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NEWS FROM THE OFFICE FOR POSTGRADUATE RESEARCH

The Office for Postgraduate Research is undergoing some significant personnel changes in the coming weeks, with cause for both celebration and sadness.

On the celebration front: we are very pleased to welcome the latest addition to the OPR’s Admin. team, Ms Katie Batterham, who has joined the OPR to assist in the general operations and administrative functions of the office. Katie is working across the key areas of supporting scholarships, examination and training and we are delighted that she is able to offer us her skills in data management as the postgraduate area continues to grow and diversify.

We are also delighted to welcome Professor Helen Borland as the incoming Director of Postgraduate Research. Helen’s outstanding track record as a supervisor of research students, international research profile, expertise and knowledge in the arena of developing and sustaining international research and postgraduate programs, and significant experience as a senior academic manager over many years are just a few of the attributes she will bring to the role of leading the Office for Postgraduate Research in a range of new initiatives designed to further strengthen and diversify the postgraduate research profile at VU and our relationships with other universities and partners both nationally and abroad. Helen will begin her new leadership role on 28 July.

However, as new staff join the OPR, we also need to say goodbye, with real sadness, to some of the staff who have contributed significantly over many years to building and sustaining new, sometimes risky and often innovative approaches in the domain of postgraduate research education and training at VU.

Departing on 11 July is Professor Elaine Martin, who has led graduate research at VU for the past 7 years. Elaine’s outstanding commitment to research students and supervisors, her innovations in training and support, her compassion, courage, insight and intelligence have raised the profile and the standard of student research at VU to new heights, in some cases producing new approaches to old problems that have been duplicated by many other universities across the sector. Elaine’s retirement is cause for celebration in the sense that she will now be freer to continue her substantial research and pedagogical contribution to the field of postgraduate education through her own writing and presenting - but she leaves behind many colleagues and students who are in her debt and who will sorely miss the generosity of spirit and the rigor of analysis she brought to all her endeavours at the university.

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Professor Helen Borland
Professor Elaine Martin
Professor Jim Sillitoe also leaves the University after more than 40 years of service in a variety of positions, most recently over the last several years as a mentor and educator for both research students and also supervisors. Jim has contributed his personal knowledge and support to countless numbers of new (and not so new!) students grappling with the rigours of thesis-writing and presentation, and he has also sustained many a research supervisor through his wonderful ‘Supervisor Conversations’ series designed to help troubleshoot and share strategies for common experiences and challenges in the supervisor-student relationship. Jim’s retirement marks the end of an era for VU, and his dedication and selflessness in relation to the needs of postgraduate students has left us with a model to emulate for many years to come.

Finally, Associate Professor Michele Grossman leaves the OPR at the end of July after a year of ‘filling in’ as Associate and then Acting Director of Graduate Research while Professor Martin was on leave. Michele returns to the Faculty of Arts, Education and Human Development as Associate Dean (Research and Research Training) and will continue to remain involved in postgraduate issues and programs in this role at Faculty and University level. Michele’s significant contributions to the development of new policies surrounding postgraduate procedures and processes, her commitment to building an improved research culture and environment for postgraduate students across the university, and her energy in enhancing the profile of postgraduate research at VU both internally and externally, especially in relation to the nexus between research and community engagement, have helped lay the groundwork for the next new phase of development for postgraduate education at VU.

Professor Elaine Martin, Director of Graduate Research at Victoria University for the past seven years will retire from this role on July 11th. She has always focused on improving the experience of research students and in keeping with this sentiment warmly invites all research students to her farewell at Cityscape, 3.30pm on Friday 11 July. RSVP to: Katie.Batterham@vu.edu.au

**BEST POSTGRADUATE PAPER AWARD – SUSAN MATE**

Susan Mate, a research student in the School of Management, has been awarded a prize for the Best Postgraduate Paper, at the International Colloquium of Asia Pacific Researchers in Organization Studies, held in New Delhi, India. Sue’s research explores individual and cultural variation in the ways in which working men and women experience growth and development as professionals. Her paper has been accepted for publication in the Institute’s journal. Sue is supervised by Dr Beverley Lloyd Walker and Professor Elaine Martin.

**SCHOLARSHIP WIN FOR DOCTORAL STUDENT – ANNI ARYANI**

Anni Aryani, a PhD candidate in the Faculty of Business and Law, has won the Australian Federation of University Women International Scholarship.

Anni is an international student from Indonesia, who is enrolled through the School of Accounting and Finance for her doctoral research, titled: *The Effect of Fairness Perception of Performance Measurement in the Balanced Scorecard Environment*. Staff in the Faculty office alerted her to the scholarship opportunity and encouraged Anni to nominate.

The scholarship was awarded at a recent ceremony on the 31st May in Melbourne. We are all delighted with Anni’s success, which is well deserved.

The above picture is of Anni showing off her scholarship certificate next to Associate Professor Santina Bertone, who is the Faculty’s Associate Dean (Research & Research Training).

**UNIVERSITIES INNOVATION SHOWCASE 22 MAY 2008**

Victorian universities came together to present their research to industry at the Universities Innovation Showcase, held at KPMG Building in Melbourne on 22 May. A Victoria University (VU) delegation participated to display research from the Institute for Sustainability and Innovation (ISI). Prof Stephen Gray (ISI Director), Assoc Prof Mikel Duke, Dr Nicholas Milne, Noel Dow, Chandra Singh and Jianhua Zhang set up and ran the VU stall, and made outstanding achievement in discussing their research well into the night! Posters on display showed results from projects on water treatment for improving water nutrient content in agriculture and delivering potable water to remote communities. Also on display was a working nanofiltration membrane system which actually removed blue dye from a wastewater.

The event was also invaluable as a networking opportunity. Numerous industry, research and university contacts were made as direct consequence of the event, and are currently being followed into forming new and exciting research collaborations in sustainability and innovation.

Chandra B. Singh and Mikel Duke from the Institute for Sustainability and Innovation (ISI)

**NEW ICEPA PROJECTS**

ICEPA PRESENTS AT STATE GOVERNMENT MULTICULTURAL ROUNDTABLE

In August 2008, the Governor of Victoria will hold a round table discussion with key stakeholders from across the state on the future of Multiculturalism in Victoria. This includes fifty participants ranging from the Premier and business leaders to newspaper editors and Football Club Presidents. ICEPA has won a $20,000 tender from the Victorian Multicultural Commission to develop a paper on future directions for multiculturalism which will inform the roundtable discussion, and be the basis for shaping the future Multicultural policy iteration in Victoria. Professor Hurriyet Babacan and Associate Professor Danny Ben-Moshe will present the paper which is being prepared with the assistance of Dr Beata Leuner, a VU Postdoctoral...
Researcher with the Faculty of Business and Law and ICEPA. The discussion paper will form the basis for a series of community consultations following the roundtable and demonstrates ICEPA’s leadership, profile and track record in this area of research activity.

VU CROSS-DEPARTMENTAL COOPERATION SUPPORTS CAPACITY BUILDING FOR FIJI MINISTRY OF HEALTH

In continuing to build on its development work with an international focus, ICEPA has won funding to undertake a capacity building project for JTA International and the Fiji Ministry of Health (funded under Ausaid Projects). This project aims to assist managers in the Ministry of Health to improve their management and team work performance, and will comprise up to thirty Ministry managers from middle to senior ranks in both clinical and non-clinical portfolios. A range of research, training and development activities will be delivered using in-country and in-Australia activities. Led by Professor Hurriyet Babacan and Professor Ian Rouse, the project team has been drawn from departments across the university and includes Dr Damira Lopes, Ms Patricia Josipovic, Mr Pranay Lodhiya, Dr Kerry Ryan and Ms Joanne Pyke. This $135,000 project will be finalised by September 2008.

KICK STARTING THE SMALL BUSINESS PROGRAM WITHIN CTSR

The CTSR is set to ‘kick start’ its new Small Business Program which has come about as a result of our merger with the Small Business Research Unit (SBRU) – as recommended in the 2007 FOBL Unit Review. Championed by Professor John Breen the SBRU successfully operated for 14 years. John, who currently works as Deputy Dean for the FOBL, will continue to support the new Small Business Program with Dr Sue Bergin-Seers as Program Leader.

A key aim of the Program is to raise VU’s profile to be nationally recognised as Australia’s leading small business research entity with an international profile and hub for small business resources. To achieve this end the CTSR will set in motion a number of new initiatives within the next few months, one of which is to bring together all VU researchers who have an interest in small business, entrepreneurship and innovation. Invitations to join a small business forum will be distributed in late July. In the mean time, the CTSR welcomes expressions of interest from researchers across VU.

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NEWS FROM THE FACULTY OF ARTS, EDUCATION AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

CALLING NEW YORK: NYU RESEARCH FELLOWSHIP FOR COLD WAR HISTORIAN

Professor Phillip Deery (School of Social Sciences) has been awarded an internationally competitive Frederic Ewen Fellowship at New York University for the spring semester of 2009. Professor Deery’s research project at NYU is entitled ‘Diluting Democracy: academic and political freedom in Cold War America’. It will explore the ways in which fears of enemies abroad and anxieties about threats from within have influenced key institutions of civil society, including universities. The project also has contemporary relevance to current debates concerning the defence of academic freedom in the modern age. Whilst at NYU, he will present his findings to symposia and to the annual conference of the Center for the United States and the Cold War.

VU PHD STUDENT BRINGS SUDANESE PERSPECTIVES ON EDUCATION TO THE BIG SCREEN

Among the seven short films exploring the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers screened at the film festival ‘A Place to Call Home’, part of Victoria’s Refugee Week activities in mid-June, was the documentary Neir Chi Puj, which, translated from Dinka, means Educated Girls. The 10-minute film, directed by Victoria University PhD student Anne Harris (Education) and featuring Sudanese student Lina Deng, is the first in a series of films that form part of Anne’s doctorate, which explores young Sudanese women and their education experiences in Australia. Anne says there is a need for films documenting the refugee experience: ‘Too many refugee students are struggling in Australian schools, and sometimes not finishing. They need more support – academic, social, financial – and sufficient funding is not there. These films give young Sudanese women a chance to speak for themselves about the knowledge they have accumulated about schooling (in) Australia.’ Anne’s PhD studies in the School of Education, Faculty of AEHD, are supported by the supervisory team of Dr Tarquam McKenna (Education), Dr Enza Gandolfo (Communication, Culture and Languages) and Associate Professor Michele Grossman (Communication, Culture and Languages).

SURVIVORS OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE: INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH INITIATIVE

Professor Jill Astbury (Psychology) is presenting a paper at the upcoming Mundos de Mujeres 2008 (the 10th international interdisciplinary symposium on women) in Madrid July 3-9. She will present work based on her research titled “Working with survivors of sexual violence: What we know and what we need to know” for a special session on the Sexual Violence Research Initiative, an international initiative of the Global Forum for Health Research. Professor Astbury serves as Co-Chair of this initiative’s coordinating group.

EARLY CAREER RESEARCHERS OFFER CONFERENCE PANEL ON ‘REFASHIONING MYTH’

Three early-career researchers in the School of Communication, Culture and Languages – Dr Tom Clark (Professional Writing/Public Relations), Philip Dimitriadis (doctoral student, Literary Studies) and Sue Dodd (Creative Arts) have had a panel of research papers titled ‘The mythopoetics of ubiquity: Everyday-cultural sourcing for mythical intensity and lyrical force’ accepted at the forthcoming University of Melbourne conference on ‘Refashioning Myth’ to be held in October 2008. Their respective papers will range across mythic transformation in the poetry of Australian footy, the ‘trash truths’ of tabloid vernacular, and the relationship between myth, politicians and clichés.

CANADIAN CONFERENCE PAPERS ON ORAL AND LITERATE CULTURAL TRADITIONS

Dr Clark and another CCL colleague, Dr Karina Smith, are currently in Saskatoon, Canada presenting double-refereed conference papers at
Australian Rules Football. In the research essay, 'The Australian football as an intangible cultural asset', published by Taylor & Francis (CRC Press), Information Processing (ISSNIP), and has recently discussed collaborative work within the ARC Research Network on Intelligent Sensors, Sensor Networks and Information Interfaces and Audiences' international conference on contemporary orality and writing in diverse cultural settings. The conference is one of the largest gatherings of academics from around the world who specialise in oral traditions and the relationship between orality and literacy across cultures in modern contexts, and is hosted by the University of Saskatchewan.

PERSPECTIVES ON COMPUTATIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE– NEW RESEARCH PUBLICATION

Associate Professor Rezaul Begg (Human Movement, Recreation and Performance) has recently published a new research monograph in collaboration with colleagues from VU’s CARES (Postdoctoral Fellow Dr Daniel T.H. Lai) and the University of Melbourne (Dr Marimuthu Palaniswami). Computational Intelligence in Biomedical Engineering provides a unique look at how techniques in computational intelligence (CI) can offer solutions in modelling, relationship pattern recognition, clustering and other problems particular to the biomedical field. The book was produced as part of the authors’ collaborative work within the ARC Research Network on Intelligent Sensors, Sensor Networks and Information Processing (ISSNIP), and has recently been published by Taylor & Francis (CRC Press).

NOT JUST ANOTHER GAME: AUSTRALIAN RULES FOOTBALL AND INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Professor Robert Pascoe will be presenting a paper to the National Trust shortly based on his current research project on intangible cultural heritage and Australian Rules Football. In the research essay, 'The Unbearable Lightness of a Bag of Wind', Professor Pascoe notes that intangible cultural heritage, a UNESCO term, refers to those oral and performed forms of human existence which are just as valuable for memorialising as the historic buildings and built fabric that is the traditional preserve of the heritage industry. In making the case for the recognition of Australian football as an intangible cultural asset, Pascoe turns to the work of various artists in their depiction of the code. The absence of an off-side rule, for instance, is captured in images of players running ahead of their flat-footed opponents. The actions of the nimble heroes in these cameo appearances is virtually alike - there is no obstacle to these men running into the open goal, as in more traditional forms of European football. Pascoe concludes that Australian football, codified in 1859, reflects the liberal democratic ethos of goldrush Victoria and is thus an important and intrinsic element of Australian intangible cultural heritage.

SUBMITTING HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS APPLICATIONS – KEY CONSIDERATIONS

Researchers developing ethics applications need to be cognisant of several key steps in order to effectively plan for their timely submission. Amongst the key issues are three vital steps which can save you time. They include understanding:

- The level of risk inherent in the research study
- The appropriate Human Research Ethics Committee (HREC) to submit the ethics application
- The schedule of HREC submission dates

Level of Risk Completing Item 5.3 of the Ethics Application form will assist researchers identify the level of risk posed by the research study. For example, research proposals involving children, vulnerable groups, seeking to procure information from a Commonwealth agency or department, clinical trials, the use of deception or research focusing on Aboriginal or Torres Straight Islander participants are deemed “non-minimal risk” and will be assessed accordingly.

Submitting applications to the appropriate HREC In general, research applications are forwarded to one of the four HRECs based upon 1) level of risk, 2) research discipline. All non-minimal risk applications are forwarded to the Victoria University HREC (VUHREC). Applications not identifying Items 5.3 (g to k) may be regarded as ‘minimal risk’ applications. Such applications are forwarded to the relevant faculty HREC for review. All applications will initially be reviewed by staff at the Ethics and Biosafety Administration Group where further clarification may be sought.

Submission dates All HRECs have separate meeting cycles. To ensure that your application is reviewed at the first opportunity, it is vital to establish 1) your application’s ‘risk level’ and 2) the appropriate HREC that will review your application. Establishing both matters will ensure that you are able to plan for submission by the appropriate HREC at the earliest date. Details of submission dates for each HREC are available on the Human Research Ethics website at:

http://research/vcichealth/hre_cctee.php

Staff at the Ethics and Biosafety Administration Group are available to assist researchers with questions regarding ethics applications.

ARC LINKAGE INDUSTRY PARTNER GRANTS THROUGH VICHEALTH

Researchers at Victoria University may wish to apply for an ARC linkage grant with VicHealth as an industry partner this year. The closing date for applications with the Office for Research is Friday, 8 August 2008 and with VicHealth on Friday, 15 August 2008.

VicHealth are particularly interested in projects that relate to one or more of our current research interests as described below.

- Social Inclusion, Discrimination and Health Inequalities
- Nutrition and Healthy Eating
- Alcohol Harm Reduction
- Promoting Physical Activity
- Smoking and Tobacco

For further details and information please see their website at:


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