

Editorial

Feature Interview

The *Feature* in this issue is a conversation with Richard James, a highly respected Australian academic with extensive experience in research and policy development on the First Year Experience. Richard discusses the inevitability of universal participation in tertiary education and its impact on the style of participation, student diversity, the shifting focus of decision-making on standards and credentialism; and addresses the challenges posed by these and related issues for universities and the First Year Experience, along with possible solutions.

Articles

A number of empirical articles focus on aspects of academic literacy:

Shelly Beatty and Maureen Buckingham from Edith Cowan University and Ashok Collins from the University of Western Australia discuss a strategy to address the declining rates of English language proficiency amongst first year students and the challenges around attracting at-risk students to engage in these programs. Academic literacy is further explored in a discipline specific context by Lorinda Palmer and colleagues from the University of Newcastle, New South Wales. The authors detail a case study which develops an academic literacy profile of undergraduate nursing students at the beginning and end of their first semester. And finally in this cluster, Sophie Goldingay and her co-authors from Deakin University in Victoria provide a range of recommendations for sustainability around initiatives aimed at embedding academic skill development in the curriculum and advocate a socially inclusive approach. The authors stress

that such an approach requires collaboration between teaching staff and the academic literacy specialists in the institution.

Sarah O'Shea from the University of Wollongong and Cathy Stone from Open Universities Australia draw upon the metaphor of the hero's journey to analyse stories about mature-aged women commencing in higher education and how they navigate their transition into learning. The paper was originally an invited presentation at the 16th International First Year in Higher Education Conference in 2013 and the editors are pleased to be able to publish the article which received considerable interest at the event.

Two conceptual articles provide a methodological balance. Sorrel Penn-Edwards from Griffith University and Sharn Donnison from the University of the Sunshine Coast in Queensland, in a thought-provoking conceptual discussion, propose a fourth generation approach to transition pedagogy suggesting university-community partnerships. Given the considerable influence of emotional and motivational factors on student engagement, Stephen Larmar and Jason Lodge from Griffith University in Brisbane, Australia propose a model that focuses on developing a clearer connection between transitional strategies and learning approaches that assist students in understanding how they learn.

Finally, and reflecting the ongoing interest in analytics, Andrew Harvey and Michael Luckman's analysis of attrition in the first year of a Bachelor of Arts course at La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia highlights two correlating factors: course preference; and first year university achievement, while Jesse Kokaua and colleagues

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from the University of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand, report on the development of a pre-enrolment screening tool to inform targeted support services in the first year.

Practice Reports

In Perth, Australia, Murdoch University's First Year Advisor Network (FYAN) is the context of two separate practice reports accepted for this issue - and continues the dissemination of outcomes from this program previously detailed in this journal (Volume 3, Issue 1 and Volume 4, Issue 2). Firstly, Janine Wojcieszek and colleagues detail the various initiatives underway to improve collaboration and collegiality among professional and academic staff involved in FYAN. Secondly, the challenge of student engagement in transition programs are explored by Ann Lefroy and her colleagues. Murdoch's *UniEdge* program has undergone several iterations since pilot activity in 2011 and the authors note the importance of continual program evolution to respond to the changes in cohort groups over time.

Caroline Lenette from Griffith University discusses cross-cultural teaching in a first year subject and draws on expertise in cultural safety, which arose from the experiences of Māori nursing students' in Aotearoa/New Zealand. Similarly, Lisa Thomas and Jennifer Heath from the University of

Wollongong in New South Wales, Australia detail the development of a website as part of an institutional strategy to address and support socially inclusive teaching. Support for teaching staff is also discussed in a co-teaching mentor case study for first year lecturers at Curtin University in Perth. Authors Kent Turkich, Shane Greive and Paul Cozens discuss the potential for such a model not only for teacher evaluation activities but around student retention.

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