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WELCOME & VUECR NEWS

Welcome to the first Research Matters bulletin for 2007.

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS (VUECR)

An exciting new research initiative, the Victoria University Early Career Researchers (VUECR), has been recently established by several VU early career researchers, with the full support of the Office for Research. The VUECR would now like to advise and invite all interested and relevant researchers to participate in this initiative. Please contact the committee for more information.

Mission statement:

VUECR is committed to excellence in research. VUECR has been established by a network of Level A and Level B academics who joined VU in 2006. VUECR members and associates strive for their research findings to be published in national and international peer reviewed publications which will assist in promoting VU further as a centre for excellence and diversity. VUECR has a loyal sense of long term commitment towards VU and supports learning and understanding the policies and governance of VU as it relates particularly to research. VUECR encourages its members to generate competitive research grant applications. VUECR appreciates the benefit to VU of peer review, peer support and peer mentoring. Accordingly, VUECR will strive to promote inter-disciplinary research initiatives and joint publications from within VUECR.

Objectives:

Whilst the objectives for VUECR are still being formulated, they include:

To educate and inform members and associates on available grant schemes, conferences and publications;

To learn and understand the methodology necessary to write successful grant applications;

To learn and understand the methodology necessary to write book proposals;

To provide peer review and peer mentoring;

To promote inter-disciplinary peer review, joint research and diversity;

To understand the workings of the RQF framework;

Committee:

The 2007 caretaker committee has now been elected. Office bearers will hold their positions until January 2008.

VUECR Committee 2007:

Ms Rebecca Leshinsky, Convenor, School of Law.

Dr Karina Smith, Deputy Convenor, School of Culture Communication & Languages.

Dr Tom Clark, Secretary, School of Culture Communication & Languages.

Dr Penny Weller, Assistant Secretary, School of Law.



Membership:

It is envisaged that further VUECR membership will be derived from other VU Level A or Level B academics that are research active and/or enrolled in a higher degree by research. There may also be a facility for others of equivalent status ('associates') to join or participate in VUECR activities.

PROFESSOR LINDA ROSENMAN

DEPUTY VICE-CHANCELLOR (RESEARCH AND REGION)



Professor Linda Rosenman was recently appointed Deputy-Vice-Chancellor, Research and Region at Victoria University. Previously Executive Dean of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences and Professor of Social Policy at the University of Queensland, Linda is heavily involved in a large program of research and practice around the issues of Asset management for Older people. The research team have secured grants from the Australia Research Council, the Queensland Law Society, to research financial abuse and mismanagement and third party asset management on behalf of older people and currently have grant and foundation support to implement and evaluate community initiatives to protect older people's assets. Linda is currently Vice-President of the Council for Humanities Arts and Social Sciences (CHASS) and a former President of the Australasian Council of Deans of Arts, Social Sciences and Humanities (DASSH) representing the relevant faculties at all universities in Australia and New Zealand. Her previous positions include Executive Dean of the Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, President of the Academic Board and Head of School at University of Queensland and Associate Dean of Arts and Sciences at the University of Missouri in the USA. Linda's PhD is in Economics and Social work from Washington University St Louis and she has served on and chaired a large number of Boards, Commissions and advisory councils across the education and human services sectors. Linda's research expertise focuses on aging and assets and superannuation.

VUECR 2007 SEMINARS:

(Seminars to run 5.30-7.30 pm. Venues to be confirmed); Wine and cheese provided!

1. Tuesday, 27 February:
VUECR Launch at Queen Street, B10
Dr Gayle Morris and Prof Linda Rosenman
"Learning from successful research grant applications"
(initial information session for VU RDGS, July 2007)
2. Tuesday, 27 March:
"Constructing Research Proposals"
(including budgeting and referencing)
3. Tuesday, 24 April:
"Finding a Mentor"
(including peer review, research networking, team building)
4. Tuesday, 29 May:
"Troubleshooting VU RDGS"
5. Tuesday, 31 July:
"VU Policies & Guidelines on Research"
6. Tuesday, 28 August:
"Funding Opportunities"
(including feedback on VU RDGS – if available)
7. Tuesday, 25 September:
"ARC Grants from an ECR perspective"
8. Tuesday, 30 October:
"RQF and VU"
9. Tuesday, 27 November:
VUECR end of year function.
Senior VU research staff and management to be invited. Election of VUECR 2008 committee.

NEW OFFICE FOR RESEARCH STAFF MEMBER: DR REN YI

Before Ren joined VU as the Research Development Officer, Ren was acting manager at Office of Research and Higher Degrees, the University of Southern Qld. Pre this position, Ren was Research Manager at Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences, the University of Qld. He also lectured and guest lectured at the University of Melbourne, Mannheim University in Germany, Maharashi Vedic University in Cambodia and Northwest Poly University in China. Ren also has industry consulting experiences in the Australasian region. Currently he is Vice President of Australia China Business Council in Qld.

Ren completed his PhD at the University of Melbourne. His research areas are International Business, Globalisation, and Economic Geography. Ren also hold MBA and BA Degrees.



RQF UPDATE

INTRODUCTION

On 14 November 2006, the Minister of Education, Science and Training announced that the Government would proceed with the Research Quality Framework (RQF) and released the "The Recommended RQF" document which was endorsed by the RQF Development Advisory Group (RQF DAG). The RQF seeks to ensure public funding is being invested in research of the highest quality which delivers real benefits to the wider community. The assessment period for the first cycle of the RQF at 1 January 2001 to 31 December 2006, with the Staff Census Date at 31 March 2007. The submission deadline for Evidence Portfolios would be 30 April 2008. The redistribution of funds would apply from 2009 with appropriate smoothing arrangements.

IMPACT FOR VU

It is crucial for VU staff to understand the Framework as the results of the first round of the RQF will be used by DEST to distribute the funding currently distributed through the Institutional Grants Scheme (IGS), and half the funding distributed through the Research Training Scheme (RTS). This translates for VU to RQF eligible funds of \$4,632,000 pa or \$27,792,000 over a six year cycle, assuming RQF (100% IGS + 50% RTS) based on the DEST (2007), Higher Education Report 2005.

ASSESSMENT PANELS

There will be 13 assessment panels for the RQF based on Research Fields, Courses and Disciplines (RFCD) codes, who will assess the work of research groups. The 13 panels are:

- Biological sciences;

- Physical, chemical and earth sciences;
- Engineering and technology;
- Mathematical and information sciences and technology;
- Agricultural, veterinary, food and environmental sciences;
- Clinical sciences and clinical physiology;
- Public health and health services;
- Psychology, psychiatry, neurological, behavioural and cognitive sciences;
- Social sciences and politics;
- Economics, commerce and management;
- Law, education and professional practices;
- Humanities and creative arts, design and built environment.

MODEL – IN BRIEF

The Recommended RQF has been developed by the RQF DAG. The Model in brief is as follows:

- Universities nominate Research Groups
- Research Groups prepare Evidence Portfolios
- Evidence Portfolios assessed by Assessment Panels
- Assessment Panels assign Quality and Impact scores
- Score produced leads to funding determination
- RQF scores published for all Universities

RQF TIMELINES:

MILESTONES AND DATES

- Research assessment period: 1/1/2001 to 31/12/2006
- Staff census date: 31/3/2007
- Institutional submissions deadline: 30/4/2008
- Assessment phase: July/August 2008
- Ministerial approval and announcements: November 2008
- Funding outcomes: 1/1/2009

VU TIMELINES AND MAJOR ACTIVITIES: 2007

- DEST Panel Workshops 23 February 2007: Prof Stephen Gray selected
- Drafting of Groups
- VU workshops for RQF
- Analysis and test drafted guidelines with focus on key research groups (eg. Centres and Institutes)
- Updating portfolio data
- Preparation for team context statement

VU RQF STEERING GROUP

Professor Greg Baxter, Dr Ren Yi, Dr Neale Yates, Dr Gayle Morris, and Ms Susan Monaghan.

Principle Officer: Professor Linda Rosenman, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research & Region).

NEWS FLASH: THE RQF REFERENCE COMMITTEE

It was announced on Tuesday, 20 February that the RQF Reference Committee, chaired by Ms Leanne Harvey (DEST) includes the VU Vice-Chancellor, Prof Elizabeth Harman. This is wonderful recognition of Prof Harman's experience in teaching and learning, industrial relations and university sector governance.

This Committee, which includes representatives from industry, government and the research sector, will provide advice on pertinent RQF matters during the first cycle of the RQF, including the development of RQF specifications, the moderation and validation process, and the development of an RQF Information Management System.

RESEARCH STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS:

James Veale, Human Movement, Recreation and Performance, recently gave three papers from his honours research thesis at the VI World Congress of Science and Football in Antalya, Turkey: "Movement intensity analysis of elite junior Australian Rules football: Comparison to elite senior results."; "Profile of position movement demands in elite junior Australian Rules football"; and "Physiological responses of elite junior Australian Rules footballers during match-play". These papers will become chapters in the upcoming book "Science and Football VI" published by Routledge. James will continue his research into Australian Football for his PhD.

APPROACHES TO NARRATIVE RESEARCH METHODS – SYMPOSIUM & WORKSHOP SERIES

Following on from the success of the Narrative as Research Symposium and workshop series run by the Office for Postgraduate Research in 2006, Narrative Network Australia, in conjunction with Victoria University and Monash University recently held a second highly successful workshop series and symposium.

The "Approaches to Narrative Research Methods" Symposium and Workshop Series was lead by Professor Catherine Kohler Riessman from Boston College, USA. Professor Riessman has published

extensively on narrative methods, including her groundbreaking book "Narrative Analysis". Her new book "Narrative Methods in the Human Sciences" is due out in mid-2007.

This event was a significant opportunity for researchers and research students to come together to debate and discuss significant issues in narrative research in both formal settings and informal gatherings. It brought together researchers who are exploring narrative methods in the humanities, the social and behavioural sciences, and the health sciences.

Over sixty people attended what was a lively, engaging and thought-provoking series of events throughout the week. The success of this second event in narrative research has been a great start to 2007 for Narrative Network Australia and the Office for Postgraduate Research.

If you are interested in joining Narrative Network Australia, please contact Ruth Ballardie via email at ruthballardie@optusnet.com.au for further information. The next meeting of Narrative Network Australia (Melbourne branch) will be held at 4pm on Friday 23 February 2007, Room 16.11, Level 16, Victoria University, 300 Flinders Street, Melbourne.

LECTURE: A FILTHY PROBLEM: TORTURE AND DELIBERATE EVIL DOING

Date: Friday 23 February 2007

Speaker: Dr Richard Matthews

Introduction by Dr Barbara Hocking, President of the Association of Canadian Studies in Australia and New Zealand.

Venue: Victoria University City campus

300 Flinders Street

Melbourne (btw King and Elizabeth Sts)

Room 16.11

(Refreshments in Open Gallery, Level 17)

Time: Refreshments 6.00pm

Lecture commences 6.30pm

Speaker:

Dr. Matthews is a philosopher and ethicist based at Mount Allison University in New Brunswick, Canada. While his teaching responsibilities range from logic to bioethics, his current research addresses recent claims that torture is justifiable and necessary in an emerging climate of global terrorism. His most recent publication, *Indecent Medicine: In Defense of the Absolute Prohibition against Physician Participation in Torture* (American Journal of Bioethics, 2006) argues that institutional requirements for making torture

effective constitute an unacceptable degradation of medical ethics and practice, as well as of political institutions in general. These arguments form a precursor to a more thorough consideration of these issues in his forthcoming book, *The Absolute Violation: Why Torture must be Forbidden*.

Topic:

Increasing defences of and justifications for torture since 2001 - particularly in legal circles, newspapers, magazines, on the internet and in the applied ethics literature - have highlighted the need for more thorough ethical enquiry into these issues. Dr Matthews takes up this challenge in *A Filthy Problem: Torture and Deliberate Evil* where he rejects this trend towards justification and holds that defences of torture are misguided and constitute an 'absolute violation' which distributes harm to all persons, communities and institutions involved. Dr Matthews argues that defenders of torture fail to understand the meaning of dignity violations and thus misjudge the impacts of torture on the individual and the community.

The organisers would like to acknowledge the support of the Association of Canadian Studies in Australia and New Zealand (ACSANZ) in bringing Dr Matthews to Australia.

LECTURE DETAILS

CONTACT PERSON:

Professor Elaine Martin, Director, Office of Postgraduate Research

Email: elaine.martin@vu.edu.au

REGISTRATION:

RSVP by 19 February to: Nicole Drage

Email: nicole.drage@vu.edu.au

Phone: 613 9919 4521

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Sharif Shuja, a Sessional Academic in the School of Social Sciences has been commissioned by *Contemporary Review*, which is published in Oxford, to write 3 research articles on international affairs. He has published the first one entitled " Terrorism in Southeast Asia: Australia's Security Threat and Response", in *Contemporary Review*, Vol.288, No.1683, Winter 2006. He has also authored another article entitled " Pragmatism in Chinese Foreign Policy", that appeared also in *Contemporary Review*, Vol.289, No.1684, Spring 2007. Sharif's final article entitled " The Sources of Pakistan's Insecurity", will appear in *Contemporary Review*, Vol.289, No.1685, Summer 2007.

EPA REVIEW

The EPA recently released an environmental audit of the historical contamination in the lower Maribyrnong River in the area of industrial precinct of Whitehall St, Yarraville, which found levels of contamination for a range of metals, including arsenic, in sediment samples consistent with those expected in a highly urbanised catchment. A concurrent fish study looked at a large range of contaminants in fish and eels, including heavy metals, dioxins and other compounds. While it was found that none of the contaminants were above the relevant safety standards, people were advised to limit their consumption of fish taken from the River. The audit resulted from a campaign by *The Age* in 2005 and the audit findings were reported in *The Age* of 24 January. **Professor John Cary** chaired the Audit Reference Group.

ANZJAT: AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND JOURNAL OF ART THERAPY

In October 2006, the Australian and New Zealand Association for Art Therapy (ANZATA) launched a new blind peer-reviewed international journal. **Tarquam McKenna**, in the role of President of ANZATA headed up this journal and gained funding for the inaugural journal over the last two years from four universities.

The journal is situated to document a strategic body of research work with specific research and health goals aimed at producing important outcomes using Arts Psychotherapies in Australia and New Zealand. It comprises a number of related articles addressing projects as well as research. The journal sets out to provide greater opportunity for effective reflections on findings into policy and practice using arts psychotherapies as evidence/knowledge in schools, hospitals and Indigenous well-being contexts.

For further information please contact Tarquam McKenna, Editor ANZJAT on 9919 3371.



AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND ART THERAPY ASSOCIATION

2007 KEY GRANT OPPORTUNITIES

- ARC Linkage Projects - proposals submitted in 2007 (for funding commencing in 2008) are due for submission at the following closing times:

Round 1 - Office for Research is Friday, 13 April, 2007 and with the agency Friday, 4 May 2007;

Note: March 9 workshop

Round 2 - Office for Research is Friday, 2 November 2007 and with the agency Friday, 23 November 2007.

http://www.arc.gov.au/nccgp/lp/lp_default.htm

- ARC Linkage Infrastructure, Equipment and Facilities (LIEF) scheme: Closing date with the Office for Research is Friday, 4 May 2007 and with the agency on Friday, 18 May 2007.

http://www.arc.gov.au/nccgp/lief/lief_default.htm

- Australia-China Special Fund for S&T Cooperation (Australia-China Fund). The objective of the Australia-China Fund is to promote and support scientific and technological cooperation between Australian and Chinese researchers in both public and private sectors.

ISL Australia-China Fund applications are invited once a year and should be lodged online. The Australia-China Fund application round opened at 09:00 AEDT Wednesday 7 February 2007, and will close at 17:00 AEDT Tuesday 20 March 2007. Referee's reports are due within two weeks of the round closing date, being 17:00 (AEST) Tuesday 3 April 2007.

For more information, please visit the DEST website:

<https://sciencegrants.dest.gov.au/ISL/Pages/Doc.aspx?name=ChinaFund.htm>

- VU Researcher Development Grants Scheme (RDGS) for 2007. The scheme aims to provide research funding to support VU Early Career Researchers, showing clear evidence of high research capacity, and newly appointed staff without research funding. Preference is given to teams involving 'mentors' and/or strong research collaborations with industry, government and/or the community. Closing date for applications with the Office for Research is 20 July 2007.
- VU Grant Preparation Support Scheme (GPSS) - These are small grants designed to assist researchers at VU to prepare applications for external research funding involving two or more institutions or extensive University collaboration with industry. Closing date: ANYTIME.

THANK YOU: To all who contributed to the content of the Research Matters bulletin.