 800 students at a time were now framed as tools to actively facilitate this understanding, with the students expected to obtain the detail through their own pre-reading. For many of the teachers, this was a significant philosophical departure, as it stepped out of the comfort zone of delivering the 'curriculum' during a lecture to instead focus on teaching concepts and making links across subjects and disciplines. To offer support, I delivered workshops to fellow lecturers and teaching fellows, demonstrating how people might make this stylistic transition. Pleasing student comment and evaluations attest to the tremendous effort put in by teaching staff to achieve this change.

For the students, in their first lecture I introduced them to the use of concept maps ('mind maps') as one tool for making links across subject areas, during note-taking and revision. I enlisted the help of the Student Learning Centre to demonstrate, by engaging the students in drawing a concept map of the topics I presented during my lecture. In recognition of the diversity of the students' learning styles and acknowledging that students may bring a variety of approaches to learning from their previous experience, concept maps were strongly encouraged but not assessed.

Students doing the HUBS191 papers are a heterogeneous group, including those who will be successful in gaining entry into a competitive health professional training programme, as well as 1000 others who will pursue science, physical education and other careers. I believe that all of these students to some degree should share an early appreciation of the contribution that research and scientific discovery make to the material they learn. Hence,

I strive to instil in them a passion for science at the first year level which they will carry through the diverse range of their career paths. In my HUBS191 lectures I instituted scientific vignettes, with the theme "How do we know that?" In these, I recount interesting and often serendipitous discoveries which underpin potentially 'common' knowledge. An example is the accidental staining of individual cells in brain tissue by the Italian physician Camillo Golgi in 1873, which has led to our common understanding that the brain is made up of millions of physically distinct cells. Although the content of these vignettes is outside the assessed curriculum, they are selected to illustrate and complement core material. In all the teaching I have done at first year, I aim, through leading by 'enthusiastic example', to attract some students by the thrill of scientific enquiry to pursue a research career.

Leading by example

The relationship between teacher and learner can be a lifelong partnership which extends beyond the classroom into the areas of career and personal development. However brief the actual contact, this relationship can have far-reaching consequences, since the influence of one's words and actions does not cease at the conclusion of the lecture. I still aspire to the good example provided by a teacher at my Intermediate school, as well as that provided by influential lecturers at Medical School. These people motivate, lead by example and direct you as a student into areas that you might not normally venture. Sometimes this is literal, in the context of inspiring students into postgraduate research programmes, as I myself was drawn into Neuroscience research at Medical School by an inspiring teacher, who is now a close colleague. This relationship in its broadest sense can also be between teaching or research peers, with a positive impact on the practice of one or both.

Closing Remarks

In the practice of medicine, teaching is fundamental. The Hippocratic Oath, taken in some form by most graduating doctors, includes the reference: "...by precept, lecture and every other mode of



instruction, I will impart a knowledge of the Art to my own sons and those of my teachers...". Perhaps a modern and less eloquent synthesis of the Oath is an edict used to describe the acquisition and (almost immediate) passing on of clinical procedures to junior colleagues, known as the "see one, do one, teach one" rule. The emphasis is on passing knowledge from generation to generation, and the implication is that the learning involved is empowering and lifelong. Teaching medical students was my first exposure to pedagogy. It laid the foundations for my philosophies on the need to shape student approaches to learning and inspire them to visualise their career goals, which I have woven into my design strategies to facilitate student learning. Teaching medical students is now a subset of my

teaching activities, supplemented by the teaching of science students at all levels. Many of the current highlights in my teaching come from the postgraduate students in my laboratory, through sharing the triumph they feel after a successful experiment, and assisting them to interpret their findings and formulate ideas. These students arguably get the least of my physical time due to my other demands, but are the most satisfying to observe on their journey to becoming independent researchers and, possibly, future collaborators. I aim to use some of the Teaching Excellence Award to honour their contributions and to provide them with audiovisual and communications equipment that will facilitate our group discussions and their learning.

PEER AND STUDENT COMMENTS

"HUBS 191 and 192 were and are bold experiments in teaching large classes; not just organizational experiments, but also an experiment in shifting the way large classes are taught. John convened HUBS 191, and it is no exaggeration to say that his leadership was inspirational. His commitment was total."

Prof. David Green, HOD, Dept. of Anatomy and Structural Biology.

"So successful was John's influence that staff who were initially reluctant to change their teaching style are now advocating that the changes in approach are carried on and developed further in the subsequent years of the health professional courses."

Prof. Helen Nicholson, Dean, Otago School of Medical Sciences.

"I found Dr Reynolds to be a committed supervisor, who constantly challenged me on both the academic and technical aspects of my project, thus helping to develop critical thinking skills that are required to complete studies at this level."

Dr. Toni Pitcher, the first PhD student to have completed studies in my laboratory.

"Of particular note was the involvement in his lectures of research concepts and evidence gained from research, which he used to demonstrate the link between what is learned

in the lab and how it translates to lecture material. Asking students questions about material covered, or enquiring what their thoughts would be in terms of the logical next step in research, is an effective component of Dr Reynolds's teaching style. This particularly encourages students to be actively learning"

Lisa Smith, third-year Neurobiology student (ANAT335), 2007.

"I believe that the qualities required for good supervision are different to those required of teaching. John has both. He is an extremely enthusiastic supervisor who invests a lot of time in his students and post docs. and is actively involved in their research. He teaches by example and encourages us all to take part in and present at seminars and conferences."

Rachel Sizemore, a current PhD student in my laboratory.

"John's depth of knowledge and clear passion for the subject matter enlivened our interest and made the information real. We cannot convey how important it was in our learning process and enjoyment of medical school, to have been taught by such an outstanding communicator and passionate person."

Vivienne Faithfull, Sophie Tapper, Lindsay Todd, Felicity Dominick, past third-year Medical students.



S U S T A I N E D E X C E L L E N C E

Dr Sean Weaver

SENIOR LECTURER, SCHOOL OF GEOGRAPHY, ENVIRONMENT AND EARTH SCIENCES
■ VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

Sean describes his students as “my favourite colleagues”. Sean’s dual career in education and environmental management over the past 20 years has enabled him to be the cornerstone of the Environment Studies undergraduate major. He brings to his classes “the commitment of an environmental activist and married with it the discipline of a very good scientist”. This means that his teaching is led by both research and practice in his discipline. Sean believes that 80% of good teaching is encouragement, for which he has many strategies. He also concludes that “action without reflection is ineffective, and reflection without action does not do anything”. To this end he draws on his diverse background, including work in Vanuatu and Fiji, the Education for Sustainability Contract funded by the Ministry of Education, and, policy consultancy to develop current case studies for his students. Sean’s leadership and many contributions have been recognised by students and the university through a number of teaching awards over the past five years.

Two sides: One Coin

I have a dual career: education and applied environmental management. These two complement each other in many ways, with one informing the other in an ongoing cycle that has lasted 20 years so far. Only recently have I become more conscious of the remarkable synergy between these two dimensions of my work, and why I have never settled with just one or the other. My practice enriches my teaching and my teaching enriches my practice.

My approach to teaching is underpinned by the words of one of my own teachers: “80% of teaching is encouragement.” I have used this notion as the motif of my professional work in a sphere commonly plagued by messages of “gloom and doom” about the state of the environment. Of

course it is true that there are many environmental problems in the world, and some of them very serious. My teaching is designed to inspire people into action and in my experience action arises more effectively from positive emotional drivers.

Part of encouragement is to foster student confidence in their own abilities. One thing I know as an environmental management and policy practitioner, is that everyone is capable of doing great things – even with the capabilities they bring to the very beginning of a learning process. Everyone in society has skills and capabilities sufficient to make a positive difference for a more enduring and prosperous future (in the face of significant resource management challenges), if only we decide to do so. Education for sustainability is a process of building on that foundation and

providing people with the opportunity to practise, sharpen their skills, learn from experience, and improve their effectiveness.

Another aspect of this environmental pedagogy is that people do not need to be converted to any particular way of thinking – that is the way of “environmental proselytism” which I do not practice or encourage. There is a wealth of existing values and knowledge to draw upon for the kind of sustainable future so many people talk about. The key is to apply those values and that knowledge to the task protecting the things we value, which include a wide range of essential ecosystem services provided to society by nature for free.

I do not attempt to merely fill up a collection of minds with facts and concepts. Instead I try to coach students to use information to design solutions to the problems that they already see. This makes use of facts – plenty of them. This is why my work is science-based: it is important to understand how the physical system functions if we are to present convincing arguments as to how to align our collective and individual behaviors’ to the flows of the Earth System.

Translating Science

We live in a society where ancient lore is not

enough. The people who make resource management decisions demand credible answers to their questions, and my job has been to train students how to answer those questions. What is defined as “credible” these days aligns closely with evidence and scientific explanations, and with the big issue, scientific consensus. So be it. And in the process we learn the wonderful and fascinating things that science can teach us, through the work of those who have sharpened their awareness by undertaking detailed observations of the dynamic process of what we call “nature.” The stories arising from these careful observations are compelling if only they could be understood more easily by those more interested in consuming science than producing it. This is my job: translation.

The rest of my job is to inspire. This is more likely when people get a sense that they are respected, capable, competent, and powerful. So, I spend a lot of time trying to help students see this in themselves.

Medium and Message

There are a lot of opportunities in teaching environmental studies to become a messenger of big problems. The evidence is compelling and in many cases does not make happy reading. The



“bad news” storyline has characterised environmentalism over the last few decades, and as a result has cultivated a negative attitude. While it is important to bear witness to the global resource challenges we face (e.g. water security, food security, oil prices, biodiversity loss, climate change), if we want to turn problems into solutions we need to instil a sense of common purpose, empowerment and a “can-do” outlook. This, in my experience, is far more capable of motivating people into action than doom and gloom.

Picking up any environmental science textbook can be a sobering experience, leading to course content that wears people out. I feel a responsibility to engender a sense of hope in my courses, and this means concentrating on solutions more than problems. I have a friend and teacher who is a counsellor and he once shared with me his view that a healthy interpersonal relationship needs about 80% positive messages so that necessary negative messages have a strong container. If the negative message gets beyond 20% the relationship begins to erode. I apply this principle to the design of my course content and teaching delivery in terms of the ratio of positive and negative stories.

One way that I do this is to package the necessary facts of our condition in a fun way that does not take it all too seriously. I am a big fan of the way Ben Elton uses comedy to make challenging social and environmental issues palatable, and I see the wisdom in this communication strategy. It is important to keep learning ears open, and they will close up if the medium and the message are too dour.

Another way that I build happy associations is through a laughing workshop with my 300 level class (Global Environmental Issues) early in the course. I invite students to lie on the floor in the lecture theatre and then I take them through a laughing exercise that produces about 10 minutes of unmitigated raucous mirth.

Interconnected World

I only teach one thing really: the world is interconnected. I find many different ways to express this because the interconnected world presents a constant supply of examples, from the

hydrological cycle through to economic externalities, environmental problems, and solutions. I explore with students some of the implications arising from a loyalty to an interconnected theory of reality: how could there be a boundary between Nature and Culture? How could there be a value system that cares for Nature more than it cares for people? This theme of interconnections is something I explore in a spiralling hermeneutical that slides down a rabbit hole from ecosystem dynamics to the political implications of no-boundary between self and other. I teach applied interconnectedness, and so I consistently invite students to find ways to discover and expand their passion and then press this into a professional form capable of taking into the workforce.

The way I do this is best illustrated in my 300 level Global Environmental Issues course which is divided into two parallel curricula each worth half of the final grade. One focuses on a holistic outlook presented in lecture content to cover the breadth and depth of the field of interconnections as a discipline underlying an inquiry into global environmental issues. The other is a training programme in literature-based research and analysis, designed to coach students to drill precisely and deeply into an issue. The focus of the former is broad, whilst the focus of the latter is narrow. Both the broad outlook and the sharp focus are reconciled as core components of the skill-set of an effective environmental professional, capable of seeing the forest and the trees.

Final Note

My plans for the future are to spend some time in the ‘practitioner space’ as a climate change policy and carbon markets consultant, also offering educational services to the business, policy and management sector (and some contract teaching at the tertiary level). I have projects in Vanuatu and New Zealand and do international climate-policy work at the UN and World Bank. I will never stop being a teacher because teaching is in my blood, but my focus at this stage in the educator/practitioner cycle is to direct my educational capabilities into working more closely with decision makers and leaders.



PEER AND STUDENT COMMENTS

Sean Weaver is a uniquely gifted individual who exhausts himself every year because of the energy, passion and excellence he brings to his teaching. He is the cornerstone of the Environmental Studies undergraduate major, and its growing success at Victoria University is in no small measure due to his inspiring contributions. I am constantly encountering students who voluntarily offer unstinting praise for the course content and the way the material is taught. If there is one quality which I think distinguishes Sean's teaching and marks him out as worthy of a national award, it is the passion and conviction he brings to the subject.

Richard Willis, Acting Head of School, School of Geography Environment and Earth Sciences, Victoria University of Wellington

The most important gift Sean offers is to inspire students – to learn, to do research, and to get active. He adds skill and capability building to inspiration, to create an awesome and persuasive mix. But he also encourages many to go on to graduate study, so that they can hone their skills and make an even more powerful contribution in their careers. In doing these things, Sean has had a very clear and major impact not only on individuals but on a whole generation. I am not surprised that Sean is consistently praised by his students, and sought after to supervise postgraduate thesis work.

Ralph Chapman (Associate Professor), Director, Graduate Programme in Environmental Studies, Victoria University of Wellington

Sean has a real ability to convey the key messages of complex issues in ways that are interesting, understandable to 'lay persons' and have a relevance to those persons' everyday lives. In short, he engages his audience. It is clear to me that he does this in the classroom as well. This is because I have seen how his candidate Masters and PhD students look up to him and pursue their work. They are engaged in the subjects of their study with such a passion that it is clear to me they have taken on some of Sean's passion for the environment and environmental education. To me this is the mark of a great teacher.

Murray Ward, Principal, GtripleC, an international consultancy, formerly, Manager Climate Change, New Zealand, Ministry for the Environment.

I can confidently say that I learned more from Sean's Environmental Studies paper than any other course I have taken. While the focus of the course is ostensibly to study the many environmental problems faced by the inhabitants of this planet, Sean's teaching extends significantly beyond this, illustrating the vital links between social issues, informational problems and importantly, the common gap between environmental science and policy. This latter concern provides the core focus of the major assignment of the course; that being a comprehensive policy-style report which incorporates an environmental issue, related policy and recommendations. This report and Sean's assistance with it, has more than anything else in my degree, helped me develop the necessary skills required for post-graduate study or work in the area of research or policy.

Pat Horsley, 3rd Year Student



S U S T A I N E D E X C E L L E N C E

Dr Marc Wilson

SCHOOL OF PSYCHOLOGY ■ VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON

Marc has captured the “magic of learning” to inspire students to achieve. Over his 14 years of teaching, Marc’s approach has evolved from trial and error, to the development of a personal teaching style and philosophy, to teaching based on the scholarship of pedagogy. Most of Marc’s undergraduate teaching occurs in a paper with the largest number of students in the school (over 800 students). That paper is one of the foundation courses required for continuing study in psychology. Despite the size, nature, and, for many, the complexity of the subject, Marc has developed a framework for course design and delivery that overcomes these potential barriers. Displaying strong leadership both within and beyond the university, Marc has had an integral involvement with Victoria University’s Te Ropu Awhina support programme for Māori and Pacific Nations students in the Faculty of Science. He is regularly involved in school visits, on-campus visits, and presents or teaches at the invitation of outside organisations. Marc’s summary is that learning should be “challenging but enjoyable, not taken-for-granted but intriguing and fresh, sometimes unexpected but always intellectually satisfying”.

Good teaching is like good parenting – we want our charges to leave and make their way in the world able to effectively and independently do what we teach them, and ideally to exceed our hopes and expectations of them. To achieve this, teachers and parents must allow those in their care the opportunities to push the boundaries of the world around them, to learn where those boundaries are, and where their own boundaries lie.

Providing supportive opportunities can be harder than denying them or pretending that they’re unimportant. Opportunities can lead to failures (important lessons about what not to do) and skinned knees, but they allow for defining

experiences and memorable triumphs. The triumph and enjoyment of riding without training wheels can only happen if one has the opportunity in the first place, and there should always be the possibility that just this sort of triumph can come from good teaching.

“Students who haven’t seen a film on sexuality and communication prefer it to a lecture on history they haven’t heard...”
(Reynolds, 1977, p.82)

Apparently students may not enjoy learning about disciplinary history or research methods, particularly if they are required to, and in large classes. Yet history and methods are two foundational areas that define disciplinary

boundaries. Psychology students, on the other hand, want to learn about brains, and schizophrenia, and relationships – the psychology that intrigues them. Add to this that the classes in which these topics are taught tend to be both required AND large. The trick, then, is to take important disciplinary content that students may find unappealing, in a context they find unappealing, and present it in an engaging, fascinating and interactive manner. This is exactly the context and manner in which I try to teach – required classes of up to 800 students.

I love learning and teaching, so I want to facilitate the best learning context that I can, and to develop the knowledge and skills that help me. Learning should be challenging but enjoyable, not taken-for-granted but intriguing and fresh, sometimes unexpected but always intellectually satisfying. My own teaching has evolved and developed, first through trial and error (natural selection in teaching!) then as I started to develop an actual teaching philosophy in my search for a personal teaching style. Recently I have been influenced by research on the scholarship of teaching, and there I've been pleased to find support for at least some of the naïve principles that drive me.

At first-year, I teach Social Influence, History and Research Methods - one 'fun' content topic (an incomparable opportunity to teach students about the studies that had first inspired my own interest) and two topics that are foundational for understanding what follows (considered by many as not an incomparable opportunity, or at least not incomparably good). Yet research skills, and the ability to critically evaluate research, continue throughout our programme – through compulsory second and third-year papers, to a well-developed understanding of the role of science in contemporary psychology. This provides a scaffold for appreciation and evaluation of more recent critiques and alternatives that have developed in response to traditional methods.

Without the ability to critically evaluate research, student researchers risk being 'hoodwinked' by the more analytically sophisticated (i.e. me). An essential step on the path to independently and confidently evaluating one's own, and other's, research is to actually **do** research. Engaging in an activity makes it personally relevant, and personal relevance is a strong predictor of quality learning. This offers me opportunity, inspiration, and plain old fun, in dealing with the difficulties and triumphs of teaching.



My goals of teaching then, are to facilitate a learning experience that produces students who can

- appreciate the context of philosophical and ideological issues associated with different 'ways of knowing' in psychological research.
- implement the methodologies taught appropriately and to a high level.
- critically evaluate their own and others' work.

Above all, I really want people to find and enjoy their own place in my discipline, including confidence and self-efficacy to find out what they need to know and where to get it even after they are no longer part of my classes!

These goals occupy two levels – the aspiration to provide a context for learning about the doing and understanding of psychological research that assists people in actually continuing on to their own independent psychological research, but firstly to enthuse them with the desire and motivation to do so. Among the major principles that drive my teaching are:

Respect

One could prepare the perfect learning experience without that necessarily translating into effective learning if one doesn't respect and show respect for one's audience. I have always sought to remember my own student experience and to treat those who come into my class as individuals with their own histories, competencies, and interests. In large classes, students can feel like 'just another face in the crowd' so I always arrive at lectures early to chat, and explicitly invite them to introduce themselves to me before or after the lecture, during a weekly public lunch on the Kirk Overbridge, or in my open-door office hours. It's hard to remember 800 names, but I always ask the name of a student when they come to see me, or ask a question in class.

Engagement

Horses only drink if there's water and only if they can be drawn to it, and learning is predicated on first engaging student interest. Students hope to be engaged by what they are taught, and it falls to us to live up to that expectation, and reflect when it isn't happening. Enjoyment is a strong



motivator; I approach my teaching as a performance specifically designed to develop engagement through appropriate but entertaining illustration and a range of exercises, large-scale experiments, and demonstrations to hold student attention and illustrate lecture material. In-class demonstrations serve multiple positive functions, including attracting and holding attention when they might otherwise be drifting and creating active learning experiences that memorably bring to life demonstrated principles - course highlights that students and teachers can enjoy.

A framework for learning

Most of what I teach is novel, so I draw on the experience people bring to the classroom to illustrate my teaching, in effect hanging new material on the coat hooks of existing knowledge. Personal relevance is a powerful learning aid. I work to establish the relevance of new concepts by using topical analogies from everyday life and popular media - we know that such analogies function as aids for understanding, recall, and encouraging critical thinking. Psychological material is my narrative; I see my role in the classroom as a



narrator, and I deliberately construct my teaching persona around this. Classes are an interactive story, not about 'transmitting facts', but an apparently casual storytelling performance that is a part of the framework for learning. These stories have protagonists and antagonists, with motives and modus operandi, gravity and/or humour, all to be fleshed out as part of the story that is the meta-framework for course material.

Learning through doing

We learn better when we interact with course material. Classes include demonstrations using volunteers, think-pair-share and active listening exercises, and inquiry-based learning opportunities where students are invited to predict experiment outcomes where possible. We always discuss the outcome and its potential causes, because that is when demonstrations are most effective. My favourites include an apparent demonstration of mind-reading in which I predict the name (from a phonebook) that a student has selected, and dyeing my hair for the first class as an example of experimental manipulation that affects the way students perceive me. I always include significant empirical research components, wherever possible giving choice of research topic. As students advance, it is important that they are not simply guinea pigs for the 'research' they are required to summarise, but are the researchers – to 'own' their data. While it involves a lot of work, third-year students choose a cutting-edge topic to research and we collaborate to produce a manuscript that can be submitted for publication in 'real' journals.

Organisation and integration

Effective teaching starts before the students and teacher meet in the classroom for the first time. Courses should display integration and consistency across lectures, laboratories, and assessment. Ultimately, learning outcomes (grades, knowledge, etc) should reflect the capabilities developed and learning experienced, rather than an artefact of course dis/organisation. Even my use of humour in classes, though it seems spontaneous, is designed to address specific teaching goals such as illustrating a point, breaking the tension or routine, or as a cue for later recall. I strive to be a competent and organised educator, while trying not to look too organised – it's only a good performance if nobody realises it is one!

Ultimately students' success must be their own, but... the best teaching efforts facilitate students towards their own learning, and provide them with the tools and self-efficacy to continue to learn long after they are no longer a part of our courses and institutions.

The future...

Next year I'm looking forward to consolidating my teaching. That will involve attending the APA Teaching of Psychology, and HERDSA conferences in the US and Australia next year - meeting some of the people whose work has inspired and equipped me in my own teaching. More than that though, I'm really just looking forward to the start of the year, when I get to enjoy once again the thrill of performing for my large class and the opportunity to show that the world isn't always how we think it is!

PEER AND STUDENT COMMENTS

"I thought I would write to thank you for what I learned from you in the advanced research methods paper. What an excellent paper that was! It was by far the most useful paper of anything I took at an undergraduate level. I frequently find myself turning to the workbook we were required to compile (an inspired inclusion in our assessment!), both for my own purposes and to help others. It is an invaluable resource. Who would have known I'd end up actually using Cohen's Kappa?"

2006 email from a 2004 student

"I have looked to Marc as a role model in regards to pedagogical strategies for teaching

and approach Marc as a 'first-port-of-call' whenever I am in need of some expert advice. His ability to keep challenging himself in the 'how to' of teaching means he continually tries to improve and while doing so, motivates me to do the same"

David Gittings, Senior Tutor in Psychology

"Marc's overall manner and positive attitude toward students has helped to create an atmosphere where they are comfortable asking questions and seeking further guidance."

Dr. Andrew Robertson, tutor



SUSTAINED EXCELLENCE

Adrian Woodhouse

CATERING LECTURER ■ OTAGO POLYTECHNIC

Adrian commenced teaching seven years ago following a chance meeting with a previous lecturer. Adrian describes his teaching ambition as being to “inspire, motivate and teach students” in a way that enables him to “light the fire in their minds”. In order to achieve this goal, Adrian takes care to create a learning environment that embraces the diversity of his students and that ensures all students have the opportunity to contribute to and participate in the learning process. He regularly adopts an active, co-operative learning strategy in which students with different experiences and knowledge are paired, thus providing a collaborative learning effort. A particular strength of Adrian’s is his use of on-line technology that enables him to bring innovative approaches to his teaching thus providing flexibility in workplace learning practices. Remaining attentive and responsive to industry trends is vital in Adrian’s work. He is an active member of the New Zealand Chefs Association and works closely with industry. Adrian draws on feedback from colleagues, students and ITO moderators to reflect on and inform his practice.

Teaching offers me the privilege to be entrusted with the responsibility of ‘lighting the fire’ in the minds of my students. I believe that to be effective as a lecturer, one must create a safe and welcoming environment that is both interactive and collaborative. I see the classroom as a foundation for the promotion of practical industry applications as well as an environment to hone critical thinking skills.

Creating a Learning Environment

My teaching environment accommodates a variety of adult learning styles and encourages students to present their opinions while respecting the opinions of others. Giving all of my students a

voice in class provides them with the benefit of peer learning by enriching the course material with personal experiences and knowledge. It also allows them to take responsibility for their own learning and, therefore, enhances the integration of their new knowledge into practice. Because I have to meet diverse industry needs, I teach broad as well as specific skills. As an academic, I teach students with little or no industry experience through to those with considerable experience from many sectors of industry, including restaurants, cafes, hotels, corporate catering, rest-homes and student hostels. Each student brings different perspectives and consequently their needs and desired outcomes differ, depending on their ambitions.

For example, a student who works in a hostel may have an innate interest in the nutritional content and costing of a dish while a student with a restaurant background may be more interested in the creative and visual aspects. I encourage a learning environment where such diversity is valued and utilised.

Learning Styles

Many of my students identify as kinaesthetic learners. While most of my programme is centred on acquisition of practical skills, there is also theory content. One of the strategies I use to accommodate a kinaesthetic learning style during theory based lessons is to require the students to physically simulate the information being taught. One example involves teaching students the theory of how consommé is prepared: minced meat and egg whites are placed in a pot with stock which is unclarified and contains impurities, heat is then applied and the egg whites and meat coagulate, removing the impurities from within the stock.

What results is a mass of coagulated protein and a crystal clear soup. In the practical simulation I allocate roles to students such as heat, meat, egg whites, stock and stock impurities. The ingredient students are placed in the centre of the classroom and mixed up. I then ask the heat-labelled students to work with the group of mixed up ingredient students and show the resulting effect. The heat students get the students labelled as meat, egg white and stock impurities to connect together, leaving only the students labelled as stock free. It is a physical and fun display of what occurs within the soup as heat is applied while addressing the needs of a kinaesthetic learner.

Working Collaboratively

In order to succeed in the hospitality industry, it is imperative to work closely with others and to value team work. To enable me to foster these aspects, I implement a co-operative learning environment as part of my holistic approach to the classroom. Students are provided with opportunities to work collaboratively and to process their learning reflectively which enables them to share experiences and develop a wider appreciation of industry needs.

Recently I taught a lesson on the subject of preparing and cooking fish in a commercial kitchen. I devised an exercise in



which I placed the students in pairs and asked them to develop a menu based on fish preparation techniques that we had covered earlier. What made the exercise interesting is that I paired students with different industry backgrounds, for example one from a rest-home with one with restaurant experience. I asked them to include the cookery techniques of frying, baking, steaming and poaching. To value the contribution and work histories of my students, I suggested that they not include any of the dishes prepared during class but base them on their own experiences. What resulted was a collaborative learning effort. From their combined experience they created a new dish and learned from each other.

On-line Support

Most of my students are high users of technology and on-line learning allows me to individualise my curriculum and customise it to the needs of my students and local Industry. I make use of on-line tools in my day-to-day teaching practice to create an environment of comfort and familiarity as well as provide an expanded access to resources. I have developed a blog site where students can view movies of dishes they will prepare during the course. The site also contains footage of past students training for and competing in cookery competitions (both local and national) and theme dinners held over previous years. While useful as a flexible learning tool, it also allows students to view practical content that is taught during the course prior to it being formally introduced. Recently I have taken this initiative one step further and converted our practical movie clips to a format that allows students to download them to their iPods. This allows the student to watch a movie clip of a summative assessment without the use of an internet connection. Many students have already commented that they are watching assessments while riding the bus to Polytechnic or on their break at work.

Enriching the Unit Standards

To try and overcome the restriction of working with a unit standards based course, I employ strategies that enable students to develop additional skills that unit standards do not recognise. Perhaps the best example is a

component of the course that requires students to work together in a restaurant. The Polytechnic operates a fifty seat restaurant which is open to the public for sixteen weeks of the year. Students are placed in small teams which are responsible for certain sections of the menu (including menu design). In their groups they decide on roles which include Head Chef, Sous Chef, Chef de Partie to Commis Chef, and allocate duties and set timelines. The restaurant provides the students with opportunities to receive formative and summative feedback about the food from paying customers. At the end of each service the "Head Chef" visits each of the tables and thanks the patrons for dining at the restaurant. This interaction provides customers with an opportunity to give direct feedback on their dining experience. In conjunction with this verbal feedback, written feedback is also obtained in the form of a small evaluation that each table completes describing their dining experience. The "Head Chef" collates the feedback from the dining room and reports a summary to the class at the lesson debrief. The majority of feedback is positive and encouraging and the direct effect is that the students continue to build individual confidence and belief in their capability while empowering the class as a whole. The students are asked to reflect upon the suggested improvement comments and implement changes during the following restaurant service which provides students with an opportunity to self assess their performance and implement the required changes. After the changes are implemented the students can collate new formative feedback from the restaurant and track the success of their changes

The Future

The award will help my plan to continue to upskill as both a culinary practitioner and as an educator. I plan to further develop my expertise in flexible delivery modes, and although I already have a Certificate in Adult Teaching, I will enrol in a Graduate Certificate in Tertiary Learning and Teaching.

I will also upskill in advanced patisserie and further my M-learning work, including the production of podcasts which students can view prior to their face-to-face sessions.



PEER AND STUDENT COMMENTS

Throughout my education I have never had a teacher that has offered me the support and inspiration that Adrian did. I think what makes Adrian such a respected tutor is that he not only treats you as a student but also as an individual, who both share in the same dedication and passion for the industry. Not only is he thorough and informative, his door is always open and through motivation encourages you to work to the highest standard.

Morgan Laurence Thacker
Level 4 Cookery graduate 2007

Adrian's approach to teaching embraces the diversity of his students and he constantly finds ways to utilise the experiences of all students. Adrian creates a positive learning environment where students are able to contribute and participate in the learning process. One of the strengths of Adrian's teaching is his ability to develop the students' critical thinking and provide them with a course which is closely linked to the needs of the industry.

Steve Ellwood
Cookery Lecturer, Otago Polytechnic

As a student of Adrian's I believe he always made student learning a priority. In my opinion Adrian is an incredible teacher with great communication skills and flexible learning options, setting students up for a great future within the hospitality industry. Adrian saw an amazing opportunity within the internet using blogs and youtube.com. He created videos

on a daily basis recording practical classes and making them available for students to refer back to for assessment. Not only was this a great opportunity for flexible learning for the students but it still offers assistance now we are in the industry.

Jodi Ball
Level 4 Cookery graduate 2007

Students enjoy how Adrian relates the theory component to real life anecdotes of his industry experience. Students also acknowledge the lengths to which Adrian has gone to make his teaching accessible and inclusive for differing learning styles. Adrian applies an open door policy that allows the students to be dealt with as individuals. Fellow staff members comment on his helpfulness, his mentoring of new lecturers, his positive attitude to his work, and openness to new ideas for teaching

Tony Heptinstall
Programme Manager Cookery, Otago Polytechnic

Adrian is constantly in touch with the hospitality industry through regular Chefs Association meetings. Adrian ensures that local chefs have input into his students' training through their inclusion in course development, demonstrations, motivational talks and restaurant visits. The students speak highly of him and enjoy him as a teacher. He has inspired many including myself to carry on with a career in hospitality.

Mark Lane
Chef /Owner, High Tide Restaurant

ISBN 978-0-473-14265-0 (Print)
ISBN 978-0-473-14266-7 (Online)

Contact details

Ako Aotearoa National Office
c/- Massey University Wellington Campus
Private Box 756
Wellington
New Zealand

Phone: +64 4 801 0808
Fax: +64 4 801 2682
Email: akoaootearoa@massey.ac.nz
Web: www.akoaootearoa.ac.nz