

## EQUITY AND CULTURAL DIVERSITY AUDIT 2005

### Appendix 2: Some examples of Good Practice

#### FACULTIES

##### ARCHITECTURE, BUILDING AND PLANNING

- As a professional faculty with a large international student cohort, ABP has always endeavoured to ensure that the curriculum meets the needs of all students. A range of subjects with an Asian focus, a cross-cultural subject, off-shore intensives and international fieldtrips are offered.
- The Learning Support Group, established in 2005, works with continuing and sessional academic staff to ensure that teaching and assessment are culturally inclusive.
- All academic staff are required to note their availability and contact details in subject documents to enable students to consult them individually. From 2005, Design tutorial classes have been capped at 16 students to ensure that students receive individual attention during class time.
- Postgraduate students from diverse backgrounds are employed to increase diversity in teaching.

##### ARTS

- The Faculty's Academic Programs Committee (APC) chaired by the Associate Dean (Academic Program) continues to monitor the Faculty's syllabus and new subject and course proposals regarding issues of gender, class, ethnicity and sexuality. APC reviews approximately 25% of all existing subjects each year as a function of the subject change process.
- Discussion of cultural diversity in the teaching context is a prominent component of the Faculty's Tutor Induction Program.
- A total of 336 EFTSL were engaged in study in subjects with an 'Asian focus' (Asian Studies EFTSL Premium). This count, received from Financial Operations, does not include MIALS subjects. Thus considering this result, as well as taking into consideration MIALS subjects, the Faculty of Arts has exceeded the overall target of 100 EFTSU.
- The Faculty met its *Access Melbourne* and *Access Melbourne* Scholarship targets.
- In 2005, the Faculty made available funds to departments and schools for all first year students to be interviewed on a one-on-one basis, in each of their subjects, to discuss their progress and transition.
- The Faculty has enrolments of 15 or less in tutorial classes in 184 undergraduate and 115 postgraduate subjects.
- The Faculty values its role as host to the largest cohort of Indigenous (CIE) students and *Access Melbourne* students (233 EFTSL in 2005) and intends to meet its AM target of 203 EFTSL for 2006 intake.

##### ECONOMICS AND COMMERCE

- Within several subject areas, where group work is a requirement of the tutorial program, additional workshops and required reading are structured. This is to ensure that these tutors in particular are equipped to assist students in the development of diverse teams/groups, negotiate differences in the formation of small groups and are able to troubleshoot when differences emerge.

- Administrative staff members are all trained in cultural diversity.
- The Faculty has introduced a Week One tutorial in a core first year subject, Introductory Economics, and a core second year subject, Organisational Behaviour. The incorporation of a Week One tutorial is to provide an opportunity for tutors to ensure greater connectedness among students, and between students and the tutor. The focus, therefore, is very much on attending to the social aspects required for better small group learning, and not academic content.
- Audio streaming of lectures conducted through the Faculty TLU and iLecture assist international students if they have not understood an aspect of their lectures.
- The Faculty online tutor also assists international students, in so far as this tool allows them to view other students' questions and answers and to ask questions in a non-threatening environment. There is a wide variety of online learning tools, including online feedback and assessment tests, Marlina and CALM. These are useful for international students as well as facilitating student learning generally.
- The introduction of Academic Orientation continued to be a huge success in Economics and Commerce. In 2005, 1200 students participated in a series of lectures given by the subject coordinators in key first semester areas, and in mock tutorials facilitated by tutors. There was greater inclusion of major student societies in both the management of the program, and in the coordination of the social program. Academic staff and senior students were well represented in the overall program.
- All Faculty undergraduate subjects have feedback to students by week 6. Many subjects have online revision and assessment tests to assist students in understanding the degree of their knowledge in the subjects they are studying.

## EDUCATION

- Drawing from the findings of the *Students from Asia: Issues in Teaching and Learning* report, the Faculty of Education offered a number of cultural diversity professional development opportunities for academic and general staff in 2005. For academic staff, two workshops highlighted classroom strategies for inclusive teaching and learning practices and supporting the needs of international students in the classroom.
- Members of the Faculty are actively engaged in several projects geared towards improving teaching and learning for cultural diversity in the Faculty. In 2005, the following four projects were funded under the Cultural Diversity Infusion Grants scheme:
  - BECE 1 Teaching and Professional Practice Tuition Scheme for International Students
  - A cultural diversity training scheme for University Teaching and Professional Practice Supervisors and Field Supervisors of International BECE students
  - Thesis Writing Circle
  - Using Diversity Dolls in Early Childhood Settings.
- Studies in Education focus on how students, as practising teachers, should encourage diversity in school classrooms and the Faculty places considerable importance on developing an inclusive curriculum.
- The Faculty has identified a specific need for international students undertaking school placements and provides a specialised preparation program for these students prior to placement. The Faculty also utilises tutors who have been trained to support international students and has identified schools that provide the best support for international students.
- All students in School Experience are required to prepare a written response to their placement evaluation report, which also involves individual consultation with their academic staff member.

## ENGINEERING

- In order to determine the language competency of international students, undergraduate and postgraduate students all take the DELA. As a result of the test, students may be referred on to support programs at LLSU or Engineering Study Skills seminars. An academic writing task has been implemented as part of the Faculty

Transition Program to replace ESSA. Students performing at a particular standard were referred to the Engineering Study Skills Session and a range of LLSU support.

- To assist students who have a physical and/or mental disability the Faculty has staff members who have undertaken the necessary training to work as Disability Liaison Officer and Mental Health Contact Officer. Staff are able to negotiate alternative examination arrangements, alternative formats for work materials and extensions for assignments.
- In regard to *Access Melbourne*, statistics collected have determined that 25% of rural students do not have access to Specialist Mathematics. The Faculty is currently reviewing its pre-requisites in line with a total curriculum revision that supports equity and diversity initiatives.
- Faculty scholarships/bursaries are available for disadvantaged students to assist with their progression through their course.
- The Career Mentoring Program (Engineering) matches up third and fourth year students with professionals in industry. The purpose is to aid a student's transition into the workforce and facilitate professional networking skills.
- How the relevant policies are embedded into Faculty planning is currently being reviewed. The outcome of this review will be implemented in the revised Faculty Plan.

## LAW

- The Faculty undertook a major review of the LLB curriculum in 2005 for implementation in 2006. The curriculum review covered the designation and broad content of subjects, the order in which subjects would be delivered and the principles that underpin the optional program. The review encompassed other matters as well, including the development of skills and other cross-cutting influences in some subjects (including Indigenous issues, comparative approaches and intercultural perspectives), extracurricular features that might enhance the quality of the educational experience for LLB students, and the institutional arrangements necessary to retain a balanced, integrated and forward-looking curriculum for the future. A particular focus of the LLB curriculum review was the University's Graduate Attributes, including the need to develop in graduates an international awareness and openness to the world, based on understanding and appreciation of social and cultural diversity and respect for human rights and dignity.
- The International Law Students Society, with membership open to all law undergraduate students, organises a Buddy-Mentor Scheme that matches later year students with first year students to help guide them through the cultural and educational transition.
- International graduate students are encouraged to undertake DELA testing and to meet with the Director, Postgraduate Language Support. This is compulsory in the JD program. Weekly seminars are conducted during the first half of the semester and individual appointments may be made to discuss language and learning issues. Students are also advised as to the availability of University services.
- It is compulsory for all international LLB students to undertake DELA testing. Support is provided by a designated Language and Learning Skills Adviser from the Language and Learning Skills Unit (LLSU) including individual appointments and seminars. All first year students in 2005 were also required to undertake a short written exercise in class within the subjects HPL 1 and TPL 1 during the first week of semester. This Faculty initiative was designed to identify students with language difficulties. Over 40 students were identified, with students receiving a letter from the Associate Dean (Undergraduate) referring them on to the LLSU program.
- LLB and JD Guest Lecture series included speakers discussing topics of relevance to equity, diversity and access issues.
- The Faculty conducted a seminar on creating a pro bono culture with the Law School.
- The Faculty appoints Equal Opportunity Liaison Officers (academic staff members) for students from Indigenous; International and Non-English speaking; Queer (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Intersex); Mature Age; and Disabilities backgrounds.
- A close relationship has been developed between the Indigenous Students Liaison Officer and the CIE in providing support for Indigenous students, including preparation of a regular newsletter for Indigenous law students, graduates, staff at CIE, key Law School Faculty.

- Besides the orientation program, the Postgraduate Law Students Association (PLSA) conducts a Welcome Dinner each semester and various functions throughout the year. International students are actively encouraged to attend. The Faculty encourages international graduate students to take maximum advantage of their time here. Opportunities include the following:
  - A program of tours and briefings to introduce graduate students to Australian legal institutions
  - Networking opportunities for graduate students with established careers in their home country
  - Active involvement in the Postgraduate Law Students Association.
- In addition to orientation activities the Faculty offers support for LLB students from a diverse range of backgrounds, to assist them to make the transition to University, including the LLSU/Faculty initiative – a separate program for LLB students developed in AIRport (web-based transition initiative). The program explains to students, in an interactive manner, what first year teachers' expectations are, and how to approach learning in a seminar format.
- A majority of compulsory subjects offered in the LLB utilise formal progressive assessment and detailed feedback. The Faculty is committed to increasing the level of feedback provided to undergraduate students, particularly during their first year of study. Many subject reading guides now include detailed discussion of what constitutes feedback and the many ways it can be provided both formally and informally. Additional strategies to improve the quantity and quality of feedback were developed and implemented during 2004/2005. The Faculty's Undergraduate Studies Committee is currently monitoring the effectiveness of these strategies.

#### **LAND AND FOOD RESOURCES**

- A new program, planned with China Agricultural University, will see 10 Chinese students per year studying a range of subjects, taught at Parkville in the undergraduate courses offered by the Faculty. This program may extend to other universities in China. Undergraduate subject content will be reviewed especially for transition year subjects for these students from China.
- A number of undergraduate candidates were provided with financial assistance to undertake third and fourth year research projects in South East Asia.
- In order to develop an inclusive curriculum that considers the experience of the culturally diverse student cohort - including international students - certain subjects such as "The Global Seminar " are conducted where international universities and their students take part in the subject and various discussions.
- Commencing undergraduate students have study group facilitators, usually postgraduate students or more senior students, from a range of cultures and disciplines and this helps build on the Faculty's international student cohort as an educational resource.

#### **MDHS**

- The curriculum – particularly at an undergraduate level and in Medicine - has been licensed overseas and has been carefully examined for cultural awareness.
- The predominance of teaching in the Faculty is small group – at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels but particularly with PBL (Problem Based Learning) teaching at undergraduate levels.
- There is a very close integration of the international students in the Faculty and the concentration on PBL and small group teaching assists with reducing any distinction between international students and local students. The close contact PBL tutors and academic staff have with students enables them to communicate the expected learning practices at UOM. Note that the PBL tutors have specific training in this area.
- There is constant feedback from PBLs and clinical staff during the clinical placements.
- The Faculty believes the small group teaching and close pastoral contact is a very important part of the support available for disadvantaged students, to assist with their progression through their course. There is also an Indigenous Liaison Officer to help Indigenous students specifically.

## MUSIC

- Guidelines which communicate the expected learning practices at UOM, including issues such as the UOM policy on plagiarism, approaches to assessment, group and individual work and the student /supervisor relationship issues, are provided in print form in the Undergraduate Course and Subject Guide and are reiterated in individual subject guides, in print and on the website.
- Time commitment statements are published in the Course and Subject Guide, reiterated in individual subject guides and further mentioned in verbal introductions to subjects.
- In many Music subjects international students are encouraged to become a learning resource through accounts and examples of their own experiences. Many have contributed valuable physical resources such as providing audio and video recordings from their home countries; by doing research for domestic students when they return home for holidays; by demonstrating traditional musical skills from their home countries.

## SGS

- The International Postgraduate Orientation week program includes explanations of the expected learning practices at UOM (eg UOM policy on plagiarism, approaches to assessment, group and individual work and the student /supervisor relationship), as does the online learning program, *Postgraduate Essentials* which all students are encouraged to undertake in their first year of candidature.
- SGS conducts supervisors' workshops *Cross-Cultural Issues in Supervision* to help supervisors understand the influence of culture in the student-supervisor relationship. Participants learn the skills and knowledge required to successfully resolve conflict and handle mismatched expectations. New supervisors undertake compulsory training that covers a range of issues including culture.
- SGS runs a series of seminars and workshops for international and ESL postgraduate students (Academic Orientation Program for International Postgraduate Students – AOPIPS) throughout year, including a writing skills program that is run in conjunction with LLSU.
- The publication *Eleven Practices of Effective Supervision* also highlights the importance of assessing and meeting the particular learning needs of international students.

## SCIENCE

- Continuous review of the curriculum is undertaken by Departments and coordinated by the Faculty's Academic Programs Committee (APC). For example, in 2005, APC, in partnership with relevant teaching staff in the Faculties of Science and Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences, conducted a thorough review of the entire program in the Bachelor of Biomedical Science. One of the key issues addressed in the review was ensuring that the curricula, teaching styles and assessment cater for the diverse needs of the current cohort of students enrolled in that degree.
- Where problems or deficits are identified the Faculty endeavours to address these through curriculum or programmatic responses. The Bachelor of Biomedical Science Review has led to changes in the integration of key disciplines in the course as well as pointing to the need for further development of strategies to address the needs of students from non-English speaking backgrounds.
- The Faculty supports a group of students known as the International Science Students Advisory group that encourages and receives participation from both local and international students on many aspects of student life. One of the successful initiatives of this group has been the development of 'Discover Honours', a program designed to inform students about the Faculty's Honours programs and encourage them to consider Honours as a possibility once they have finished their undergraduate Science or Information Systems degree.
- To encourage the uptake of ESL subjects for credit in this cohort of students, first year teachers in Science have collaborated with staff from the Department of Linguistics and Applied Linguistics to develop a subject (Science Communication – ESL) that uses

Science content to teach relevant academic language skills, to be offered for the first time in semester 1, 2006.

- The strategies which the Faculty sees as being leading examples of good practice in this area are:
  - Transition program including all 101 programs
  - Enrolment questionnaire
  - International Science Students' Advisory Group
  - IS tutor training (to be adopted by other departments in 2006)
  - Faculty of Science Newsletter for Students
  - The Faculty has developed a formal policy for responding to requests for special consideration and alternative examination arrangements on religious and cultural grounds
  - The Faculty of Science was the only faculty participating in a pilot program offering peer support to students facing the Unsatisfactory Progress Committee
  - The Faculty runs a study skills session and a student panel, where new students are able to come and ask questions of later year students about their courses and university life. Following this session students are invited to attend lunch with first year staff.
- In 2005, the Faculty piloted a mid-semester Students at Risk program in semester 1. Students were identified on the basis of their results in mid-semester assessment in first year subjects and those judged to be at risk of failing were contacted by email and provided with tips and advice for improving their performance in that semester, as well as an invitation to meet with a Student Adviser.
- The Faculty and Departments have disability contact officers. This group meets once per semester with staff from the Disability Liaison Unit to share information and ideas about the process of negotiating reasonable adjustments for students and generally supporting students with disabilities in the Faculty.
- The position of Manager, Student Access, Equity and Diversity is a tangible demonstration of the Faculty's commitment to equity and diversity issues. This position is involved in the development of Faculty responses to cultural diversity planning, to the Disability Action Plan and to the need to increase participation of students from various equity groups.

## **VETERINARY SCIENCE**

- The relevant policies are embedded into Faculty planning via the Faculty's Operational Plan.
- Curricula are determined by professional accreditation requirements. International relevance is given in relation to diseases that are exotic to Australia, but which may be endemic in the home countries of our international students.
- Two suitable staff members have been appointed as International Student Mentors.
- Questionnaires completed by the students following O'Week are analysed to make improvements for the subsequent year.
- The Faculty appoints veterinarians as Academic Associates to supervise veterinary clinical work placements. Individual students can seek advice from staff on placements. The Faculty also provides the 'Practitioner in Residence' to assist students with their transition to the workforce.

## **AMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENTS**

### **STUDENT ADMINISTRATIVE SYSTEMS**

- Web developments have enabled increased access to services. For example, examination timetables and examination seat numbers are available on the web.
- The Department is looking to develop an improved class allocation system and make examination results available through SMS.

## **INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS**

- Special interview skills workshops were introduced for IS students to help them perform to their best in interview.
- International Student Services (ISS) initiated and developed the Language and Cultural Exchange Program (LCEP) where students who are native speakers of French, Mandarin and Japanese students engaged with local students learning the language, through a series of activities.
- ISS is involved in and partially funds the Postgraduate Social Morning Teas organised by UMPA for international and non-international students (ISS).
- Careers and Employment (C&E) have regular discussions about the impact of culture on job seeking behaviour of IS students and design of strategies to address this.
- Staff training on an individual as well as group basis. Examples of sessions attended include: Increasing your Cross Cultural Effectiveness, Victorian Transcultural Psychiatry Unit (Sessions on Mental Health issues as relevant to International Students) and Welfare and Duty of Care with International Students (Session delivered by Counselling staff).
- C&E run a number of career planning and development programs that deliberately integrate IS and other students eg Student Ambassador Leadership program, Mentoring programs, Higher Education Workforce Skills Olympiad.
- The ISS fortnightly email Newsletter highlights relevant services at key junctures in the academic year.

## **LANGUAGE SUPPORT**

- Language and academic support for international students and for students from NESB, and educationally disadvantaged background students continues to increase with the development of enhanced programs and services through the Language and Learning Skills Unit. This is in part due to the establishment of two service agreements for additional on-site support to faculties in 2005, as well as the development and launch of the Academic Interactive Resources Portal (AIRport), an online academic skills and writing program. Two key initiatives in 2005, AIRport and the establishment of faculty service agreements, will continue in 2006. The LLSU, in collaboration with Law and Science, will launch two faculty-specific online resources for first year students in February 2006. The LLSU will also commence service specifically for international and NESB students on-site to the Faculty of Education as one of the suite of faculty service agreements.
- As of 26 October 2005, the LLSU provided undergraduate and postgraduate students at the Parkville campus as well as non-Parkville sites (teaching hospitals and remote/rural campuses) with 2590 hours of individual tutorials, 848.5 hours of workshops and 219.5 hours of on-line tuition as part of AIRport. These figures represent a 15% increase in individual tutorial hours, and 20% increase in workshop hours when compared with the 2004 statistics.

## **STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

- The University is implementing the key compliance issues identified in the Access Audit. \$200,000 has been allocated for this purpose each year from 2005 to 2007.
- A policy on students with disabilities integrated within a compliance strategy for the 2005 Disability Standards for Education has been prepared and will be implemented in 2006.
- Improved student feedback mechanisms introduced as part of the Action Plan have identified additional strategies for improving the participation of students with disabilities including:
  - Real Time Transcription Pilot commencing in semester one 2006 to provide improved access to information for students with a hearing impairment

- Appointment of a project officer to develop protocols and guidelines for University staff in dealing with students who have complex needs arising from mental health conditions
- The integration of adaptive technology software and hardware with University computer renewal processes has ensured that all adaptive technology workstations are comparable with other student computer facilities.