



**FACULTY OF ARTS AND EDUCATION**

## **INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM DESIGN PROJECT REPORT**



**Compiled by Dr Petra Brown and Dr Janet Watson**

**January 2015**

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## FACULTY OF ARTS AND EDUCATION INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM DESIGN PROJECT

### Background

The Faculty Inclusive Curriculum Design Project is a HEPPP-funded project that is aligned with the University's Inclusive Curriculum and Capacity Building project and is intended to integrate with Equity and Diversity, Library, Student Life, the Institute of Koorie Education and Deakin Learning Futures (DLF). The project specifically targets undergraduate units with above-average low socio-economic status (LSES) student enrolment. It aims to build a culture of inclusive curriculum in Faculty through modifications to teaching delivery, learning methods and online resources to better meet the needs of students from LSES backgrounds. This includes embedding academic skills and literacies, digital literacy, career development learning, and universal design principles in curriculum.

### Methodology

Based on meeting LSES enrolment requirements in alignment with HEPPP funding, six first year Faculty units were selected as case studies for evaluation, analysis, and curriculum design recommendations. These were evaluated according to Universal Design for Learning guidelines and checkpoints. UDL findings were then analysed in consultation with Higher Education Academy principles for inclusive curriculum. As part of this process, the project team worked with Unit Chairs, Equity and Diversity, Language and Learning Advisers, and Liaison Librarians to recommend ways of improving content, assessment, and delivery to accommodate different learning approaches in curriculum design. Project planning also included: professional development in teaching practices for sessional staff (workshops at Burwood and Geelong), and development of online multi-media educational resources for academics.

### Case Study Key Findings

#### Several areas of good practice

1. Aligning learning goals and outcomes to GLOs
2. Highlighting broader themes, ideas and relationships in unit content
3. Promotion of student inclusivity, engagement and access
4. Mechanisms to deal with sensitive and controversial topics
5. Terms, concepts, codes and symbols explained
6. A range of learning resources provided
7. Lecture recordings and slides provided online
8. Encouragement of group work
9. Assessments provide for multiple formats and timely feedback
10. Clear linking to study skills resources

#### Identified Areas for Improvement

1. Improve consistency between units in aligning learning goals to GLOs and make clear weekly goals and learning outcomes
2. Predominant reliance on text-based materials in learning resources and assessment
3. Lack of discipline specific unit glossaries
4. Provision of lecture recording transcripts if appropriate
5. Greater opportunity for self-reflective practice required
6. More effective use and organisation of discussion forums needed
7. Need for greater variety of assessment formats and expanded rubrics.

### Key Recommendations

1. Appoint Faculty ICD Project Co-Ordinator or Manager for ICD oversight in 2015
2. Faculty project officer/s to work with single points of contact in terms of other partners/stakeholders
3. Consider discipline-specific contexts/requirements when undertaking Faculty audits and evaluations
4. Build academic staff awareness of existing ICD resources and service providers
5. Develop template document with guidelines for teaching team practice and pedagogy
6. Develop Faculty ICD website: training modules, unit exemplars, discipline specific resources, map existing ICD resources with links to relevant service providers
7. Collect follow-up data on efficacy, improvement and benefits in targeted units
8. Publish project data and outcomes in relevant journal/s.

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Deakin University would like to acknowledge that the present site of the Melbourne Burwood Campus is located on the land of the Wurundjeri people, the Geelong Waurin Ponds Campus and Geelong Waterfront Campus are located on the land of the Wathaurong people, and the Warrnambool Campus is located on the land of the Gunditjmara people. They are connected to these lands, have walked these lands, and continue to care for them and nurture them for future generations.

## 1.2 PURPOSE AND RATIONALE:

The Faculty Arts and Education Inclusive Curriculum Design (ICD) Project is located within a program of initiatives funded by the Commonwealth Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program (HEPPP). Through HEPPP, Deakin promotes access and successful participation in undergraduate courses by students from low socio-economic status (LSES) backgrounds. As part of this program, the Faculty ICD Project is specifically aligned with the Inclusive Curriculum and Capacity Building initiative and is intended to integrate with Equity and Diversity, Library, Student Life, the Institute of Koorie Education and Deakin Learning Futures. The Faculty ICD project team works and liaises with Faculty academics and Deakin-wide bodies associated with the project. The project aims to examine modifications to teaching delivery, learning methods and online resources to better meet the needs of students from LSES backgrounds. This includes embedding academic skills and literacies, digital literacy practice, career development learning, and universal design principles in curriculum, to make learning at Deakin inclusive for all students. In order to facilitate the Faculty's focus on building a culture of inclusive curriculum, this project employed a dedicated project team to develop 'case studies', which can become examples for other Faculty units, and to provide capacity for professional development in order to create a foundation for inclusive curriculum teaching and research.

## 1.3 INCLUSIVE CURRICULUM DESIGN (ICD)

### Philosophy and Principles

Classrooms reflect the diversely constituted globalised society in which we now live, and as such, demand that curriculum is designed and delivered in a way that improves and enhances the learning outcomes, experiences and successes of all students, particularly LSES groups. Devlin et al. argue that low-socioeconomic students who try to participate in the sociocultural discourses; expectations and norms surrounding Universities experience 'sociocultural incongruence' that leads to exclusion (Devlin et al. 2012: 2). Devlin et al. find that the problem of the exclusion of low-socioeconomic students is an institutional problem that must be bridged by creating an emphatic institutional context in which the institution values and respects all students, encompasses a comprehensive, integrated and co-ordinated curriculum, incorporates inclusive learning environments and strategies, empowers students by making the implicit explicit, and focuses on student learning outcomes and success (Devlin et al. 2012: 2)

An understanding of the diverse profile of student demographics, and that learning styles and abilities may differ accordingly, is necessary in order to build a culture of inclusivity in teaching practice, pedagogy, and curriculum design, which importantly does not compromise academic standards or integrity.

The notion of ICD therefore underlines the imperative for tertiary institutions to design curriculum:

*in such a way as to promote success among all students ... [and] take into account students' educational, cultural and social background and experience as well as the presence of any physical or sensor impairment and their mental well-being* (Morgan & Houghton 2011: 5).

Effective course design in teaching, learning and assessment is premised on flexibility, variety, accessibility, collaboration, transparency, and accountability in order to maximise equitable participation by all students irrespective of their individual needs and abilities (Creating Accessible Teaching and Support (CATS) n.d.; Morgan & Houghton 2011).

Drawing on guidelines that form part of an Australian national research project (Devlin et al. 2012: 3), key advice to staff teaching students from LSES backgrounds is as follows:

1. *Know and respect your students: understand LSES students are time poor; communicate with them, embrace and integrate their diversity and enable contributions of their knowledge to everyone's learning.*
2. *Offer your students flexibility, variety and choice: while upholding academic standards, offer LSES students flexibility, choice in assessment and variety in teaching and learning strategies.*
3. *Make expectations clear, using accessible language: speak and write in plain language to ensure students understand the concepts being taught, your expectations of them and what is required to be a successful student.*
4. *Scaffold your students' learning: take a step-by-step approach to teaching to ensure students build on what they bring to higher education and are taught the particular discourses necessary to succeed.*
5. *Be available and approachable to guide student learning: in addition to being available, be approachable so that students may make use of your expertise and guidance to improve their learning and performance.*
6. *Be a reflective practitioner: reflect and seek to act on your own reflections, those from peers and feedback from students, to continuously improve your teaching practice and your students' learning.*

## Resources and Exemplars

- Further literature on inclusive practices see: Larkin, Nihill and Devlin (2014) and Hitch et al. (2012).
- See CloudDeakin [Course Enhancement—Teaching Capacities](#) for modules, resources and literature including inclusive learning and teaching and specifically relating to GLOs.
- See CloudDeakin [Language and Learning Development Site](#) with exemplar units MMM132 and MMM262. These could be evaluated in terms of how modules might be adapted for Faculty of Arts and Education.
- See CloudDeakin [BECE Learning Hub](#) for an exemplar of how a Cloud site can be developed at discipline level to support students.

## 1.4 STAKEHOLDER COLLABORATION

### Deakin University Project Stakeholders

| Name                                   | Position   |
|--|--|
| Juliana Ryan                           | Project Lead – Inclusive Curriculum and Capacity Building (Equity and Diversity) |
| Robyn Everist                          | Project Manager – Inclusive Curriculum and Capacity Building                     |
| Christine Oughtred & Marion Churkovich | Library (Digital Literacies)   |
| John Page                              | Institute of Koorie Education (IKE)  |
| Dr Linda Thies and Viola Rosario       | Deakin Student Life  |
|  | Deakin Learning Futures (DLF)  |
| Prof. Sarah Paddle                     | Associate Dean, Teaching and Learning  |
| Danielle Hitch                         | UDL Consultant   |

## Faculty of Arts and Education Project Team

| Name                 | Project Role    | Responsibilities  |
|----------------------|-----------------|---|
| A/Prof. Damian Blake | Project Manager | Provide overall guidance of project. Set up and co-ordinate student survey process.   |
| Dr. Petra Brown      | Project Officer | Plan and facilitate day-to-day progress; oversee all units involved in project; liaise with Geelong Unit Chairs; liaise with stakeholders and service providers to Faculty; contribute to redevelopment of AIX160; organise Sessional Academic Workshops. |
| Dr. Janet Watson     | Project Officer | Provide support to Petra; liaise with Burwood Unit Chairs; provide support for Burwood Sessional Academic Workshop; data analysis of UDL audits; compile, edit and format Faculty report.   |

## 1.5 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

|  |
|--|
| To develop and encourage a culture of inclusive curriculum in the Faculty.   |
| To assist Unit Chairs in embedding academic and digital literacies, employability skills and Universal Design for Learning into curriculum of targeted courses that will better meet the needs LSES background students. |
| To collect data/evidence and contribute to high quality research on inclusive curriculum.  |
| Develop a model from 'case studies' that can be applied to other Arts-Education units, and the foundation for inclusive curriculum research in the Faculty.  |
| To modify teaching and delivery learning methods and online resources in targeted Arts-Education units to better meet the needs of students from LSES backgrounds.   |

## Project Aims and Deliverables

- ✓ Universal Design for Learning (UDL) reviews of selected project units.
- ✓ Meeting with Unit Chairs of project units to discuss UDL report, review their unit in light of suggestions provided by HEA Inclusive curriculum design for their discipline area, and to discuss possible changes to unit in light of UDL review and *eVALUate* surveys.
- ✓ Evaluation/SWOT analysis and recommendations for project units.
- ✓ Follow-up to project unit recommendations to plan and scope resources in consultation with Language and Learning Advisers (academic literacies), Liaison Librarians (digital literacies) and other service providers.
- ✓ Professional Development workshop to build capacity in teaching for sessional staff.
- ✓ Assist Mary Dracup with development of AIX160 as Faculty Representative.
- ✓ Production of video resources/Cloud concepts for project units and AIX160.
- ✓ ICD Report to Faculty: Purpose, rationale, methodology, case studies, outcomes and deliverables, stakeholder reflection, recommendations.
- ✓ Scope development of inclusive curriculum information for academics e.g. tutor handbook; table/concept map of services for UC; video introduction; web page, Cloud concept on Inclusive Curriculum.
- ✓ Case studies of units can be used as models for broader discipline and course improvements for 2015 and form the basis for research on inclusive curriculum design.
- ✓ Raise awareness of inclusive curriculum in the Faculty through encouraging discussion, idea sharing, and providing links and information to academic staff.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

In consultation with University stakeholders, the project team acknowledged that while a course-focussed approach on inclusive curriculum would be highly desirable, time constraints indicated that working with selected units would be more practical. Unit evaluations, findings and outcomes will provide the basis for modelling ICD further research and development to be applied at a broader discipline and course level. Working at a unit level has some advantages in a new project with a short lead-in. First, it enabled the cultivation of trust and relationships between academics and other project partners. Building these relationships then becomes the foundation to create a culture of inclusive curriculum in the Faculty, one of the stated project objectives. Second, working at a unit level with individual Unit Chairs enabled the project team, to begin to undertake case studies in a short time-frame that could become a model for other units in the Faculty or for future work at course level. It is further envisioned that data gathered from these case studies can also contribute to a high-level research project on inclusive curriculum at either Faculty or University level. As part of the objective of developing a culture of inclusive curriculum, capacity building formed one of the project deliverables. This was done through organising and facilitating an inclusive curriculum design and teaching workshop.

### 2.1 EVALUATION OF CURRICULUM

The project team deemed that although important to target units with high LSES and off-campus enrolment, co-operation of Unit Chairs was equally important. Identification and selection of appropriate first year units was informed by interim 2014 data (LSES enrolments and success rates) from Deakin's Strategic Intelligence and Planning Unit. The initial strategy included contacting Unit Chairs of units identified as having high LSES enrolment, and to invite Unit Chairs to participate if they showed interest in the project and a willingness to be open to evaluation and curriculum design suggestions, improvements and recommendations. Unit Chairs were fully informed of the evaluation process in face-to-face discussions with project officers. After agreeing to participate, the selected units were evaluated according to Universal Design for Learning (UDL) guidelines and checkpoints. UDL findings were then analysed in consultation with Higher Education Academy (HEA) principles for inclusive curriculum (see below for further information of UDL and HEA) and recommendations provided.

#### Universal Design For Learning (UDL)\*

Based on neuroscience research, the concept of UDL starts from the premise of learner variability—that is, there is not an imagined 'average' learner, but that students fall on a spectrum of learning abilities and styles. UDL therefore aims to address learner variability by suggesting flexible goals, methods, materials and assessments in curriculum design. Flexible designs have customisable options that are varied and robust enough to provide effective instruction to all learners. Such an approach therefore seeks to remove barriers that position learners on the margins, whether gifted, vulnerable or have disabilities.

A concise definition of Universal Design for Learning was provided by the Higher Education Opportunity Act of 2008, which stated:

The term UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING means a scientifically valid framework for guiding educational practice that:

- A. provides flexibility in the ways information is presented, in the ways students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and in the ways students are engaged; and
- B. reduces barriers in instruction, provides appropriate accommodations, supports, and challenges, and maintains high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students who are limited English proficient.

#### Principles and Checkpoints of UDL

Three principles underpin the framework for UDL Guidelines and checkpoints:

1. **Provide Multiple Means of Representation:** 'What' of Learning—to accommodate and optimise differing ways in which learners perceive and comprehend information e.g. sensory disabilities (vision/hearing impaired), learning disabilities (dyslexia), cultural and/or linguistic difference. In addition, multiple means of representation optimises the learning process and transfer of learning as it allows to students to make connections within and between concepts.




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\* Based on extracts from CAST (2011)



2. **Provide Multiple Means of Action and Expression:** ‘How’ of Learning—to accommodate and optimise differing ways in which learners navigate their learning environment e.g. mobility, executive function, linguistic barriers.
3. **Provide Multiple Means of Engagement:** ‘Why’ of Learning—to accommodate and optimise differing ways in which learners interact, engage and are motivated in their learning environment. A variety of factors may influence the manner of engagement: culture, personal relevance, subjectivity, background knowledge etc. Some may work better in groups, while others prefer individual tasks; some flourish better with less rigid or prescriptive boundaries, while others require routine, structure and rules.

### UDL Guidelines and Checkpoints

| 1. PROVIDE MULTIPLE MEANS OF REPRESENTATION  | 2. PROVIDE MULTIPLE MEANS OF ACTION AND EXPRESSION  | 3 PROVIDE MULTIPLE MEANS OF ENGAGEMENT   |
|--|---|--|
| <b>1. Provide options for perception</b><br><br>1.1. Offer ways of customising the display of information<br>1.2. Offer alternatives for auditory information<br>1.3. Offer alternatives for visual information  | <b>4. Provide options for physical action</b><br><br>4.1. Vary the methods of response and navigation<br>4.2. Optimise access to tools and assistive technologies   | <b>7. Provide options for recruiting interest</b><br><br>7.1. Optimise individual choice and autonomy<br>7.2. Optimise relevance, value and authenticity<br>7.3. Minimise threats and distractions   |
| <b>2. Provide options for language, mathematical expressions and symbols</b><br><br>2.1. Clarify vocabulary and symbols<br>2.2. Clarify syntax and structure<br>2.3. Support decoding of text, mathematical notation and symbols<br>2.4. Promote understanding across languages<br>2.5. Illustrate through multi-media | <b>5. Provide options for expression and communication</b><br><br>5.1. Use multiple media for communication<br>5.2. Use multiple tools for construction and composition<br>5.3. Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance | <b>8. Provide options for sustaining effort and persistence</b><br><br>8.1. Heighten salience of goals and objectives<br>8.2. Vary demands and resources to optimise challenge<br>8.3. Foster collaboration and community<br>8.4. Increase mastery-oriented feedback |
| <b>3. Provide options for comprehension</b><br><br>3.1. Activate or supply background knowledge<br>3.2. Highlight patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships<br>3.3. Guide information processing, visualisation, and manipulation<br>3.4. Maximise transfer and generalization                         | <b>6. Provide options for executive function</b><br><br>6.1. Guide appropriate goal-setting<br>6.2. Support planning and strategy development<br>6.3. Facilitate managing information and resources<br>6.4. Enhance capacity for monitoring progress          | <b>9. Provide options for self-regulation</b><br><br>9.1. Promote expectations and beliefs that optimise motivation<br>9.2. Facilitate personal coping skills and strategies<br>9.3. Develop self-assessment and reflection  |
|   |    |   |
| <b>Resourceful, knowledgeable learners</b>   | <b>Strategic, goal-directed learners</b>  | <b>Purposeful, motivated learners</b>  |

Source: CAST (2011)

### Higher Education Academy (HEA)<sup>†</sup>

HEA is the national body in the UK for enhancing learning and teaching in higher education. The core principles and philosophy of HEA mirror much of UDL's but situates these explicitly within a socio-structural context. It espouses a proactive anticipatory approach predicated by:

- ✓ recognising students' multiple identities, which are diversely constituted within and through intersecting social and institutional considerations of education, disposition, circumstance, and culture
- ✓ avoiding compartmentalising solutions based on specific 'need'
- ✓ adopting an holistic approach to satisfy students' entitlements

### HEA Core Principles of ICD

- ✓ **Anticipatory:** understanding and considering the diverse profile of students as a whole (prospective and existing) and their entitlements in design and delivery of all activity.
- ✓ **Flexible:** to be open, versatile and responsive to changing student populations and circumstances that

<sup>†</sup> Based on extracts from Morgan and Houghton (2011).



may require adaptations to curriculum.

- ✓ **Accountable:** encourages staff and students to be responsible for progress in alignment with agreed actions and objectives.
- ✓ **Collaborative:** builds on partnerships, dialogue and feedback between students, staff and other stakeholders to enrich curriculum content and relevance.
- ✓ **Transparent:** to make clear rationale for design decisions by increasing general awareness of benefits for all.
- ✓ **Equitable:** processes and procedures for students are fair, open, transparent and the same for all.

#### HEA Key Components Of Curriculum Design And Example Questions:

- ✓ **Aims:** Do the aims reflect an ethos of inclusion?
- ✓ **Objectives:** Are the objectives made transparent to students pre- and post-entry to facilitate effective decision-making?
- ✓ **Learning Outcomes:** Are the learning outcomes closely linked to assessment methods?
- ✓ **Academic And Competence Standards:** Have you ensured that the competence standards do not discriminate against any equality groupings?
- ✓ **Syllabus:** Is there a broad range of content examples to which all students can relate? Do examples help raise awareness of equality and promote respect of individual difference? Are students invited to draw on their previous educational or life experience?
- ✓ **Teaching Methods:** Is there a variety of teaching activities to take account of students' diverse preferred learning approaches and experiences? Do teaching methods increase the ways students can engage with content and materials? Do teaching methods support students to engage in different ways e.g. virtual learning environments to support delivery of material? Is there a balance between individual, pair, small group and whole group activities? Is the group's profile used to promote inclusion?
- ✓ **Learning Activities:** Is the purpose and outcome of learning tasks made clear to all students? Is time built into learning activities for students to ask questions or receive feedback? Are learning activities reflected on to enable all students to recognise their learning and the value of any alternative approaches adopted?
- ✓ **Teaching Materials:** Are there sufficient resources available for students to complete set tasks? Have alternative formats been considered when developing/compiling new resources? Do unit resources provide a range of examples that demonstrate a commitment to diversity of content and relevance?
- ✓ **Assessment:** Is there a variety of assessment opportunities offered in the unit? Does the assessment give opportunities to develop graduate skills to aid employability of all students? How are students prepared for assessments? Are there marking criteria? Is the language jargon-free? What feedback opportunities are there? How timely is the feedback? How inclusive are the feedback methods used?

While UDL offers a universal design checklist, HEA also takes into account that the needs and requirements of various fields of knowledge may differ in terms of curriculum design and delivery. HEA therefore supplements generic guidelines with discipline-specific subject guides (such as sociology, anthropology, politics, philosophy, education, history). These provide information and case studies concerning issues pertinent to the teaching of specific fields of knowledge, and offer strategies for teaching practice, pedagogy, and curriculum design.

## 2.2 BUILDING CAPACITY

Project planning identified two areas in which to build capacity in academic staff:

**1. Professional development in teaching practices for sessional staff.** Due to the short time-frame of the project, it was decided that a workshop on inclusive curriculum and teaching for sessional teaching staff, to be run at both Burwood and Geelong, would be both achievable and have the added benefit of equipping the teachers that are responsible for teaching and implementing curriculum. While Deakin provides a number of online resources for sessional teaching academics, there is little opportunity for paid face-to-face professional development. The project team considered this to be an important part of developing and encouraging inclusive curriculum and teaching, and the workshops were considered a good format to facilitate this.

**2. Provision of online educational resources for academics.** As part of the project, it was considered highly desirable to develop and curate online and/or multi-media resources for academics to provide support to Unit Chairs and teaching academics in inclusive curriculum design and teaching.

### 3. UNIT CASE STUDIES

#### 3.1 OVERVIEW

UDL audits of the selected six first year level units from the Faculty's SHSS, SoE, and SCCA provided data for a case study analysis. As much as possible, units were chosen that satisfied the HEPPP funding requirement of minimum 13% LSES enrolment. Apart from AIX160 *Introduction to University Study*, these units are located within the disciplines of Anthropology, Philosophy, Sociology, Education (Primary), and Australian Studies. In discussions with different Unit Chairs, it is clear that teaching academics do think about inclusive curriculum design and inclusive teaching practices, but lack the time to undertake large-scale unit redevelopment or training.

**Primary Education** (2014 Total enrolment 606 students, LSES 75)<sup>‡</sup>: A core unit in the Education degree, the Unit Chair inherited the unit three years ago. As the only education unit in the project, this unit also had the components of group work and fieldwork that present unique challenges to UC. The unit has had minor editions and changes: streamlining readings, refining assessments task so that they are more engaging. Students are positive about assessment tasks in SETU feedback. Online development of unit through improving Cloud content and usage is one significant area of improvement. Currently Cloud is used mainly as a lecture and content repository. UC welcomes assistance in redeveloping this part of the unit at this time. A further issue of concern to the UC was support for students in learning to think self-reflectively and self-reflexively and to recognise their own social formation. At times this can be challenging for students. Other challenges identified by the UC included skills in reading and critically analysing information. The UC responded appreciatively and positively to the UDL report and HEA analysis.

**Australian Studies** (2014 Enrolment 740 students, LSES 95 students): At the time of writing, the Cloud concept material for this unit is under development with Course Enhancement and DLF. These focus on the unit's needs, and will in large part translate what is taught in seminars (i.e. reading and analysing academic articles, reading empirical studies, interpreting data, graphs, statistics and note-taking) to a cloud video platform. The teaching team welcomed a review of their unit and for suggestions to improve curriculum design. It was noted that the evaluation encouraged them to critically reflect on their teaching practices and to articulate definitions about their unit approach in succinct terms. Some of the suggestions as a result of this review have been considered and agreed upon.

**Sociology** (2014 Enrolment 605 students, LSES 103 students): Importantly, the Unit Chair noted that the unit is a large first year unit, with more than a dozen academic teaching staff. As such, the unit does not belong to one academic, but to the discipline. Therefore, differing ideas, and pedagogical approaches have to be a considered and accommodated—so a one size fits all holistic approach is not always workable/possible. The teaching team review meeting discussion supported UDL findings even though staff may not have explicitly read the report or recognised the connections. UC agreed with the substantive content of the UDL review, noting that it underlined good practice, which should be continued, and other suggestions will enhance or resonate with the student feedback in the way the unit is taught. The UDL report will provide a guide to further refining the unit—some aspects will be adopted, while others will provide thought for debate. In particular, the team meeting review of the unit agreed that there is so much material delivered by way of readings, Study Guide and lectures that there is a need to make clear the key ideas to be grasped and understood each week. The team agreed that refining and streamlining of teaching material is necessary in order to make transparent weekly goals and expectations. Of note, the unit has excellent student feedback and evaluation scores. UC appreciated being a part of this project and welcomed the critical, constructive and objective view offered from outside the discipline.

**Anthropology** (2014 Enrolment 325 students, LSES 46 students): The Unit Chair has identified that students struggle with both the reading required, particularly reading whole books or ethnographies, and to understand academic language of this specific discipline. In order to address this, UC has been working with a dyslexic tutor,

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<sup>‡</sup> T2 enrolment numbers for all units in project (except for philosophy) based on interim data at 6 May 2014 – domestic undergraduate students enrolled in Bachelor of Arts and/or Education.

who spontaneously draws the lectures for students. This work was demonstrated in a Cloud showcase at the 2014 Teaching and Learning Conference: Sharing and Showcasing. A joint-authored paper for a pedagogical journal is currently in progress, and will explore the use of cartoons as key pedagogy metaphors to approach difficult to articulate ideological concepts that occur in anthropology. UC welcomes further assistance in order to extend this initial research and work in the use of images and cartoons for first year anthropology classes, as well as support in teaching study skills required in reading and writing in anthropology.

**Philosophy** (2014 Enrolment 357 students, LSES 48 students)<sup>§</sup>: The Unit Chair is keen to make some changes to the unit. But the unit has been successful and has good evaluations. It is a flagship unit in the school. So while improvement is desirable, there is caution in terms of not wanting to 'kill' unit in the process. UC would like to 'renovate' without demolishing or rebuilding. Of note, the textbook is being replaced in 2015 and the unit content will be re-written in part. Hence, participation in this project is welcome and timely. UC expressed concern over students' struggle with amount of reading and how best to communicate expectations required by reading philosophy. UC acknowledged that further strengthening of diverse assessments is needed but is unsure how best to achieve this. Of further concern, is the identified need for protocol guidelines in broaching sensitive issues without alienating or confronting some students, and how best to teach such material. UC commended the project officers on the excellent analysis that raised a number of important issues, which will be tackled. The unit analysis will contribute to redevelopment of the unit in 2015.

**AIX160 Introduction to University Study** (Enrolment and LSES data 2014 N/A): The unit audit reviewed existing Cloud content as taught in 2014. While this unit underwent an initial revision in teaching methods and delivery this year, Cloud content and design remained largely as taught in previous years (other than weekly lecture classes and seminar discussion boards) as the course content was scheduled for a complete rewrite and redesign to be delivered in 2015. This redevelopment has drawn on recommendations in two reports: 1) UDL audit (Danielle Hitch, November 2014) and 2) Internationalisation of Curriculum Report (Dr. Janet Watson, September 2014). This unit is now been redesigned as a model unit for inclusive curriculum design and teaching. Work will be ongoing in 2015. Further information on the redevelopment of AIX160 as a model unit is provided in this report.

## 3.2 THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF CASE STUDY UNITS

The UDL review reports for each unit were qualitatively analysed to identify themes, issues and patterns that emerged individually and across the unit case studies sample. Analysis located the UDL checkpoint evaluations alongside the HEA guidelines (both generic and subject-specific) to gain a comprehensive understanding of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) of each unit and the overall sample. The following summarises the findings from this analysis according to key components of HEA curriculum design.

### Learning Outcomes and Goals/ Objectives

#### GOOD PRACTICE

- Unit learning goals in units were generally stated, aligned to GLOs, and GLOs mapped to all unit-learning outcomes.

#### AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- A lack of consistency between units in aligning learning goals to GLOs was evident.
- A lack of clearly stated weekly goals and learning outcomes in classes, seminars and Study Guide material to make expectations explicit to students.

### Syllabus/Course Content

#### GOOD PRACTICE

- Evidence of highlighting broader themes, ideas and relationships in and across weekly content of more than half the units.
- Units demonstrated clear strategies to avoid unintentionally excluding students, such as CALD/International/ESL, by providing Australian examples in resources and evidencing promotion of global citizenship, intercultural awareness, and socio-cultural inclusion.

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<sup>§</sup> T1 unit – enrolment numbers at 8 June 2014 – domestic undergraduate students enrolled in Bachelor of Arts.

- Some units evidenced strategies in order to manage sensitive topics and cultural diversity. These include encouraging open discussion about critically reflecting on differing perspectives, interrogating their own experiences; lecturers talking about life experiences, and promoting First in Family scheme.

#### AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Unit material and aims to the overall course major or Bachelor degree are not clearly linked i.e. how units relate to and complement one another and build knowledge/skills/capacity in the discipline.
- To date, the Faculty has not provided clear guidelines on how to teach sensitive issues in classrooms in a format that is readily accessible for teaching staff.

### **Teaching and Learning Materials**

#### GOOD PRACTICE

- Lecture recordings and slides provided for all units.
- Information provided about how to engage with the units.
- All learning resources are provided in CloudDeakin and are amenable to assistive technology.
- Demonstration of linking resources to specific lessons evident in most units.
- Some evidence of multiple means of representation in the range of learning resources e.g. websites, journals, books, DVDs/videos, podcasts, songs etc.
- Units provide options for decoding language and symbols by offering hints on how to write essays, academic conventions, and other communication. Study skills links and resources are provided that build independent learning and autonomy.
- Terms and concepts are explained in lectures and within content.

#### AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- Predominant reliance on text-based materials. Lack of alternative formats poses a threat to inclusivity by not accommodating different learning styles.
- No unit provides a discipline-specific glossary.
- Only one unit provided transcripts of lecture recordings for all students. Another unit provided lecture transcripts for deaf students, and transcripts for other resources.

### **Teaching Methods and Learning Activities**

#### GOOD PRACTICE

- All units reflect an ethos of inclusion i.e. promoting access and engagement for all students via the following key factors:
  - Available across campuses.
  - Lessons available face-to-face and online with supporting readings and activities.
  - Encouraging, friendly and welcoming tone adopted throughout communicating the belief students can succeed.
  - Independent learning built into all units and within each lesson, which provides some opportunity for individual choice and autonomy.
- Best practice demonstrated in one unit in which teaching teams communicate by way of email and meetings regarding: learning outcomes, tutorial expectations, developing common teaching strategies, problem solving, mutual support, incorporating skills into tutorials; an awareness of students' prior experience/backgrounds and skill levels (including Learning Access Plans). Such practices are evident at some level in all case study units.
- Mechanisms for self-monitoring of progress evident in half the case study units, with two units providing several mechanisms.
- Self-reflective strategies encouraged to varying degrees in units. The education and philosophy units adopt a reflective stance throughout whereas others only conveyed some elements of self-reflection.
- Group work tasks are included in seminar activities (NB: this is not evident in auditing Cloud content, which underlines the necessity to cross-check UDL audit reviews in discussion with teaching staff).

#### AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

- There needs to be further opportunity for self-reflection in some units. Reflecting on learning activities enables all students to recognise their learning style and the value of alternative approaches they adopt. Reflection takes student thinking outside content to consider process, practice, experience together with literature and evidence to support their reflective insights.

- Fostering of online community and discussion varied across the units. Some units made effective use of the discussions forum and engaged all students in online discussion, while others utilised discussion forums as a teaching tool for off-campus only. Only one unit appears to have used Lync sessions for Cloud/off-campus students. In general therefore, effective online community building, collaboration and discussion is, to greater and lesser degrees, under-utilised.
- The UDL audit noted in some units that discussions forums were used sporadically/underused and recommended cutting down the number of discussion topics to make the section easier to navigate.
- Other pressures on staff, such as large cohorts of students, prevent development of one-on-one relationships and can exclude students who lack confidence.

## **Assessment and Feedback**

### **GOOD PRACTICE**

- Some exemplary practices evident that variously include:
  - assessments in multiple formats: written, oral, group work, peer-assessment, blogs, capacity to incorporate multi-media in submissions
  - FAQs, tips and support for assessment (demonstrated in all units)
  - clear, detailed rubrics outlining expectations and means to guide student goal setting
  - multiple means of representation in feedback
  - choices in essay topics (demonstrated in all units)
  - timely feedback in order to begin next assessment task (demonstrated in all units)
  - assessments based on learning materials (demonstrated in all units)

### **AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT**

- Some units variously evidenced a focus on written tasks—which may disadvantage students for whom this is not their preferred learning style.
- Some units evidenced a lack of: peer-assessment, group assessment, and detailed rubrics e.g. did not explicitly state what would constitute Excellent, Good, Satisfactory, Poor or Very Poor. Providing an expanded rubric, which for instance, explicitly states what constitutes Low (0-3), Medium (4-6) and High (7-10) scores for each item, would support students to plan their work, set goals, and self-assess.

## **3.3 OPPORTUNITIES AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER IMPROVEMENT**

### **Learning Outcomes and Goals/Objectives**

- Faculty/Course and discipline developers to recognise and build on the work done to align learning goals to GLOs to date, and to explicitly encourage this in 2015 across all Faculty units.
- Transparent inclusive goals should separate the goal from the means to achieve it and support various pathways to success.
- Weekly unit goals/key concepts to be stated more clearly, aligning with Study Guide/Classes/Seminars, and working towards optimal consistency across campuses. Weekly goals should be reflected in seminar activities to foster connections across all teaching and learning forums.
- Scope to improve making connections across unit themes to weekly readings/classes/seminars so that students are presented with an overall narrative of the unit content and how all components relate to one another in order to enhance student interest and understanding, as well as support acquisition of new skills and knowledge. This should inform curriculum design and delivery before the beginning of the teaching period, and ensure consistency across campuses and teaching teams.

### **Syllabus/Course Content**

- Staff Professional Development for teaching staff workshops and manuals on how to manage sensitive topics, and cultural/linguistic diversity (particularly with regard to English language competency, comprehension, literacy, cultural difference, and inclusive teaching). HEA guidelines recommend that the lecturer's role as referee is not to be neutral but rather to steer activity to ensure it remains focussed on class session outcomes. Strategies to minimise distress in potentially inflammatory situations arising from emotionally-laden issues include:
  - Discussing social and disciplinary norms explicitly and using discussion with students as the basis for ground rules for individual and group conduct.
  - Clear information about the range and nature of the content to be covered in modules allowing students to make informed decisions about programmes and modules.

- Make students aware of sensitive nature of topics: model best practice by providing supporting material in lectures, PowerPoints, discussion posts and seminars, and drawing attention to Deakin support such as Equity and Diversity and counselling services.
- Building in ‘open’ (i.e. safe) spaces for students to analyse and share their own learning experience and practice.
- Promote global citizenship (GLO8) by including a wide range of examples including: Australian and international perspectives, cross-cultural comparisons including local-global; awareness raising of equality and promotion of respect of individual difference; inclusion of real-life case studies; students’ educational/life experience.
- Recognise benefits of comparing socio-cultural frames by asking international students to share experiences of their home. This introduces international perspectives to local/domestic students and allows international students to reflect on their own teaching and learning experiences.
- Provide opportunity to emphasise critical thinking skills in dealing with sensitive/controversial subject through interrogating one’s own assumptions and others’ ideas.

### **Teaching and Learning Materials**

- Where there is scope to rewrite course content, to provide clearly written, easily navigable Study Guides that use clear links to readings, key terms and connections to overall themes of the unit. This provides an opportunity to incorporate cross-cultural and international perspectives into course content.
- Clear linking of learning materials to lesson goals and key terms to facilitate consistency of curriculum design and delivery.
- Scope for greater uptake of technology by embedding academic and digital literacies using Cloud concepts. For example, the library provides support for embedding digital literacy skills into curriculum.
- Provision of a Unit Glossary where appropriate for the discipline.
- Provision of reading guides to assist students with difficult/dense set reading material.
- Inclusion of more multi-media course content to optimise student engagement and interactivity. Possibly replace some text-based materials with alternative forms of media. Cautionary note regarding according too much emphasis to multi-media information: media explains ideas quickly and simply, but lacks sophistication of argument, which requires reading of text. If students become less patient in engaging with academic texts, what will this mean in terms of their understanding of the content of the unit, and their ability to critically analyse ideas?
- Scope to provide transcripts where possible and if appropriate for AV resources. Transcripts are of benefit to hearing impaired and also international and ESL students who have difficulty interpreting local accents and Australian-English vernacular. The issue of encouraging able students to note-take in preference to being supplied transcripts should be discussed among teaching teams when planning their curriculum delivery.
- Provide example of a poorly written essay as a seminar activity to identify structural faults.
- Unit Chairs may seek assistance from the library to keep up to date with curating information.

### **Teaching Methods and Learning Activities**

- Encourage self-reflective thinking and practice that enables students to look at their own experiences and to be able to consider their role in society through the theoretical/conceptual lens of their discipline. This could be done through:
  - Placing greater emphasis on self-reflective practices and incorporating the value of self-reflection into the ethos of curriculum design overall, at lectures, tutorial activities, readings and set exercises and as part of assessment (see assessment section).
  - Developing a video with a colleague that discusses the skills and attributes of the discipline and in which academics share their experience.
  - Developing an introductory video on Cloud Deakin that explains the role and relevance of the discipline in contemporary society. Including an element of ‘response’ in the requirement to participate in discussions (i.e. students need to comment to other postings / comments, and not just contribute their own thoughts).
- Provide explicit information about study skills needed for the specific discipline through:
  - Developing a video with a student in which they share how they improved in the nominated discipline to achieve higher grades or negotiated transitional difficulties.

- Developing a resource that helps students read and note-take from a text relevant to the discipline. Make explicit the reasons why students need to develop good reading habits. Make explicit the role of critical analysis. Provide resources that teach the craft of directed reading, and note taking.
- Improve online discussion and communication through:
  - Considering design and purpose of discussion forums i.e. how best to navigate topics and encourage participation by making it an stated expectation and requirement if appropriate and manageable.
  - Offering a number of online teaching tutorials using BB Collaborate or Lync. These do not have to match the weekly topic—but can be a form of interactive discussion around an important theme. Session can be recorded and posted on the Cloud Deakin site for viewing by other students.
  - Rationalising number of online discussion forums to make the section easier to navigate. Need to recognise that practical issues in managing large units (between 500 and 800 students across 3 campuses and off-campus) and discussion forums need to be considered. For practical purposes, it may be easier to manage Discussion Posts for large cohorts when broken down into smaller components.
- Opportunity to consider widening contexts of learning opportunities if appropriate to the unit goals/objectives as exemplified by the education unit, which goes beyond traditional lectures/tutorials to include field visits and placements.
- Scope to circulate a document to all those involved in teaching and in particular to new or visiting staff that highlights the prior educational experience of students and makes suggestions for how delivery might be tailored in response will better inform teaching and learning methods and improve learning outcomes.
- Improve community building and teamwork. Teamwork is one of the GLOs. Unit Chairs could consider incorporating this more explicitly in their curriculum development, through developing and encouraging group work tasks in seminars and as part of assessment.

### **Assessment**

- Greater consideration of self-monitoring mechanisms should inform curriculum design e.g. initial short assessment with timely feedback, tutor feedback, quizzes, comprehension and reflective questions on discussion boards/in Study Guide, peer and self-assessment tasks, detailed assessment criteria to facilitate self-monitoring. This can be done through:
  - Developing a plagiarism and referencing quiz as part of the unit. Set this up so that students are required to complete this before accessing their drop box and submitting assignment.
  - Providing a space for students to self-assess or reflect on their assignments before submitting.
  - Providing accessible/user friendly literacy software that enables students to check their assessments for grammar, spelling and punctuation as part of the submission process.
- Consider broadening assessment options to include and accommodate different learning styles and provide multiple ways to demonstrate knowledge (students could be offered a range of choices within one assessment) e.g. video/multimedia production, web-site design, blog, interviews, creative work and exegesis, peer and/or self-assessment, as well as traditional text formats.
- Embed learning of research skills and digital literacy into the first assessment. Marking criteria may stipulate that marks will be lost for using inappropriate search engines and web-sites (these should be clearly listed on Cloud Resources).
- Improve rubrics for assessments.
- Include more group assessment, which would also create an explicit link between assessments and the 'teamwork' GLO. Investigate strategies wherein 'teamwork' be included in online learning e.g. group blogs, simulations, wikis, shared documents and portfolios. Equip students for group assessment; include teaching effective communication and collaboration skills. This could be in the form of a video uploaded on Cloud Deakin, but also potential for separate workshops on inter-personal skills (through Study Skills). Note: group assessments may be difficult to include in online units where students are expected to facilitate their own learning.
- Scope to improve inclusion of peer/self-assessment. The ability to assess self and others is an essential graduate attribute. Studies consistently report positive outcomes for well-designed peer marking, including claims from students that it makes them think more, become more critical, learn more and gain in confidence.

### **3.4 EXISTING RESOURCES TO SUPPORT OPPORTUNITIES AND SUGGESTIONS**

- **Career Ready Modules** are HEPP funded and aimed particularly at LSES units. At the time of writing these are in development by Division of Student Life (Sabrina Chakman) with their own Cloud Deakin page. Career



modules cover three levels: My plan (level 1); My experience (level 2); My jobsearch (level 3), which prepares students over their three year degree. Modules are interactive (videos are captioned) and will be fully functional by 2015. All students will be enrolled in a career module site. But parts of the site can be exported and customised to individual units or courses within faculty, and linked to assessment. This would have the greatest impact on student engagement with career modules. This could be particularly useful for journalism, PR, education and other units/courses where students are to work in industry. Observer status is available to Unit Chairs, if they want to see modules online.

- **'Getting Started' guide for students**—currently being developed by Library, to be released in Tri 3 2014. This generic digital literacies teaching tool can be contextualised and embedded into specific disciplines, with support of the Faculty Liaison Librarian.
- **Teach-Digital literacy**—Examples of embedding digital literacy into units via library website (<http://www.deakin.edu.au/library/teach/digital-literacy.php#about>). The library is already working with some courses/units in Arts & Ed. Here, for example, ACC100 and 101 (Tony Chalkley) could work as a demonstration model for other Unit Chairs interested in embedding digital literacy into their curriculum.
- **Dealing with sensitive issues**—follow HEA recommended **example of Notice**: *Please note: it should be clear that some issues discussed in this module are of a sensitive and controversial nature. These will be recurrent – in lecture presentations and seminar discussions. Students should consider whether they might find such material offensive and whether they would be comfortable discussing these themes when making module choices.* Exemplar guidelines can be found at Flinders' University <http://www.flinders.edu.au/staff-development-files/CDIP%20documents/CDIP%20Toolkit%202012/Inclusive%20Practices%20for%20Managing%20Controversial%20Issues%20in%20the%20Classroom.pdf>
- **Examples of designing assessment by subject area**: <http://www.uts.edu.au/research-and-teaching/teaching-and-learning/assessment-futures/examples-subject-area>
- **Online inclusive language guide**: <http://w3.unisa.edu.au/academicdevelopment/diversity/inclusive.asp#guidelines>
- **Scope to improve rubrics for all assessments**—see *Deakin Learning Futures AGENDA 2020: Course Enhancement* [http://www.deakin.edu.au/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/47364/course-enhancement-guide.pdf](http://www.deakin.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/47364/course-enhancement-guide.pdf).
- **Improving design in assessments and broadening assessment options**: [http://www.washington.edu/doit/UDHE-promising-practices/PDF/ud\\_assessments.pdf](http://www.washington.edu/doit/UDHE-promising-practices/PDF/ud_assessments.pdf)

### 3.5 GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Unit Chairs overwhelming commented on how valuable the process of ICD review has been, particularly in discussing the evaluation data (resulting from analysis of UDL audit, HEA guidelines and face to face discussions with Faculty Project Officers). In particular, it has facilitated a reflective and reflexive process for academics in thinking about curriculum and teaching practices.
- Discussions with Unit Chairs underlined that existing good practice needs to be kept in place, and hence exercise caution in unit makeovers. That is, to renovate without demolishing or the need to rebuild.
- Discussions with Unit Chairs revealed that best practice models need to consider organisational logistics where units have large student cohorts and teaching teams comprise several academic staff across campuses.
- Unit Chairs commonly noted that students struggled with readings in terms of comprehension and keeping up to date with weekly content in order to prepare for tutorials. Diminishing tutorial attendance was also noted as an issue. One Unit Chair includes a tutorial participation mark of 10% in order to encourage greater attendance.
- Some of the following suggestions and recommendations are being actively pursued or put in place by Unit Chairs. It was noted that work with Course Enhancement and DLF builds an awareness of inclusive curriculum. However, it was clear in discussions with Unit Chairs, that it was not always clear to them what resources were already in existence, and who/which sector could provide assistance on particular issues/matters. One Unit Chair noted that revising units can be awkward because of timing as changes to a unit have to be notified by September but student feedback for T2 units is not received until December, so there is an 18 month lag time, which is cumbersome.

## **4. REDEVELOPING AIX160, INTRODUCTION TO UNIVERSITY STUDY**

### **Dr Mary Dracup**

During the last quarter of 2014, ASC160 Introduction to university study was redesigned and redeveloped as AIX160, using universal design for learning (UDL) and internationalised curriculum principles. The redevelopment also included integrating further an 'embedded literacies' approach to support students' development of digital and information literacy skills. The redevelopment was overseen by a team including a project manager, the UDL consultant, the unit chair, a unit tutor, Library staff, Division of Student Life staff, an Institute of Koori Education representative and myself as curriculum developer. While the unit is ready to be taught in T1 2015, the unit would benefit from further development.

### **Aims and intended learning outcomes**

AIX160 is designed to help students achieve basic skills and knowledge they will need to succeed as a university student. As such, every Deakin graduate learning outcome is addressed to some degree, and most are addressed overtly in the activities, content and assessment. The intended learning outcomes are clearly stated each week. In addition to this, visual curriculum maps are placed on the first page of each week's work in the online study guide to help students to understand how their activities each week relate to achieving each of the larger unit aims and preparing for each piece of assessment.

### **Syllabus/course content**

AIX160 is designed to serve as an introductory unit across Arts-Education schools and to some extent across the university. Learning activities, examples and assessment questions are chosen to reflect interest areas in each of the Arts-Education schools. As the unit design was based on the constructive alignment model (Biggs & Tang 2006), the study guide, activities and readings are almost completely new and purpose-built or chosen explicitly to help students achieve the stated intended learning outcomes.

### **Assessment**

The design of AIX160 is authentic (Herrington 2010) in that the two assignments and exam are designed to be typical forms of assessment for Arts-Education units. Significant resources and learning activities are provided in the study guide explicitly to scaffold students' ability to perform well in these assessments and apply their learning in other units. Assessment criteria and weightings are clearly stated in rubrics for each assignment. Templates and examples of high quality work are provided. The two assignments offer a choice in terms of subject area. Assignment 1 offers a choice between written and oral work (recorded), and individual or pair submission. Assignment 2 offers a choice of writing an essay or a report. As Assignment 2 is designed to build on the research students complete for Assignment 1, a formative element is built into these assessments. The exam is an online exam with a combination of MCQs, short-answer and essay questions also designed to reflect common formats. As it is completed before exam week, it is designed to build students' confidence in preparing for and sitting exams they will face in other units.

### **Teaching and learning materials**

All students have a comprehensive set of accessible materials delivered online. The CloudDeakin site has been developed as a stand-alone instructional resource for Cloud-based students, with the addition of recorded on-campus classes and regular online seminars using Lync or BB Collaborate. On-campus students can also refer to these resources if they miss seminars or classes. Learning materials exhibit to varying degrees multiple forms of representation, e.g. text plus video/audio plus images; international examples, cases and readings; transcripts and/or captions for all video and audio materials; an extensive glossary of university terms. Students are encouraged to access Deakin student support, study skills and Library information websites and staff and relevant links are provided. Ongoing efforts are needed to further extend these options and build a quality repository of learning materials.

### **Teaching methods and learning activities**

Active learning methods are used as far as possible. These include learning a skill by performing it in a real context, applying theory in authentic tasks, using checklists to identify characteristics in examples, using sets of questions to guide study of videos or texts, discussing relevant real-life experiences with other students, and so on. Where possible, annotated examples and multiple examples are provided. Cloud-based students are repeatedly encouraged to discuss and complete activities with peers, using the LMS discussion forums, a wiki and regular online seminars as forums and support. Classes are lecture-style delivery in order to explain the

contemporary theoretical rationale for the skills-based content. Seminars provide the opportunity for active and collaborative learning techniques using either pairs or small groups, and encouraging the use of technology for hands-on activities. On-campus lecturers and tutors are supported with 'weekly teaching notes' in the online study guide. Some seminars are held in Library labs so students can better orient themselves to the Library facilities.

### **Individual learning**

Practical reasons for learning particular skills and knowledge are explained in the study guide. Students are encouraged to self-reflect on their new skills and knowledge. The importance of metacognitive awareness and goal-based activity is introduced early and reinforced in individual reflective activities each week. Students can assess their achievement of the intended learning outcomes in the weekly quiz self-assessments. Students can identify their personal learning goals for the unit and their wider university course at the beginning of the unit, and are prompted to review these throughout the trimester in their personal unit blog.

### **Christine Oughtred, *Liaison Librarian***

The Library collaborated with the unit chair and Academic Skills staff to deliver a refreshed content for ASC160 in 2014. While this was seen as successful by all stakeholders there were some difficulties including disparity between the written course material uploaded from previous years and the new content delivered. Communication between a large number of presenters from divisions and tutors was also a challenge. However these issues have now been addressed.

The unit is ideal for a coordinated HEPP supported approach given the potential for providing foundation skills essential for success at university. Given the approval process and appointment of support staff to work on the 2015 content meant that again there was time pressure to complete the materials for delivery in T1 2015 however there has been a much enhanced unit in terms of content aligning to assessment tasks, authentic exercises and updating of resources. The potential for a teaching staff-training day before unit commencement will also mean any communication issues between presenters will be addressed before the start of trimester.

The use of Mary Dracup's expertise has meant that the limited time available has been spent in an efficient manner and Library staff have been encouraged to give feed back into the Digital Literacy content, delivery and learning activities for development of skills to 'find, use and disseminate information' during weeks 2, 3, 8 and 10. This is time well spent for the Library because of the nature of the unit and student cohort.

The Library has also been able to support the development of a reading list of current resources, as well as eBooks, images and multimedia for the unit content.

The change from ASC to AIX will help badge this unit as potentially interdisciplinary as the content is relevant to all entry level students regardless of faculty. The changes for 2015 are seen as iterative and allow a trial of assessment tasks and style of teaching and learning activities that will hopefully enhance learning outcomes for entry-level students. The evaluation of the unit will be much anticipated.

Given the potential for use of this content across the university it would be wonderful to have a team of people work together early in 2015 for the 2016 content including staff with expertise in eLearning design and pedagogy. Having a collaborative approach to building the curriculum with a longer lead in time would seem to be a good investment for the potential of this unit to showcase the outcomes of the LIVE agenda.

### **Marie Gaspar, *Language and Learning Adviser***

Chris has provided a very comprehensive response and Language and Learning agree on:

- the unit being ideal for a coordinated HEPPP supported approach
- the pressure of time to provide materials for T1, 2015 delivery
- the value of a teaching staff training day
- the potential for developing the unit across the university and the feasibility of working on this collaboratively for 2016, beginning early 2015.

Language and Learning Advisers valued the opportunity to be involved with the Arts Education team and the Library to contribute to the articulation and the development of the intended unit learning outcomes, the content and the assessment tasks.

The unit addresses foundation skills for university study and success, which are core to the work of Language and Learning Advisers. We are pleased to be taking primary responsibility for Weeks 4, 5, 6 and 9, and to be working with the Library in Weeks 2 and 8.

We also valued the opportunity to provide detailed feedback to Mary Dracup on the Study Guide for each week, which she received/considered/accepted most graciously. We look forward to working with the team in the further re-development of the unit.

## 5. DELIVERABLES

### 5.1 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

#### **'Inclusive Teaching and Learning' Sessional Academic Workshop: October 15<sup>th</sup> (Burwood campus) and October 16<sup>th</sup> (Waterfront campus)**

The focus of this sessional workshop was to explain inclusive curriculum and teaching in terms of specific disciplines, and inclusive teaching practice group discussions. This was done through Universal Design for Learning: from principles to practice, Danielle Hitch, Equity and Diversity; Q & A 'Star Performers' Panel with Faculty academics showcasing inclusive teaching/curriculum design practices and pedagogies. The workshop was scheduled from 10 am to 1 pm, with morning tea provided. The two workshops were well attended, with 47 participants across the two workshops. Sessions were opened by Professor Sarah Paddle, Associated Dean of Teaching and Learning at Burwood, and Associate Professor Damian Blake, Associate Head of School (Teaching and Learning) at Waterfront.

Danielle Hitch presented the morning session, 'Universal Design for Learning: from principles to practice', an interactive workshop for sessionals. Attendees were provided with a workbook and other resources for this session.

Following a tea break at 12 pm, the remaining 50 minutes were dedicated to a 'Star Performers' Panel with experienced Faculty academics who shared their teaching knowledge and strategies. At Burwood, the academics that contributed were: Dr. Patrick Stokes, Dr. Adam Brown, Dr. Cai Wilkinson, and Dr. Jill Loughlin. At Waterfront: Dr. Richard Evans, Mrs. Janette Grenfell, Dr. Chad Whelan, and Associate Professor Nina Weerakkody presented and contributed to discussion.

Presenters were invited to speak for 5 minutes on one or two interesting aspects from their curriculum design or teaching. This could be a new way of presenting information, a new form of technology, or new method of teaching that they found successful in their recent teaching career. Academics were able to present this in any way. Because of the timing in the trimester, the academics were told their participation required little preparation from them. Workshop attendees were then invited to ask questions in a Q&A type of format.

Presenters were filmed during their individual presentations and the panel discussion, using an iPad and/or handheld camera. This would enable some development of future online resource/s. The presentation by Dr Richard Evans has been edited and is available on Deakin Air [http://air.deakin.edu.au/public/media/0\\_wbvgi1by](http://air.deakin.edu.au/public/media/0_wbvgi1by)

Following the workshop, an email was sent to all participants with a summary, additional online resources, a single PowerPoint made up of central slides of the workshop, and a link to Deakin Air to a short clip with Dr Richard Evans' teaching tips.

Feedback from the workshop was very positive, both attendees and presenting academics found it very valuable. One academic who presented commented that they would like to have this kind of professional development opportunity available to them as ongoing academic staff!

One participant sent through the following email:

*It was a great opportunity for me to hear more about this important aspect of teaching and one which is particularly relevant to my work in the Master of International and Community Development course. So too for when I am lucky enough to teach Sociology undergraduates.*

*We have a wide variety of students and their ability to act, react and interact with other students and me as a teacher is often compromised by not only their own hesitations but my lack awareness of how to address efficiently. I now have new tools thanks to the great presentation and the terrific ideas of the guest speakers.*

### 5.2 CLOUD CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT

As part of this project, it was envisaged that this project could contribute to the development of unit material that would both enable and model inclusive teaching. To this end, we worked with Dr Mary Dracup, who redesigned the curriculum for AIX160 to develop three short clips of interviews with a range of academics who speak about their experience and work as academics, or on topics of importance to students such as contributing research to public issues, how students can be intentionally inclusive of those in other cultures, or advice from an PhD student reflecting on their own experiences as a student.

Naomi Davis from Digital Zen Productions was contracted to film for one full day at Burwood. Three academics were interviewed and filmed in a variety of formats. These were Dr. Scott Burchill, Ms. Julie Dyer, and Mr. Casey Scott. The footage is to be edited into 3 x 3-5 minute clips as resources for AIX160; with other units able to use these clips as may suit their curriculum.

Dr. Mary Dracup interviewed Jennifer Star, founder of Tara.Ed and named as one of “Australian 100 Women of Influence” in 2014, via Skype. Two final interviews will take place at the end of January 2015, with Associate Professor Nina Weerakoddy. These interviews will also be edited into short clips.

While the six final clips will be used in AIX160 to introduce students to the life of higher education and research, any unit in the Faculty that may find one or more of these clips useful in supporting their teaching and learning can use them.

## 6. STAKEHOLDER REPORTS

### Project Team

Two project officers were assigned to the Faculty ICP August 2014, one at Waurin Ponds and one at Burwood. As the two project officers were working in an academic capacity, they were already well established in the Faculty and able to draw on existing relationships with Unit Chairs to build a conversation around inclusive curriculum design, to locate Unit Chairs interested in more active forms of participation in the project and to contribute significantly to the redevelopment of AIX160. The established position in the Faculty and relationship with teaching staff also enabled efficient organisation of a workshop at short notice and to obtain support from experienced academics in this.

However, being embedded in the Faculty meant that it was more difficult to build relationships with the other ICCB partners, particularly given the tight deadlines of the project. While their academic backgrounds enabled project officers to build relationships with other academics, more support was needed in project management and administration. The tight deadlines did not allow for a more comprehensive induction. A further challenge to this was the fact that both officers were employed on a casual basis, contracted part-time, and this made it difficult to build a sense of continuity in the work. The team are proud of what was achieved in the project, have gained invaluable insight and experience working with the Faculty and ICCB partners and believe this project offers a good model going forward into 2015. As part of this report, the project officers have provided a SWOT analysis of the management and operation of the project and recommendations for 2015.

### **Robyn Everist, *Project Manager, Inclusive Curriculum and Capacity Building, Equity and Diversity***

#### Reflections on process

Project Officer (PO) role/s had several advantages.

- Enabled key link points for PM and ability to develop the project concepts, scope etc. together.
- PO's had faculty credibility therefore could sell the project vision and aims more quickly than an outsider PM coming in and building the relationships from scratch etc.
- PO's were on the ground to follow up, answer queries, have effective 'corridor conversations'.
- Having two POs offered input on two campuses and increased the ability to meet the ambitious program.

Disadvantages of PO role/s

- Took some time to build PO's interaction with the ICCB partners and therefore some partners did not feel as included in the project as could occur in the future. Need to clarify reporting and communication flow between the ICCB project team and PO's—making this collaboration more effective.

#### Outcomes

- PD with A&E sessional staff—resulted in some great outcomes for the piloting of the UDL module and building awareness of the potential of the project and skills and activities relating to inclusivity already happening in the faculty.
- T&L presentation—pulled together a quick video resource to be shared.
- Petra’s overview of inclusivity—video scribe—was a great short and succinct promotional tool, which is an idea that the ICCB project would like to build on.
- Work completed on AIX160 and piloted by PO in part in T2.
- Unit evaluations—UDL audit, interviews and then Janet Watson’s reports set a high standard for reviewing units in light of inclusive practice and again enables some great learning to be built on for 2015. It also enables planning for 2015 and what interventions are of what priority and then the team can work with the Unit Chairs to determine what they can resource or not.

#### Scope/implementation of providing resources to Unit Chairs

- Reports need to be followed by a meeting with the Unit Chairs and the project partners (especially relevant LLAs and LLs for A&E) so that a project plan can be determined together for particular units and expectations around timelines, and what is realistic in terms of resourcing from the partners etc. can be scoped out.

#### Expected benefit and value-adding to Deakin's LIVE the Future Agenda and to curriculum/staff/students

- The project aligns with the university’s strategic aim to offer all students an inclusive experience as they participate in this education journey.

#### **Dr. Danielle Hitch, *Universal Design for Learning Consultant, Equity and Diversity***

My work on the Inclusive Curriculum Design Project has had two main focuses—capacity building and universal design for learning audits. In regards to capacity building, I have designed and delivered two short workshops around inclusive teaching to sessional teachers, in collaboration with Petra Brown. These workshops were very well received, and were also the focus of a research project, which received ethics approval. Findings from this project indicate that significant improvements in knowledge were reported by the participants between the pre and post workshop time points, and these findings are currently being written up for publication. I have also undertaken a series of audits of undergraduate Arts and Education units, comparing current practices with the Guidelines for Universal Design for Learning 2.0. Overall, I found many examples of good practice and an awareness of the need to work with diverse students. General areas for further development included diversifying learning materials beyond a predominantly text based repertoire, and considering a greater variety of assessment formats. I have very much enjoyed working with the Arts and Education Faculty this year, and I congratulate them for the work they have undertaken towards developing a more inclusive curriculum.

## **7. SWOT Analysis of Faculty ICD Project: Management and Operation**

### **STRENGTHS**

- Faculty Project officers based in both Burwood and Geelong proved to be a successful approach in having 'on the ground' liaison with stakeholders and Unit Chairs, which cultivated sustainable, effective and collaborative working relationships.
- The project importantly allowed scope for creative thinking and developing innovative approaches in working with teaching staff.
- Project officers who are actively working as Faculty academics provided added value and strength in their liaison with Unit Chairs through possessing an empathy and understanding around Faculty teaching and curriculum. This facilitated productive communication with and support from Unit Chairs.
- Identifying 'early adopters' in the Faculty, whose goodwill in contributing to the sessional workshop, offered the opportunity for them to more deeply reflect on their teaching design, pedagogies and practice.
- The Inclusive Teaching Sessional Workshop was a resounding success. These were well attended at both campuses, with 47 participants. Overall feedback indicated the value of such a workshop for both enhancing teaching skills and building collegiality and supportive networks.

### **WEAKNESSES**

- Late stage of project start in the Faculty and overall, compromised effective planning, purpose, goal-setting, and best utilisation of budget allocation.
- Time constraints and availability of Unit Chairs at late notice meant that selection of target units were biased towards SHSS. Future planning should strive for a more even School representation.
- Not having clearly identified points of contact with each stakeholder/partner led to a break-down in effective communication at times.
- At a practical level, the casual appointment of Project Officers complicated access to administrative support, cars, finance, and training, which compromised effective time-use.

### **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Encourage Equity and Diversity to continue to recognise and draw on Faculty academic expertise and to provide support as required for project management and other administrative areas.
- Offer contract positions to Faculty Project Officer/s with appropriate academic knowledge and experience.
- Provide appropriate mentoring to Faculty Project Officer/s to ensure adequate support.

### **THREATS**

- Recognise workloads of Unit Chairs and teaching staff and how this impacts on project planning and proposed deliverables.
- Caution in how liaison and communication with academic staff is pursued. Important to underline the cultivation of goodwill and trust. Ensure that building a culture of inclusivity is not about 'compliance' or 'didactic outsiders' but is about collaborative and productive conversations in which we learn from each other and be open to new ideas.
- Be mindful that what works for one discipline may not be appropriate or achievable in another.



## 8. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FACULTY DEVELOPMENT OF ICD, 2015—

- Appoint Faculty ICD Project co-ordinator or manager for ICD oversight and to foster Faculty and University-wide communities of practice. Appoint Faculty ICD project officer/s (Burwood/Geelong) (ideally contract positions) to work with Faculty ICD co-ordinator. Ideally these positions should be contract appointments in order to access full professional development and administrative support.
- Under the auspices of Equity and Diversity, Faculty project officer/s to work with single points of contact in other stakeholder sectors of the university. All positions should be clearly designated in terms of staff member, definition of role, responsibilities and scoped according to a workable timeline, funding and resources.
- To take into consideration discipline-specific contexts when undertaking unit audits and evaluations, and recognise that each discipline has its own unique sets of traditions and frames of thinking, such that a one-size-fits-all model may not be appropriate in some circumstances.
- To continue employing HEA discipline-specific subject guides to complement and work alongside UDL principles, guidelines and checkpoints.
- Faculty project officer/s to receive some training in UDL to facilitate more efficient liaison and communication between Faculty and UDL consultant.
- Facilitate teaching staff awareness of existing resources and service providers (LLAs, Library, TeachAssist, DLF) that can assist with unit enhancement and up-skilling of utilising digital technologies.
- Provide an example document that outlines teaching team co-ordination (including sessional staff): collegiality, communication, learning outcomes and expectations, teaching pedagogies. To consider how sessional staff are included in and recompensed for attending team meetings and to provide opportunities for Professional Development.
- Develop teaching and learning resources and PD online training module for Unit Chairs/tutors to increase inclusivity related to: 1) curriculum design phase including teaching pedagogy and assessment and 2) student experience and engagement. For example,
  - ‘checklist’ for academics to self-audit their own units
  - concept map of ICD process/principles
  - Faculty repository of IC exemplars from Unit Chairs willing to share their resources/strategies/assessment designs etc., which will foster collegiality across disciplines and Schools
- Source existing resources developed by Language and Learning for other units or Faculties that can be edited/adopted for generic Arts-Ed purposes (for example work undertaken for BECE etc)
- Following HEA literature consider ICD principles at the discipline level, work collaboratively with discipline co-ordinators and cultivate productive relationships with DSL Language and Learning Advisers and Liaison Librarian (digital literacies). Develop resources commensurate with discipline guidelines.
- Accord greater emphasis on cultural inclusivity (which is part of the HEA guidelines): develop and run PD workshop for sessional tutors on managing cultural and linguistic difference/diversity and utilising this as a rich resource for teaching and learning e.g. drawing on student reflections of their cultural experiences; understanding barriers to learning and developing strategies that will benefit all students.
- Follow-up with Unit Chairs who have undertaken ICD strategies on efficacy and perceived benefits/improvements.
- Research and publication opportunity: undertake quantitative and qualitative research of student experience. Publish findings from ICD 2014-2015 project and unit evaluations and outcomes.

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- Zen Digital Productions
- The Faculty professional staff that supported the team, in particular Jessica Bartulovic, Simone Truswell, and Melissa Delpont.

Associate Professor Damian Blake

Dr Petra Brown

Dr Janet Watson

January 2015

## Resources

CloudDeakin: Course Enhancement—Teaching Capacities:

<https://d2l.deakin.edu.au/d2l/home/275395>

CloudDeakin: Language and Learning Development: <https://d2l.deakin.edu.au/d2l/home/377522>

Higher Education Academy: Inclusive Curriculum Design:

[https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/inclusion/Disability/Inclusive\\_curriculum\\_design\\_in\\_higher\\_education](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/inclusion/Disability/Inclusive_curriculum_design_in_higher_education)

Inclusive Teaching Practices at Deakin: <http://www.deakin.edu.au/learning/capacity-building/learning-2013-resources/teaching-practice-guides/inclusive-teaching-practices>

Universal Design for Learning: <http://www.cast.org/udl/>

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## Images

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# UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING EVALUATION

ASC160 – INTRODUCTION TO UNIVERSITY STUDY

PRESENTED BY: DANIELLE HITCH

EQUITY AND DIVERSITY  
GEELONG WATERFRONT CAMPUS

## UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING EVALUATION

This document outlines an evaluation of universal design for learning (UDL) within the Introduction to University Study (ASC160) unit at Deakin University. The aim of this document is to identify existing areas of good practice, and highlight areas where further development may be undertaken.

### METHODOLOGY

This evaluation has been undertaken primarily through a review of the Cloud Deakin site for this unit. A curriculum review was completed using the CAST UDL Curriculum Self-Check Tool, and the content and resources were also mapped against the Universal Design for Learning Guidelines (CAST, 2011).

### SUMMARY OF CURRENT UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING WITHIN ASC160 (INTRODUCTION TO UNIVERSITY STUDY)

See Appendix One for a copy of the Universal Design for Learning Guidelines

| Multiple means of representation                                   | Multiple means of action and expression          | Multiple means of engagement                          |
|--|--|---|
| Provide options for perception                                     | Provide options for physical action              | Provide options for recruiting interest               |
| Provide options for language, mathematical expressions and symbols | Provide options for expression and communication | Provide options for sustaining effort and persistence |
| Provide options for comprehension                                  | Provide options for executive functions          | Provide options for self-assessment                   |

#### Key:

All checkpoints reflected in good practice

Some checkpoints reflected in good practice

No checkpoints reflected in good practice

### EXISTING AREAS OF GOOD PRACTICE

There are several examples of good practice in ASC160 as it is currently configured. The provision of recordings for all lectures provides an alternative way of perceiving the lecture information, whether the student attends in person or not. While these recordings are not fully transcribed, they are supported by the lecture notes and slides. The current platform for displaying information (Cloud Deakin) can be customised, and is amenable to assistive technology. The unit explicitly seeks to provide options for language, maths and symbols by directly addressing the nature of academic writing,

numbers, tables and illustrations. These lessons make the conventions behind this information overt, which clarifies their use and meanings for the students.

Due to the focus of the unit, support is given to students during lectures for assignment completion (both in this unit and beyond), and overall grading and building on previous lessons is evidence in the design of the unit overall. Some options for executive function are provided through the provision of simple rubrics and encouraging students to regularly use Cloud Deakin. The unit is available across campuses and includes independent learning within each lesson, which provides some opportunity for individual choice and autonomy. Students are encouraged to think about their own contexts (i.e. when considering terminology), and are introduced to the staff (both visually and with contact details) at the beginning of the study guide. Some options for self-regulation are also provided, by supporting the students to split tasks into small parts (such as the multi part exercises), and some prompting of self-reflection on strategies.

### GENERAL AREAS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT

- The overall unit goals could be redeveloped to 1) separate the goal from the means to achieve it, 2) support various pathways to success and 3) reflect any changes which may occur as a result of this review
- All learning resources are either in written or audio form. Given the many alternative forms of information (and responses) required of students during their degree, there may be opportunities to extend the repertoire (and formats) of learning resources. For example; infographics, interactive multimedia, videos/Cloud Concepts etc.
- The unit has a substantial exam component, which may disadvantage students who have difficulty with this form of assessment. While exams are valid in and of themselves, the proportion of marks assigned to them could be reviewed and (given that both other assessments are also in the form of written essays/responses) a range of opportunities for students to demonstrate their competence considered. All assessment is taken individually, and there are no peer assessed tasks.
  - Potential opportunities;
    - a self-assessment of these skills at the beginning and end of the unit (including both checklist and written reflection),
    - group assignment looking at what constitutes good / poor writing,
    - providing a space for the students to self-assess on the rubric before submission
- While rubric are provided, they are in a simplified form. Providing an expanded rubric, which explicitly stated what would constitute a Low (0-3), Medium (4-6) and High (7-10) score for each item would support students to plan their work and self-assess.
- The discussion forums appear to have been used more in the beginning weeks, but far less as the unit progressed. Discussion forums provide opportunities for students to discuss their existing background knowledge, work through how their learning relates to their particular course, get feedback on their goals, seek support to minimize threats, clarify expectations,

collaborate and get a sense of community. Discussion forum postings can be incorporated into assessment, as evidence of ongoing engagement and progress throughout the unit. There may be opportunities to make better use of these forums as a result of the review of this unit.

- Many of the e-readings for this unit are over 10 years old, and may have been superseded by resources which provide relevant information in multiple ways (e.g. a website, reading with hyperlinks, TED talk). A review of the eReadings list may highlight some materials which will increase the accessibility of material in this unit for all learners.

DRAFT



## APPENDIX ONE: UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING GUIDELINES

# Universal Design for Learning Guidelines



## APPENDIX TWO: MAPPING OF UNIT GUIDES AGAINST UDL GUIDELINES

### MULTIPLE MEANS OF REPRESENTATION

#### Guideline 1: Provide Options for Perception

| Checkpoint  | Evaluation  |
|---|---|
| <b>1.1 – Offer ways of customizing the display of information</b> | Information available on platforms which allow customisation (i.e. Cloud Deakin, forums, Echo)<br>Some alternative resources (i.e. web links) listed as resources |
| <b>1.2 – Offer alternatives for auditory information</b>          | Lecture recordings and notes made available weekly  |
| <b>1.3 – Offer alternatives for visual information</b>            | Lectures recorded, but no direct transcripts of these recordings<br>Text to speech is possible in Cloud Deakin  |

#### Guideline 2: Provide options for language, mathematical expressions, and symbols

| Checkpoint  | Evaluation   |
|---|--|
| <b>2.1 – Clarify vocabulary and symbols</b>                               | Students are encouraged to form glossaries and seek definitions for terms                              |
| <b>2.2 – Clarify syntax and structure</b>                                 | Focus of the lessons on writing (general) and academic forms   |
| <b>2.3 – Support decoding of text, mathematical notation, and symbols</b> | Specific lessons on numbers, tables and illustrations  |
| <b>2.4 – Promote understanding across languages</b>                       | English only, but raises awareness of different forms of that language (i.e. academic vs non-academic) |
| <b>2.5 – Illustrate through multiple media</b>                            | All media/resources are either text or audio.  |

#### Guideline 3: Provide options for comprehension

| Checkpoint   | Evaluation   |
|--|--|
| <b>3.1 – Activate or supply background knowledge</b> | Some background knowledge is activated – i.e. students are asked to reflect on previous knowledge.<br>Overall assumption that students are coming in as novices in |

|   |  |
|---|--|
|   | regards to university study, although there is an acknowledgement that some may be 'old hands'   |
| <b>3.2 Highlight patterns, critical features, big ideas and relationships</b> | Not overtly highlighted at present. Much of the unit focuses on the development of individual skills, rather than broader ideas / relationships. |
| <b>3.3 – Guide information processing, visualization and manipulation</b>     | Few checklists or organizing strategies provided in visual formats.  |
| <b>3.4 - Maximise transfer and generalisation</b>                             | Discussed in general across the course, in that these are general skills which will be useful to you regardless of the course you are studying.  |

## MULTIPLE MEANS OF ACTION AND EXPRESSION

### Guideline 4: Provide options for physical action

| Checkpoint   | Evaluation   |
|--|--|
| <b>4.1 – Vary the methods for response and navigation</b>        | Lessons only available in lecture / self-directed format (with supporting exercises and readings).<br><br>Web links offered as additional resources, but relatively few identified |
| <b>4.2 – Optimise access to tools and assistive technologies</b> | Current formats are amenable to tools and assistive technologies to some degree.   |

### Guideline 5: Provide options for expression and communication

| Checkpoint   | Evaluation  |
|--|---|
| <b>5.1 – Use multiple media for communication</b>  | Most learning resources are either text or audio – no video or multimedia and very limited graphics   |
| <b>5.2 – Use multiple tools for construction and composition</b>                           | All assessments are written and in traditional formats. Beyond a choice of essay question, they don't currently provide multiple methods for students to demonstrate their skills and understanding |
| <b>5.3 – Build fluencies with graduated levels of support for practice and performance</b> | Support given during lectures for assignment completion<br><br>Overall grading and building on previous lessons evident in the design of the unit overall   |

**Guideline 6: Provide options for executive functions**

| <b>Checkpoint</b>  | <b>Evaluation</b>  |
|--|--|
| <b>6.1 – Guide appropriate goal setting</b>                | Marking rubrics provided in unit guide<br>Assessments directly relevant to the first three unit goals, but not the fourth  |
| <b>6.2 – Support planning and strategy development</b>     | Provides information on how to engage with the unit<br>Encouraging students to regularly use Cloud Deakin<br>Very simple rubrics provided, but they don't differentiate what a L/M/H would look like |
| <b>6.3 – Facilitate managing information and resources</b> | Little about finding and managing non-academic resources (i.e. websites, youtube / Cloud Concepts, media interviews).  |
| <b>6.4 – Enhance capacity for monitoring progress</b>      | No mechanisms for monitoring progress aside from assessment feedback   |

**MULTIPLE MEANS OF ENGAGEMENT****Guideline 7: Provide options for recruiting interest**

| <b>Checkpoint</b>                                       | <b>Evaluation</b>  |
|---|--|
| <b>7.1 – Optimise individual choice and autonomy</b>    | Available at multiple campuses<br>Independent learning built into unit   |
| <b>7.2 – Optimise relevance, value and authenticity</b> | Relatively little information on alternative forms of assessment / engagement – (i.e. presentations, wikis, group work) that the student may encounter in their courses<br><br>Few models of skills performance available beyond the textbook and some readings<br><br>Some references to thinking about students own leaning context (i.e. terminology) |
| <b>7.3 – Minimise threats and distractions</b>          | First page of study guide introduces all of the staff, with their photographs and contact details.   |

**Guideline 8: Provide options for sustaining effort and persistence**

| <b>Checkpoint</b>   | <b>Evaluation</b>   |
|---|---|
| <b>8.1 – Heighten salience of goals and objectives</b>        | <p>Learning goals in unit stated, and aligned to graduate learning outcomes, and graduate learning outcomes mapped to all unit learning outcomes. However, the specific nature of the goals indicate there are few alternative pathways for success and little flexibility in approach.</p> <p>Goals and objectives for each lesson are not present in the study guide, and there don't appear to be opportunities for students to set their own goals.</p> |
| <b>8.2 – Vary demands and resources to optimise challenge</b> | Limited chances to change the level of challenge – each week has set exercises with few opportunities for customising   |
| <b>8.3 – Foster collaboration and community</b>               | <p>Discussion forums have very few responses most weeks</p> <p>Cloud students may not have any contact with fellow students</p>   |
| <b>8.4 – Increase mastery oriented feedback</b>               | <p>Feedback provided in prior to students commencing next assessment unit, although formal feedback would be received until around week 8</p> <p>Progress quizzes or formative assessment not currently in use</p>  |

**Guideline 9: Provide options for self-regulation**

| <b>Checkpoint</b>  | <b>Evaluation</b>  |
|--|--|
| <b>9.1 – Promote expectations and beliefs that optimise motivation</b> | Encouraging tone adopted throughout, communicating a belief that students can succeed  |
| <b>9.2 – Facilitate personal coping skills and strategies</b>          | <p>Splits larger tasks into smaller parts (multi part exercises)</p> <p>Both assignment instructions and weekly activities are presented step-by-step, so students are given quite a bit of guidance</p> |
| <b>9.3 – Develop self-assessment and reflection</b>                    | <p>Practice is encouraged, and drafting is discussed in some areas</p> <p>Some prompts to self-reflect on strategies when reading, but not systematically encouraged</p>                                 |



## SOCIOLOGY, ANTHROPOLOGY AND POLITICS

### Principles of inclusive curriculum design

Anticipatory  
Flexible  
Accountable  
Collaborative  
Transparent  
Equitable

### Generic considerations

- cost and financial considerations;
- embedding student and staff well-being;
- promoting student engagement;
- use of technology to enhance learning;
- responding to different approaches to learning;
- avoiding stereotypes and celebrating diversity;
- making reasonable adjustments.

### Introduction

It is the responsibility of the every member of staff within HE to respond to the requirements of equality legislation. The basic principle that can and should be universally responded to is that **it is attitudes, barriers and other forms of discrimination within the system rather than individual characteristics or deficits that are the cause of disadvantage**. Employing an inclusive approach is underpinned by the adoption of other principles of inclusive curriculum design, summarised in the adjacent text box and discussed in the introduction section of this guide available at [www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/inclusion/disability/ICD\\_introduction.pdf](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/inclusion/disability/ICD_introduction.pdf)

May and Bridger assert, in respect of developing an inclusive culture, “making a shift of such magnitude requires cultural and systemic change at both policy and practice levels” (2010: 2). In essence this change is represented by a shift in focus from responding to the ‘needs’ of individuals or specific groups of students to an approach that anticipates and plans for the *entitlements* of the evolving student population. Thus the onus is on institutions and subject communities to change and adapt their policies and practice rather than expect this of individual or specific groups of students.

There are many generic considerations of inclusive curriculum design, summarised in the adjacent text box, which are discussed in the introduction section. The focus of this section is on subject-specific considerations for those in those subjects aligned to social, anthropology and politics. Here examples of innovation and effective practice are provided to demonstrate that effective practice for one group can and should be effective practice for all. The examples, resources and ideas included in this and other subject guides have come from the sector. They were obtained directly in response to a general request made to the sector during 2010, from a review of the HEA Subject Centres or from recommendations made by colleagues teaching in the specific subject.

Where there are examples in other subject guides that may be particularly relevant or worth reviewing for further adaptation these are flagged. However, notably inspiration and ideas for curriculum design can come from many sources, therefore reading strategies employed and ideas in other subject areas can be a useful source of new ideas.

## **Inclusive curriculum design: subject-specific considerations**

### **Enabling the transition to higher education**

Research conducted at Goldsmiths College identified a 'lack of fit' between learning experiences in further and higher education (Van de Steeg, 2002). The project, which worked with first-year Anthropology students and their teachers and with a local sixth-form college, identified a lack of understanding independent learning as the main area of concern for all groups. Many students were confused about what anthropology was and what would be required. Many students found that the learning strategies they had employed during their previous courses did not transfer to studying Anthropology at higher education. Students entering after courses other than A-levels appeared to find the expectations around independent study most challenging although all students underestimated the amount and nature of reading necessary. The project made a number of recommendations, which could be implemented across all Sociology, Anthropology and Politics programmes to the benefit of all students; these included:

- greater incorporation of subject-specific study skills into the core curriculum with an emphasis on introducing and modelling strategies for independent learning;
- building in 'open' spaces for students to "analyse and share their own learning experience and practice";
- circulating a document to all those involved in teaching and in particular to new or visiting staff that highlights the prior educational experience of students and makes suggestions for how delivery might be tailored in response.

The Politics Learning and Teaching Online (PLATO) project, undertaken by Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Southampton (Ottewill, 2002) responded to concerns among staff about the 'baseline political knowledge' of Politics students at the start of their programme. The PLATO project conducted an online survey of first-year students taking Politics modules about their political knowledge. Rather than viewing students' knowledge as a 'deficit', the PLATO project recognised that it mirrored wider social trends about engagement with politics. They therefore responded to these social trends by reviewing



their curriculum. Review findings highlighted differences in the knowledge of students at the two participating universities suggesting the importance of the “context within which politics is being taught” and the need for tailored curricula to respond to these differences. Students’ interests in the areas covered by the survey were stimulated by this exercise. This suggests that activities that engage students to think about curriculum content are a way of widening the interests and aspirations of all students. This is particularly important when students consider which modules and pathways to select for their degree programme. It was also suggested that the data gathered could be used as statistical material within Politics modules.

### Tackling sensitive topics

The Sociology, Anthropology and Politics curricula involve many topics that can be considered ‘sensitive’ with the potential to provoke emotional responses for students and staff. For many sensitive subjects the content is ‘usually complicated’ and focused on “issues on which people often hold strong opinions based on their own experiences, interests and values” (Lowe and Jones, 2010: 2). The challenge for an inclusive curriculum is to provide a learning environment in which all students have the opportunity to have a conversation in a safe, open space.

#### *‘To veil or not to veil’: students speak out against Islam(ophobia) in class*

Housee (2010) draws on her experience of teaching in race and gender at the University of Wolverhampton to reflect on how a sensitive and contentious topic – wearing the Hijab – can be incorporated into the curriculum in an inclusive manner that enables all students to participate. She argues that student contributions should be “encouraged and used as an anti-racist tool”. A focus on everyday issues, in this case stimulated by a tabloid newspaper article on a nursery nurse choosing to wear a veil, enables the wider socio-political context to be discussed using critical and problem-posing approaches. Housee is clear that the lecturer’s role as referee is not to be neutral but rather to steer the activity to ensure it remains focused on the session’s learning outcomes.

#### *Sexually explicit materials in the classroom*

Sexually explicit material was included in two final-year modules in Criminology and Sociology at the University of Glamorgan (Nolan and Oerton, 2010). Consideration was required at the design stage to allow legal and

ethical issues to be addressed. Gaining ‘informed consent’ from students so that they were aware of the material they would be expected to engage with during the modules necessitated clear module information and guidance about the potential implications of choosing not to engage with some or all of the explicit material. This is achieved by the following:

*Please note: it should be clear that some issues discussed in this module are of a sensitive and controversial nature. These will be recurrent – in lecture presentations and seminar discussions. Students should consider whether they might find such material offensive and whether they would be comfortable discussing these themes when making module choices.*

Teaching Race and Ethnicity in Higher Education collates materials including:

- sample lecture notes and slides;
- visual materials;
- video content;
- guidance on how to adapt the material for teaching (C-SAP, undated: <http://www.teachingrace.bham.ac.uk/>).

The Education, and Philosophical and Religious Studies subject guides include examples of how to deal with controversial subjects.

### Engaging students through innovative methods

The terminology and discourse of sociological and political theory can be off putting for some students. Enabling students to engage in theory and develop their capacity to apply their understanding to real life situations is enhanced through innovative teaching methods. For instance, Aberystwyth University (undated) runs ‘crisis games’ twice a year to “connect classroom learning with the real-world complexities of international politics”. A range of contemporary global scenarios such as the recent war between Russia and Georgia provide the focus. Students are allocated to teams within which they take a specific role such as a state leader. Another group of students provide regular updates via a newsroom providing regular bulletins with staff “who play the part of the ‘Gods’, registering all of the secret and open moves made by the teams as well as throwing in unexpected events to shake things up”. Taking part in the simulations enables students to develop communication and team-working skills as well as acquiring an insights into aspects of diplomacy that are harder to convey in a classroom

setting, such as the constraints actors operate within and the impact of the pressure and intensity of remaining ‘in character’.

### Raising cultural awareness by communicating across boundaries

Equipping students with the skills to discuss complex issues and the cultural awareness to appreciate solutions in one context may not be transferable to another is valuable for future employment. Manchester Metropolitan University devised an *International E-communication Exchange* where Criminology students undertook “focused discussion-based distance learning via email exchange” with students from universities in the United States (Jones, 2006: 1). The project’s aims were to:

- change modes of student communication (individual and group);
- extend communication across cultural and national borders;
- develop the potential to work across such borders;
- develop students’ ICT-mediated interactional skills (Jones, 2006: 16).

The focus one year was on gun crime and the asynchronous discussion with students from the University of West Florida enriched the curriculum by providing access to very different experiences and attitudes. A particular benefit of the exchange was the opportunity it provided for students to “exercise writing skills in a continuous manner” (requiring a different style and fluidity compared with more ‘static’ assignments like essays). This supported many students to build their confidence about writing and participating in group discussions. This was particularly appreciated by students some might describe as ‘timid’ or less confident in classroom group discussions. Key messages include:

- providing clear information about what is required and the time students will need to commit to participate fully;
- using a *Message Showcase* that demonstrates the quality expected in posts and provides a model to follow helps students unsure about how to present their ideas and responses;
- being aware of those students who have more restricted access to ICT and building in opportunities to participate at the design stage, such as organising timetabled ‘drop-in’ sessions in PC labs, which might provide students with less confidence using computers the opportunity to gain additional assistance.

See the Philosophical and Religious Studies subject guide for examples of supporting religious and cultural diversity.

## **UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING: FROM PRINCIPLES TO PRACTICE – QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS**

Questionnaire results from ‘Universal Design for Learning: from principles to practice’ – an interactive workshop for sessionals facilitated by Danielle Hitch. Questionnaire was developed by Danielle Hitch as part of a project to measure the impact of professional development on Universal Design for Learning.

There were 71 responses (36 individuals), with a small majority of responses were from female participants (62.0%).

The age of participants varied widely: <25 = 18.8%, 26-35 = 20.3%, 36-45 = 27.5%, 46-55 = 20.5%, 56-65 = 9.0%

However, many of the participants (54.1%) had five years or less experience teaching in higher education.

Before the training, the majority of participants identified the following aspects of teaching as either relevant or extremely relevant:

Inclusive learning outcomes = 97.2%

Inclusive learning activities = 97.1%

Inclusive assessments = 92.8%

Inclusive course outcomes = 90%

Inclusive graduate learning outcomes = 87.2%

Feedback regarding the training session itself was also very positive, although many participants (40%) indicated the session wasn't long enough for them.

Statistically significant improvements were recorded in the following areas:

Knowledge about customising information

Knowledge about providing alternatives to auditory information

Knowledge about decoding text / mathematics / symbols

Knowledge about promoting understanding across languages

Knowledge about guiding information processing / visualisation / manipulation

Knowledge about varying methods for response and navigation

Knowledge about options for expression and communication

Knowledge about multiple tools for construction and composition

Knowledge about building fluencies

Knowledge about increasing mastery oriented feedback

The sessions did not have a significant impact on the participants perceptions of the importance of these principals (which was pretty strong already)