

BA CONFERENCE 2017

UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND, BRISBANE

25-26 SEPTEMBER, 2017

Abstracts – Poster & Pecha Kucha Presentations

Pecha Kucha Presentations

1. JxD: lessons from interdisciplinary teaching <i>Dr Skye Doherty</i>	2
2. Cirrus: a teaching & learning platform for innovative digital assignments <i>Ms Kerry Kilner & Dr Natalie Collie</i>	2
3. The adventures of HASS Crew <i>Ms Clarissa Dharmeseta & Ms Ellen Dearden</i>	3

Poster Presentations

1. The Need for a Mentoring Program in the Bachelor of Arts Honours Year <i>Ms Emma Cooke</i>	4
2. Exploring BA students expectations using Social Media <i>Ms Carmen Garratt & Ms Yitong (Coco) Bu</i>	4
3. Blended Learning Boot Camp: Professional Development to enhance active learning pedagogies <i>Ms Meredith Hinze</i>	5
4. Tracking Changes in the Bachelor of Arts Program Across Australia <i>Ms Zoe Winder</i>	6

Pecha Kucha Presentations

4:30 – 5:00pm

1. JxD: lessons from interdisciplinary teaching

Dr Skye Doherty

UQ's Journalism Design course began as a cross-faculty collaboration between humanities and information technology. By teaming up journalism and interaction design students the course aimed to build understanding and competencies in fields that are not typically connected. The project was successful in many ways: it facilitated collaboration and pushed students to explore new ideas and practices. However, at times the leap was too great and some struggled to develop core skills in the new domain. As creativity and human values become increasingly important to the development of technology and computation, interdisciplinary courses could become more common. This poster explores lessons from this initiative and how they might apply more broadly.

2. Cirrus: a teaching & learning platform for innovative digital assignments

Ms Kerry Kilner & Dr Natalie Collie

In 2016 and 2017, the University of Queensland funded the development of a new teaching and learning environment using, in part, the technology and content management affordances of the AustLit resource. Cirrus allows academics to embed into their courses technology-enhanced learning activities such as text, image and video annotation to develop close reading and interpretation skills, or online exhibition and illustrated long form writing options. Integrated with AustLit's publication platform, Cirrus also provides students with an opportunity for publication in an annual Best of student work. Find out more at: <http://cirrus.austlit.edu.au> and watch a video explainer here. The poster and Pechakucha sessions would reveal the ways that Cirrus has been used at UQ in many courses in HASS demonstrating the value of using these innovative assessment techniques in the BA.

3. The adventures of HASS Crew

Ms Clarissa Dharmeseta & Ms Ellen Dearden

We'll be talking about an 'unfamiliar' approach at UQ – students helping students, and how a student lead, student delivered program attempted to reach out to new students, welcome them to HASS and connect them to their new environment. There were some discoveries on this adventure and a some plans for student lead approaches being laid for 2018.

Poster Presentations

4:30 – 5:00pm

1. The Need for a Mentoring Program in the Bachelor of Arts Honours Year

Ms Emma Cooke

It is in society's interest to have the best and brightest minds researching, problem solving, and addressing challenges of the future, yet study progression is determined largely by social structures rather than an individual's merit. I will outline my honours experience, apply a sociological perspective to my personal problem and identify a social issue, and propose a solution in the form of an honours mentoring program. My honours year experience was stressful; however, I was lucky to receive informal mentoring from my honours supervisor, and I am now delighted to be in the early stages of my PhD. Research on the experiences of Australian honours students finds that students lack knowledge of what honours will entail, and struggle with intense workloads and transitions into new learning environments, which contributes to emotionally overwhelming experiences (Allan, 2011). The quality of relationships with supervisors and classmates significantly influences students' honours experiences (Allan, 2011; Kite et al., 2012). Implementing a group mentoring program would allow students to share their aspirations, build networks, and receive mentoring from PhD students and other academics. This intervention will make the BA more compelling and hopefully result in greater and more diverse groups of students pursuing further research.

References:

- Allan, C. (2011). Exploring the experience of ten Australian Honours students. *Higher Education Research & Development*, 30(4), 421-433.
- Kite, J., Russo, S., Couch, P., & Bell, L. (2012). The Honours Year—A Reflection on the Experience from Four Former Students. *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, 36(1), 165-177.
-

2. Exploring BA students expectations using Social Media

Ms Carmen Garratt & Ms Yitong (Coco) Bu

With the innovative economy nowadays, employers seek workers who can demonstrate logical thinking, emotional intelligence and the capacity to adapt to new ideas – all skills inherent to HASS. However, HASS disciplines have tended to operate in isolation, competing for status and resources. This project aims to assist the overarching project to articulate a value proposition for the BA program by investigating what students expect to learn as part of the BA program and what they expect to do with their degree after they complete the program. It seeks to explore what kinds of experience, knowledge, skills and mindsets that BA students anticipate will come from engaging in a BA program, and translate the value of a BA program from students to educators, educational institutions and employers. This project uses popular social media both as a research field and as a research tool to engage

participants in conversations. By the end of the project, we hope to establish a sustained network of students and alumni concerned with broadening conversations across disciplines and programs. We hope to provide a critical evaluation of the graduate outcomes of a BA program and re-imagine the place of HASS disciplines and BA in the contemporary higher education context and in a future world of work.

3. Blended Learning Boot Camp: Professional Development to enhance active learning pedagogies

Ms Meredith Hinze

The Arts eLearning/eTeaching unit supports Faculty of Arts teaching staff at The University of Melbourne, integrate technology in their teaching and learning. The design of the new Arts West building teaching spaces reflects the shift in the humanities and social science disciplines to create an environment conducive to supporting active learning. Cochrane and Narayan (2016, p. 140) argue towards new forms of the professional development of academic staff that models “active participation within authentic contexts supporting a culture of pedagogical change”. Successful approaches to staff professional development need to incorporate concrete strategies that address these concerns, and be open to not only full-time, ongoing staff, but also part-time and sessional teaching staff. Key challenges to be addressed are upskilling staff in digital literacies and practical pedagogies, so that staff can better facilitate embedding digital literacies in student learning, student curated and created digital content, and assessment involving creation of digital content. A pre-semester three-day Blended Learning Boot Camp with teaching staff has proven to be a successful approach for transforming eTeaching/eLearning professional development in the Faculty of Arts, at the University of Melbourne, fostering design thinking, tangible and incremental changes to enhance active learning pedagogies. Teaching Staff are inspired and supported to explore and implement eLearning approaches and innovative tools in their teaching. The model provides an authentic experiential learning process, through focused intensive work. The program aims to support staff through practical skill-building, thinking through learning designs, and optimising the relationship between the virtual (LMS) space and the classroom physical space. This poster describes the planning, development and outcomes of this professional development approach. Case studies from the inaugural Boot Camp are presented and a QR code on the poster links through to the promotional video for Blended Learning Boot Camp.

4. Tracking Changes in the Bachelor of Arts Program Across Australia

Ms Zoe Winder

With Deanne Gannaway as my supervisor, I am adding a historical analysis of changes to the BA program in Australia since 2008. In particular we are interested in the increase in program level core courses as well as Work Integrated Learning (WIL) within the BA program. Through this analysis we seek to collate changes across 36 Australian institutions and identify emerging trends throughout the last decade.

I am wanting to present my findings to the conference as a poster presentation to show the current data I have collected so far. My aim is to combat the widespread conception that the Bachelor of Arts is a 'stepping stone' program by showing the areas in which the BA is thriving as a stand-alone program. The BA, in many respects, is a comprehensive program which produces graduates with strongly developed skills of communication and critical thinking. Further, as this study is beginning to show, graduates also acquire real-world experience through WIL programs during their degree.
